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Trump, Iran and Sanctions



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Representatives from the nations that, along with the United States, signed on to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JPOA), are still trying desperately to salvage the agreement, which is on life support since the U.S. pulled out of it. The latest attempt concerns SWIFT, and Iranian access to it. SWIFT, officially the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication, is a secure messaging service that transmits millions of instructions per day to banks and other financial institutions. Among the many sanctions that Trump is re-imposing on November 5, in violation of an international

agreement to which the U.S. is a signatory, one is to prevent these communications to and from Iran.

In the fantasy land in which the U.S. president resides, sanctioning Iran is important. Never mind that millions of people, mostly children, will starve to death by the end of the year in Yemen because Saudi Arabia, with the full support of the U.S., is preventing food from entering the country, and is bombing it (what's one school bus full of children, after all, in the greater scheme of things, whatever on earth that is?). Never mind that 2.5 million people in Palestine are in dire circumstances, because, again with the full support and funding of the U.S., Israel is brutally attempting to squeeze the life out of them. Forget about the fact that there is seething rage in the U.S. because the newly-appointed Supreme Court Justice has accusations of sexual assault in his background, and displayed a most inappropriate temperament when he appeared before a Congressional committee prior to his elevation to the Court.

No, none of this is of any concern; better to worry about Iran, a nation that hasn't invaded another country since 1798, shortly after the birth of that most imperial of nations, the United States.

Iran is just the latest Middle Eastern nation that, according to Trump and most U.S. politicians, must be destroyed, as was Libya, Iraq and Yemen, to please apartheid Israel. It doesn't matter how many people must die, by bullets, bombs or starvation. The unspeakable suffering of countless innocents is of no importance, as long as Israel is pleased, which, when pleased (which is usually) continues the flow of campaign contributions to U.S. members of Congress who sell themselves to the highest bidder. It doesn't matter what lies must be told to the U.S. public (such as non-existent 'weapons of mass destruction' in Iraq, or equally non-existent Syrian chemical attacks). The bombs follow the lies.

Trump has proclaimed more than once that he has accomplished more in two years than any other president. One remembers the reaction at the United Nations when he made that statement; comedians around the world covet that much laughter at their jokes. He seems to have surrounded himself with people who support this fantasy. One cannot help but be reminded of the weavers in fairy tale who convinced the king that they were making for him the most beautiful clothes imaginable, but only intelligent people could see them. Not wanting to appear stupid, the king and all his associates oohed and aahed over the non-existent clothing. Trump, of all people on the planet, believes in his own superior

intelligence, commenting now and then on the size of his brain. Those around him, apparently not wanting to appear stupid themselves, tell him how intelligent he is.

In the fairy tale, the day of reckoning came when the king paraded down the street with great fanfare in his new 'clothes'. A young boy, apparently not old enough to buy into the fallacy of believing what is fashionable, proclaimed "But he isn't wearing anything at all!" Thus crashed to ruin that particular house of cards.

What will it take in the U.S? When will someone point out what everyone (except the MAGA diehards) already knows? The nation is being led by a deluded, demented man-child, whose grasp of reality, let alone foreign policy, is tenuous at best.

It is often said that any president's family should be off-limits to criticism. For minor children, this writer concurs. But we must comment on an astounding remark of the nation's lovely, although apparently mentally-challenged, First Lady. Yes, Melania Trump, who usually knows better than to open her mouth, proclaimed recently that she is probably the most bullied person in the world. Can we stifle a gasp? Can we try to catch our breaths? Certainly, the U.S.'s Dragon Lady is open to criticism (can we forget her visiting children her husband caged along the U.S.-Mexican border, wearing a jacket emblazoned with the words "I really don't care; do you?"). Or her more recent foray into policy and public opinion, when she said that victims of sexual assault should remain silent if they don't have hard evidence?). But is this 'bullying' detrimental to her physical or mental health (the latter already in question anyway: would anyone in their right mind really marry Donald Trump)? Do her peers send her bullying texts that she can't evade? Is she fearful when walking down the street (does Melania ever walk down streets?) that someone will strike her, or mock her? Will her body guards be insufficient to prevent verbal abuse? Does she have any vague idea what real bullying is?

Other members of the First (blended) Family are also not immune to criticism. Daughter Ivanka and her Zionist, racist husband Jared Kushner remain in quasi-official positions in the White House, despite the unfortunate little detail of having no qualifications for such roles whatsoever.

But they, three of the many stooges surrounding the illustrious president, see the beauty of his new clothes. They will not tell him that, like the king's new clothes, his many self-proclaimed accomplishments simply don't exist.

So here we are, in the latter half of 2018, nearly halfway through Trump's first term in office. The U.S. tradition of bombing innocent people hasn't been violated; some Congressional committee or other is still investigating possible Russian interference in the

last presidential election, while ignoring the millions upon millions of dollars that pro-Israel lobbies pour into campaigns to do just that. A possible sex offender has been elevated to the Supreme Court; not surprising since one sits in the White House.

It is said that every cloud has a silver lining, and it's possible that the cloud of the Trump presidency does, indeed, have its upside. U.S. global influence is waning; the country is no longer seen as an honest broker between Palestine and Israel (it never was, and that lie, never well-concealed, has now been unquestionably exposed); it is known that the nation cannot be relied upon to maintain its commitments (see Climate Change Accord; JCPOA), and it has alienated most of its closest and oldest allies. Trump has an 'America First' agenda, and if only he would stick to it, and stop interfering in other nations (Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Venezuela, etc., etc., etc.), the world would be a far more peaceful place.

But no, it seems he has set his deadly sights on Iran; it is to be hoped that someone, anyone, in his administration has the brains and the ability to convince him that any war against Iran would be a global disaster. It may be too much to hope that such a person exists, but it is really all we have to hold on to.