

Reasons Trump Breaks Nuclear-Sanction Agreement with Iran, Declares Trade War with China and Meets with North Korea

By [Prof. James Petras](#)

Global Research, May 14, 2018

Region: [Asia, Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Global Economy](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?, NORTH KOREA](#)

Introduction

For some time, critics of President Trump's policies have attributed them to a mental disorder; uncontrolled manic-depression, narcissus bullying and other pathologies.

The question of Trump's mental health raises a deeper question: why does his pathologies take a specific political direction?

Moreover, Trump's decisions have a political history and background, and follow from a logic and belief in the reason and logic of imperial power.

We will examine the reason why Trump has embraced three strategic decisions which have world-historic consequences, namely: Trump's reneging the nuclear accord with Iran; Trump's declaration of a trade war with China; and Trump's meeting with North Korea.

In brief we will explore the political reasons for his decisions; what he expects to gain; and what is his game plan if he fails to secure his expected outcome and his adversaries take reprisals.

Trump's Strategic Framework

The underlying assumption of Trump's strategic thinking is that 'power works': the more intransigent his posture, the greater his belief in a unipolar world based on US power. As a corollary, Trump interprets any ally, adversary, competitor who seeks negotiations, reciprocity or concessions is 'weak' and should be pressured or forced to concede greater concessions and further retreats and sacrifices, up to the ultimate goal of surrender and submission. In other words, Trump's politics of force only recognizes counter-force: limitations in Trump's policies will only result when tangible economic and military losses and costs in US lives would undermine US imperial rule.

Reasons Why Trump Broke the Peace Accord with Iran

Trump broke the accord with Iran because the original agreement was based on retaining US sanctions against Iran; the total dismantling of its nuclear program and calling into question Iran's limited role on behalf of possible allies in the Middle East.

Iran's one-sided concessions; trading military defense for market opportunities encouraged Trump to believe that he could intimidate Iran militarily by closing all its markets.



Trump views President Rouhani (image on the right) as a rug seller not a military strategist. Trump believes that an economic squeeze will lead President Rouhani to sacrifice his allies in Syria, Lebanon (Hezbollah), Yemen (Houthi), Palestine (Hamas) and Iraq (Shia) and to dismantle its ICBM defense strategy.

Trump pursues the strategic goal of weakening Iran and preparing a regime change, reverting Iran into a client state – as it was prior to the 1979 revolution under the Shah.

The second reason for Trump's policy is to strengthen Israel's military power in the Middle East. The Trump regime is deeply influenced by the Zionist power configuration (ZPC) in the US, dubbed 'the Lobby'.

Trump recognizes and submits to Zionist-Israeli dictates because they have unprecedented power in the media, real estate, finance and insurance (FIRE). Trump recognizes the ZPC's power to buy Congressional votes, control both political parties and secure appointments in the executive branch.

Trump is the typical authoritarian: at the throat of the weak, citizens, allies and adversaries and on his knees before the powerful ZPC, the military and Wall Street. Trump's submission to Zionist power reinforces and even dictates his decision to break the peace accord with Iran and his willingness to pressure France, Germany, the UK and Russia to sacrifice billion-dollar trade agreements with Iran and to pursue a policy of pressuring Teheran to accept part of Trump's agenda of unilateral disarmament and isolation. Trump believes he can force the EU multi-nationals to disobey their governments and abide by sanctions.

Reasons for Trump's Trade War with China

Prior to Trump's presidency, especially under President Obama, the US launched a trade war and 'military pivot' to China. Obama proposed the Trans-Pacific Pact to exclude China and directed an air and naval armada to the South China Sea. Obama established a high-powered surveillance system in South Korea and supported war exercises on North Korea's border. Trump's policy deepened and radicalized Obama's policies.

Trump extended Obama's bellicose policy toward North Korea, demanding the de-nuclearization of its defense program. President Kim of North Korea and President Moon of South Korea reached an agreement to open negotiations toward a peace accord ending nearly 60 years of hostility.

However, President Trump joined the conversation on the presumption that North Korea's peace overtures were due to his threats of war and intimidation. He insisted that any peace settlement and end of economic sanctions would only be achieved by unilateral nuclear disarmament, the maintenance of US forces on the peninsula and supervision by US approved inspectors.

