



Are Bibi and Bolton in the Wheel House Now?

Brushing aside the anguished pleas of our NATO allies, President Trump Tuesday contemptuously trashed the Iranian nuclear deal and reimposed sanctions.

Prime Minister Theresa May of Great Britain, President Emmanuel Macron of France and German Chancellor Angela Merkel were put on notice that their ties to Iran are to be severed, or secondary sanctions will be imposed on them.

Driving the point home, Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin ordered Airbus to cancel its \$19 billion contract to sell 100 commercial planes to Iran.

Who is cheering Trump's trashing of the treaty?

The neocons who sought his political extinction in 2016, the royals of the Gulf, Bibi Netanyahu, and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The IRGC had warned Iranians that the Americans were duplicitous.

When Trump finished speaking, Bibi launched strikes on Iranian bases in Syria, and flew to Moscow to persuade Vladimir Putin not to give the Iranians any air defense against Israeli attacks.

Iranian forces responded with 20 missiles fired at the Golan, which ignited a massive Israeli counterstrike Thursday night, a 70-missile attack on Iranian bases in Syria.

We appear to be at the beginning of a new war, and how it ends we know not. But for Bibi and National Security Adviser John Bolton, the end has always been clear — the smashing of Iran and regime change.

Tuesday, Trump warned that Iran is on "a quest for nuclear weapons," and "if we do nothing ... in just a short period of time, the world's worst sponsor of state terror will be on the cusp of acquiring the world's most dangerous weapon."

And where is the evidence for this Bush-like assertion?

If Iran is on a "quest" for nukes, why did 17 U.S. intel agencies, "with high confidence," in 2007 and 2011, say Iran did not even have a nuclear weapons program?

Saddam Hussein could not convince us he had no WMD, because the nonexistent WMD were the pretext, the *casus belli*, for doing what the War Party had already decided to do: invade Iraq.

We were lied into that war. And how did it turn out?

Why has the Foreign Relations committee not called in the heads of the U.S. intelligence agencies and



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asked them flat out: Does Iran have an active nuclear bomb program, or is this a pack of lies to stampede us into another war?

If Iran is on a quest for nukes, let the intel agencies tell us where the work is being done, so we can send inspectors and show the world.

Efforts to pull us back from being dragged into a new war have begun.

The Europeans are begging Iran to abide by the terms of the nuclear deal, even if the Americans do not. But the regime of Hassan Rouhani, who twice defeated Ayatollah-backed candidates, is in trouble.

The nuclear deal and opening to the West were the reasons the children of the Green Movement of 2009 voted for Rouhani. If his difficulties deepen because of reimposed U.S. and Western sanctions, his great achievement, the nuclear deal, will be seen by his people as the failed gamble of a fool who trusted the Americans.

Should Rouhani's regime fall, we may get a Revolutionary Guard regime rather less to the liking of everyone, except for the War Party, which could seize upon that as a pretext for war.

What happens next is difficult to see.

Iran does not want a war with Israel in Syria that it cannot win.

Iran's ally, Hezbollah, which just swept democratic elections in Lebanon, does not want a war with Israel that would bring devastation upon the nation it now leads.

The Russians don't want a war with Israel or the Americans.

But as Putin came to the rescue of a Syria imperiled by ISIS and al-Qaida, to save his ally from a broad insurgency, he is not likely to sit impotently and watch endless air and missile strikes on Syria.

Trump has said U.S. troops will be getting out of Syria. But Bolton and the generals appear to have walked him back.

There are reports we are reinforcing the Kurds in Manbij on the west bank of the Euphrates, though President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has demanded that the Kurds vacate all Syrian border towns with Turkey.

Americans are also reportedly on the border of Yemen, assisting Saudi Arabia in locating the launch sites of the rockets being fired at Riyadh by Houthi rebels in retaliation for the three years of savage Saudi assault on their country.

Meanwhile, the news out of Afghanistan, our point of entry into the Near East wars almost a generation ago, is almost all bad — most of it about terrorist bombings of Afghan troops and civilians.

Is the foreign policy that America Firsters voted for being replaced by the Middle East agenda of Bibi and the neoconservatives? So it would appear.

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