



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on June 25, 2019

Sanctions Imposed, Trump Threatens to Obliterate Iran

[Having canceled](#) a retaliatory strike against Iran after it shot down a U.S. drone, President Trump has apparently listened again to the neocon laptop bombardiers angling to get the United States into yet another unwinnable war in the Middle East.

Now, Trump says, Iran deserves economic sanctions, an act of war, and on Monday he imposed them. Iran responded as expected. Even worse, Trump unleashed three tweets this morning threatening Iran with “obliteration.”



Question: Will Trump, [who ran](#) as an America First non-interventionist, listen to the neocons?

“Mental Retardation”

Trump imposed the sanctions, the [executive order says](#), “in light of the actions of the Government of Iran and Iranian-backed proxies, particularly those taken to destabilize the Middle East, promote international terrorism, and advance Iran’s ballistic missile program, and Iran’s irresponsible and provocative actions in and over international waters, including the targeting of United States military assets and civilian vessels.”

The provocative actions include [two alleged attacks on oil tankers](#), one Norwegian and one Japanese, and last week’s downing of an American drone, which the United States claims was in international waters. Iran says the drone was over its territory.

A top aide to Russian President Vladimir Putin said his nation’s military intelligence also [reported the drone](#) over Iranian air space.

Wherever it was, Trump backed off a plan to attack Iran because it would have caused 150 casualties, which Trump thought a “disproportionate” punishment for downing a pilotless drone. Many believe Fox talker [Tucker Carlson’s commentary influenced Trump](#).

The sanctions will block Iran’s top officials from doing financial business outside the country or from using the international banking system, the [New York Times reported](#). The *Times* called the sanctions “largely symbolic” because “Iranian officials most likely do not keep substantial assets in international banks, if any at all, or use those institutions for transactions, and any additional pressure from the new sanctions is likely to be minimal.”

Still, National Security Adviser John Bolton, the top neocon banging the drums for war in the administration, said the sanctions will soften Iran, modify its behavior, and encourage negotiations with the United States.

Bolton says Trump has held “the door open to real negotiations” with Iran, the [Washington Post reported](#), and “all that Iran needs to do is walk through that door.” A deal with Iran, he said, must “eliminate Iran’s nuclear weapons program, its pursuit of ballistic missile delivery systems, its support for international terrorism and other malign behavior worldwide.”



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But Bolton threatened even more economic pressure, the *Post* reported. “They’ll either get the point or ... we will simply enhance the maximum-pressure campaign further.” That, he said, will “bring Iran to the table.”

Iran replied with the usual overheated rhetoric. The sanctions are “outrageous” and “idiotic,” President Hassan Rouhani said, the [Associated Press reported](#). The White House is “afflicted by mental retardation.”

Iranian officials also called the White House “mentally crippled,” the *Post* reported.

Trump: Iran Is Doomed if They Attack

For his part, Trump doesn’t appear as reluctant to attack Iran as he was when [he called off](#) last week’s planned strike after Iran shot down the \$130 million [U.S. Navy RQ-4A Global Hawk](#).

In three tweets this morning, [Trump threatened](#) to erase Iran from the world map:

Iran leadership doesn’t understand the words “nice” or “compassion,” they never have. Sadly, the thing they do understand is Strength and Power, and the USA is by far the most powerful Military Force in the world, with 1.5 Trillion Dollars invested over the last two years alone..

....The wonderful Iranian people are suffering, and for no reason at all. Their leadership spends all of its money on Terror, and little on anything else. The U.S. has not forgotten Iran’s use of IED’s & EFP’s (bombs), which killed 2000 Americans, and wounded many more...

.... Iran’s very ignorant and insulting statement, put out today, only shows that they do not understand reality. Any attack by Iran on anything American will be met with great and overwhelming force. In some areas, overwhelming will mean obliteration. No more John Kerry & Obama!

Trump’s attitude toward Iran is markedly different than it was in 2013, when [he tweeted](#) a critique of President Barack Hussein Obama’s policy: “Remember that I predicted a long time ago that President Obama will attack Iran because of his inability to negotiate properly-not skilled!”

Question is, again, will Trump negotiate, or start another costly and counterproductive war?

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