Trump's unilateral declaration of a trade war against China accompanied his belief that military threats led to North Korea's "capitulation" – its promise to end its nuclear program.

Trump slapped a trade tariff on over \$100 billion dollars of Chinese exports in order to reduce its trade imbalance by \$200 billion over two years. He demanded China unilaterally end industrial 'espionage', technological 'theft' (all phony accusations) and China's compliance monitored quarterly by the US.

Trump demanded that China not retaliate with tariffs or restrictions or face bigger sanctions.

Trump threatened to respond to any reciprocal tariff by Beijing, with greater tariffs, and restrictions on Chinese goods and services.



Trump's goals seek to convert North Korea into a military satellite encroaching on China's northern border; and a trade war that drives China into an economic crisis.

Trump believes that as China declines as a world economic power, the US will grow and dominate the Asian and world economy.

Trump believes a successful trade war will lead to a successful military war. Trump believes that a submissive China, based on its isolation from the 'dynamic' US market, will enhance Washington's quest for uncontested world domination.

Trump's Ten Erroneous Thesis

Trump's political agenda is deeply flawed!

Breaking the nuclear agreement and imposing harsh sanctions has isolated Trump from his European and Asian allies.

His military intervention will inflame a regional war that would destroy the Saudi oil fields. He will force Iran to pursue a nuclear shield against US-Israeli aggression and lead to a prolonged, costly and ultimately losing war.

Trump's policies will unify all Iranians, liberals and nationalist, and undermine US collaborators.

The entire Muslim world will unify forces and carry the conflict throughout Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Tel Aviv's bombing will lead to counter-attacks in Israel.

Oil prices will skyrocket, financial markets will collapse, industries will go bankrupt.

Trump's sanctions and military aggression against Iran will lead to mutual economic destruction.

Trump's trade war with China will lead to the disruption of the supply chain which sustains the US economy and especially the 500 US multi-nationals who depend on the Chinese economy for exports to the US.

China will increase domestic consumption, diversify its markets and trading partners and reinforce its military alliance with Russia.

China has greater resilience and capacity to overcome short-term disruption and regain its dominant role as a global economic power house.

Wall Street will suffer a catastrophic financial collapse and send the US into a world depression.

Trump's negotiations with North Korea will go nowhere as long as he demands unilateral nuclear disarmament, US military control over the peninsula and political isolation from China.

Kim will insist on the end of sanctions, and a mutual defense treaty with China.

Kim will offer to end nuclear testing but not nuclear weapons. After Trump's reneged on the Iran deal, Kim will recognize that agreements with the US are not trustworthy.

Conclusion

Trump's loud, threatening gestures are a real danger to world peace and justice. But his assumptions about the consequences of his policy are deeply flawed. There is no basis to think his sanctions will topple the Iranian regime; that Israel will survive unscathed from a war with Iran: that an oil war will not undermine the US economy; that Europe will allow its companies to be frozen out of the Iran market.

Trump's trade war with China is dead in the water. He cannot find alternative production sites for US multi-nationals.

He cannot freeze China out of the world market, since they have links with five continents.

Trump cannot dominate North Korea and force it to sacrifice its sovereignty on the basis of empty economic promises to lift sanctions.

Trump is heading for defeats on all counts. But he may take the American people into the nuclear abyss in the process.

Epilogue

Are Trump's threats of war part of a strategy of bluff and bombast designed to intimidate, in order to secure political advantages? Is Trump playing the Nixon-Kissinger 'madman' tactic, in which the Secretary of State tells adversaries to accept his 'reasonable' demands or face the worst from the President? I don't think so.

Nixon unlike Trump was not led by the nose by Israel. Nixon unlike Trump was not led by pro-nuclear war advisers. Nixon in contrast to Trump opened the US to trade with China and signed nuclear reduction agreements with Russia.

Nixon successfully promoted peaceful co-existence.

Trump is a master of defeats.

*

Prof. James Petras is a Research Associate of the Centre for Research on Globalization.

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Prof. James Petras](#), Global Research, 2018

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Prof. James Petras](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca