

Will Trump Use “Human Rights” to Kill the Iran Nukes Deal?

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Global Research, January 08, 2018

[CounterPunch](#) 5 January 2018

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

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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In a matter of days, Donald Trump will have the chance to scuttle the Iranian Nuclear agreement, a transaction that Trump has called “the worst deal ever.” The future of the so called Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or JCPOA depends largely on whether Trump opts to reimpose economic sanctions on Iran or not. If the president does in fact reimpose sanctions, (sometime after January 13) the United States will be in “material noncompliance” with the terms of the nuclear agreement and all bets will be off. That means there are two questions that readers should be asking themselves:

1. Will Trump reimpose sanctions and kill the Obama-era nukes deal?
2. Are the protests in Iran instigated by Washington to provide cover to Trump for scrapping the JCPOA?

Take a look at this brief summary from an article at Politico:

President Donald Trump allowed the Iran nuclear deal to survive through 2017, but the new year will offer him another chance to blow up the agreement — and critics and supporters alike believe he may take it.

By mid-January, the president will face new legal deadlines to choose whether to slap U.S. sanctions back on Tehran. Senior lawmakers and some of Trump’s top national security officials are trying to preserve the agreement. But the deal’s backers fear Trump has grown more willing to reject the counsel of his foreign policy team, as he did with his recent decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel’s capital....

When Trump last publicly addressed the status of the Iran agreement, in mid-October, he indicated his patience had worn thin with what he has called “the worst deal ever,” and demanded that Congress and European countries take action to address what he considers the deal’s weakness.

“[I]n the event we are not able to reach a solution working with Congress and our allies, then the agreement will be terminated,” Trump said in an Oct. 13 speech.” (“How Trump could kill the Iran nuclear deal in January”, Politico)

So there it is. We do not yet know whether Trump is planning to “blow up the deal” or not. Nor do we have a clear idea of how responsible US NGOs or US agents might be in fomenting the demonstrations on the ground. What we do know, however, is that scuttling

the agreement — which took years of deliberation, collaboration and compromise- will be very costly for the United States. Former US Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew explained what the US can expect if it does walk away from JCPOA. Here's an excerpt from an editorial that appeared in the New York Times in 2014.



Lew meeting with President Barack Obama and the Legislative Affairs Director [Rob Nabors](#) (Source: Wikimedia Commons)

...the United States does have tremendous economic influence. But it was not this influence alone that persuaded countries across Europe and Asia to join the current sanction policy, one that required them to make costly sacrifices, curtail their purchases of Iran's oil, and put Iran's foreign reserves in escrow. They joined us because we made the case that Iran's nuclear program was an uncontained threat to global stability and, most important, because we offered a concrete path to address it diplomatically — which we did....Foreign governments will not continue to make costly sacrifices at our demand....

Indeed, they would more likely blame us for walking away from a credible solution to one of the world's greatest security threats, and would continue to re-engage with Iran. Instead of toughening the sanctions, a decision by Congress to unilaterally reject the deal would end a decade of isolation of Iran and put the United States at odds with the rest of the world...

The major importers of Iranian oil — China, India, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Turkey ... will not agree to indefinite economic sacrifices in the name of an illusory better deal. We should think very seriously before threatening to cripple the largest banks and companies in these countries....

We must remember recent history. In 1996, in the absence of any other international support for imposing sanctions on Iran, Congress tried to force the hands of foreign companies, creating secondary sanctions that threatened to penalize them for investing in Iran's energy sector. The idea was to force international oil companies to choose between doing business with Iran or the United States, with the expectation that all would choose us.

This outraged our foreign partners, particularly the European Union, which threatened retaliatory action and referral to the World Trade Organization and passed its own law prohibiting companies from complying. The largest oil companies of Europe and Asia stayed in Iran until, more than a decade later, we built a global consensus around the threat posed by Iran and put forward a realistic diplomatic means of addressing it.

(“The High Price of Rejecting the Iran Deal”, New York Times)

The Obama administration did not sign the Iranian nukes agreement because it wanted to, it signed it because it had to. Iranian negotiators made a number of crucial concessions that not only intensified the ongoing inspections regime, but also agreed that Iran would be treated more harshly (and unfairly) than any other nation that had ever signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

“The agreement subjects Iran to greater restrictions and more intrusive monitoring than any state with nuclear programs.”

Simply put, the US insisted that Iran accept a number of special protocols which in effect treat Iran like a second-class citizen. Iran accepted these terms so the US would stop its relentless economic strangulation which has persisted almost-continuously since 1979.

It is worth noting, that Iran does not have a nuclear weapons program nor is there any evidence that they were trying to develop one. Like Saddam’s fictitious Weapons of Mass Destruction, “Iran’s nukes” are largely a myth created to justify nonstop US-Israeli aggression. Check it out:

It is essential to recognize that Iran does not currently have a nuclear weapons program, nor does it possess a nuclear weapon. On February 26, James Clapper, the director of national intelligence, told the Senate Armed Services Committee that Ayatollah Khomeini, the supreme leader of Iran, ended his country’s nuclear weapons program in 2003 and “as far as we know, he’s not made the decision to go for a nuclear weapon.”

This repeats the “high-confidence” judgement of the U.S. Intelligence Community (IC) that was first made in November 2007.

(Micah Zenko, “Putting Iran’s Nuclear Program in Context”, Council on Foreign Relations)

Iran has no nukes, no nuclear weapons program, and no sinister nuclear project aimed at blowing up Israel or the United States. It’s all 100 percent bunkum conjured up by the same propagandists in the establishment media who concocted the mobile weapons labs, the yellowcake uranium, the aluminum tubes, curveball and the myriad other cockamamie fabrications that preceded the invasion of Iraq.

It’s also worth noting that “Forty-five US military bases encircle Iran, with over 125,000 troops in close proximity” and that both Republican and Democratic presidents have repeatedly expressed their support for regime change in Tehran. Moreover, the vast majority of Senators and Congressmen have frequently expressed their contempt for Iran while supporting covert activities to destabilize the government or punish the people.

Ideally, Trump and his lieutenants would like to replace the Islamic clerics who currently rule Iran, with a puppet like the Shah who privatized oil production, ruled the country with an iron fist, and faithfully followed Washington's diktats to the letter. The Shah's reign of terror lasted a full 40 years during which time his CIA-trained secret police, the SAVAK, rounded up and tortured millions of innocent Iranians who were then systematically subjected to "whipping and beating, electric shocks, extraction of teeth and nails, boiling water pumped into the rectum, heavy weights hung on the testicles, tying the prisoner to a metal table heated to a white heat, inserting a broken bottle into the anus, and rape." This is how the United States brought freedom and democracy to the people of Iran under the Shah.

Is it any wonder why the Iranians are skeptical of Trump's so called "supportive" tweets (such as):

"The people of Iran are finally acting against the brutal and corrupt Iranian regime.....The great Iranian people have been repressed for many years. They are hungry for food and freedom. Along with human rights, the wealth of Iran is being looted. TIME FOR CHANGE!" Donald Trump

Trump's outspoken support for the protestors has many critics believing that Washington might be orchestrating events on the ground, but that doesn't appear to be the case. In an excellent article at the World Socialist Web Site, Keith Jones, explains that the massive demonstrations are reaction to neoliberal policies that have exacerbated inequality while fueling social tensions. "Liberal reforms" and austerity have negatively impacted living standards in Iran just as they have everywhere else they've been implemented. In other words, the social explosion we are seeing unfold in Iran is not a Washington-engineered color revolution, but a the emerging signs of a class war. Here's an excerpt from the WSWS article:

Since Dec. 28, tens of thousands have defied the Islamic Republic's repressive apparatus and taken to the streets in cities and towns across the county. They have done so to voice their anger over food price rises, mass unemployment, gaping social inequality, years of sweeping social spending cuts and a pseudo-democratic political system that is rigged on behalf of the ruling elite and utterly impervious to the needs of working people.

The scope and intensity of this movement and its rapid embrace of slogans challenging the government and the entire autocratic political system have stunned Iranian authorities and western observers alike. Yet, it was preceded by months of worker protests against job cuts and plant closures and unpaid wages and benefits.....

The trigger for this explosion of popular discontent was the government's latest austerity budget. It will further slash income support for ordinary Iranians, raise gas prices by as much as 50 percent, and curtail development spending, while increasing the already huge sums under the control of the Shia clergy...

The claim that the current protests are akin to those mounted by the Green Movement in 2009 is a base slander meant to justify a bigger crime. The Green challenge to the results of the 2009 Iranian presidential election was a long-prepared political operation that followed the script of similar US-orchestrated "color revolutions" in the Ukraine, Georgia, Lebanon and elsewhere. It was aimed at bringing to power those elements of the Iranian elite most eager to reach a quick rapprochement with US and European imperialism. It drew its

popular support almost exclusively from the most privileged layers of the upper middle class, who were mobilized on the basis of neoliberal denunciations of the populist President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad for “squandering” money on the poor....

The current challenge to the Iranian regime is of an entirely different character. It is rooted in the working class, including in smaller industrial cities and district towns; draws its greatest support from young people who face an unemployment rate of 40 percent or more; and is driven by opposition to social inequality and capitalist austerity....The period in which the class struggle could be suppressed is coming to an end.

(“Working class opposition erupts in Iran: A harbinger for the world in 2018””, World Socialist Web Site)

Iran’s protests are not the result of US meddling (although the US does undoubtedly have agents on the ground) Nor is there any real chance of regime change, in fact, from Trump’s point of view, that’s not even the main objective. In our opinion, the Trump administration is looking for a way to terminate the nuclear agreement without abrogating the deal itself. My guess is that the administration plans to use Iran’s crackdown on protestors as a justification for rescinding the nukes deal, thus, providing cover for the allies to join Washington without fear of incurring the attendant penalties.

Trump’s recent tweets, all of which emphasize human rights, suggest the plan is already underway.

“Big protests in Iran. The people are finally getting wise as to how their money and wealth is being stolen and squandered on terrorism. Looks like they will not take it any longer. The USA is watching very closely for human rights violations!” Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) December 31, 2017

Iran is failing at every level despite the terrible deal made with them by the Obama Administration. The great Iranian people have been repressed for many years. They are hungry for food & for freedom. Along with human rights, the wealth of Iran is being looted. TIME FOR CHANGE! Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) January 1, 2018

The people of Iran are finally acting against the brutal and corrupt Iranian regime. All of the money that President Obama so foolishly gave them went into terrorism and into their “pockets.” The people have little food, big inflation and no human rights. The U.S. is watching! Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) January 2, 2018

Iran, the Number One State of Sponsored Terror with numerous violations of Human Rights occurring on an hourly basis, has now closed down the Internet so that peaceful demonstrators cannot communicate. Not good! Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) December 31, 2017

Trump’s sudden interest in human rights is suspicious, but is it really a sign of a plan to kill the nukes deal?

We’ll see.

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