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زبانهای اروپایی

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## **The Iran Deal: Biden and Blinken, Wykan and Blynkin**



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The single worst foreign policy move by Donald Trump was to withdraw the U.S. from the Iran Deal, and to apply secondary sanctions to countries attempting to trade with and invest legally in Iran. I'd rate it worse than any of the following:

- \* the decision to abuse and rip apart would-be immigrant families on the border, disgusting the whole world to say nothing of all Central America;
- \* the decision to maintain U.S. troops illegally in Syria (if only to steal Syrian oil);
- \* the cruise missile attack on Shayrat Airbase, Syria in April 2017 destroying 20 aircraft, and three airstrikes in April 2019 injuring six soldiers, all based on lies about chemical weapons;
- \* the decision to recognize Israeli land-grabs in Syria and Palestine, offending the Arab and broader worlds;
- \* the decision to clamp unprecedented sanctions on Russia (if only to deflect charges of "Russian collusion");

- \* the decision to promote a pretender-regime in Venezuela;
- \* the decision to designate Cuba a “sponsor of terrorism” for no reason;
- \* the decision to declare the Houthi movement “terrorist,” maligning it to prove solidarity with Saudi Arabia, hamper provision of humanitarian aid and insure the deaths of more Yemeni children;
- \* the decision to offend Chinese everywhere by calling COVID19 “the China virus;”
- \* the decision to impose punitive tariffs on China, resulting in Chinese retaliatory tariffs on the U.S., costing U.S. soy farmers \$ 10 billion; etc.

Withdrawal from the Iran Deal was the most egregious departure from Obama precedent, initiated by a president nurturing a pathological hatred for his predecessor, intent on undoing anything considered an Obama achievement. (You get a sense of the magnitude of the mental health issues here when you reflect that Trump actually seems to have fantasized that he would, like Obama, receive the Nobel Peace Prize—virtually as a matter of entitlement—for his several inconsequential meetings with Kim Jung-Un after threatening Korea with annihilation. Trump denounced the Iran Deal not even gripping what it entailed but only knowing that right-wing Republican Christian Zionists hated it, his son-in-law Jared’s family hated it, and he could get applause from his crowds promising to undo all that Obama had done. He truly seems to have thought the mullahs, intimidated by his threats as the people suffer from ongoing sanctions and sabotage, would come to him pleading to negotiate a total surrender that he could claim as further grounds for a Peace Prize. This is what we call “malignant narcissism.”)

Trump’s attack on the Iran Deal was based on his ego, but done in tandem with apartheid-Israel and rogue state Saudi Arabia, whose vile leaders advised him to bomb Iran; he was reportedly on the verge of starting a war (in June 2019 and November 2020) when his more level-headed advisors checked him. (We must always recall that however sickening the Trump years they did not produce another criminal war.) Meantime Trump deeply annoyed the Europeans, such as the Deal’s co-signers Germany, Britain and France, by thwarting major investment projects in the Islamic Republic. These included a factory to produce much needed trucks in Iran by Mercedes-Benz manufacturer Daimler AG.

China and Russia enjoy normal trade relations with Iran, to the extent that they can, but the threat of secondary sanctions hampers Chinese investment. The U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA is a concentrated expression of “American Exceptionalism,” the religious doctrine (ultimately derived from the Chosen People and Promised Land myths of the Bible) that the God of All Creation (having inspired the Founding Fathers and authored the Constitution through the Holy Spirit) has uniquely blessed the United States and bestowed on it the task of imposing moral order on the planet. (Thus—no matter how apparently wrong and evil the war—one must intone “and God bless our troops” in their praise as they obey their orders. This is as much a matter of TV anchors’ convention as a politician’s habit.)

Trump's withdrawal from the deal drove home to U.S. partners the irrationality of the new Trump administration, and also its ugly meanness. And its arrogant assumption that if the U.S. didn't trade with Iran, no nation should—or if willfully inclined to do so, should face the wrath of the U.S. banking system.

### **Blinken In No Hurry to Return to the Deal**

Tony Blinken as new secretary of state has the capacity to set the Deal back on track. He talks of how the U.S. needs to “meet its commitments to its allies”—meaning principally to its NATO allies and to the cause of NATO expansion to throttle Russia and ultimately promote regime change in Moscow. He should be reminded that one such “commitment to allies” was observance of the very rational and positive Iran Deal. The U.S. betrayed that commitment occasioning much inconvenience for Europeans to say nothing of pain for the Iranian people. Now Blinken says the U.S. is “in no hurry” to rejoin the Deal and indeed demands that Iran return to full compliance before the U.S. does so.

This is not progress. This is not improvement. Especially when Blinken states pointedly that the U.S. will consult with its allies before making any change, and these allies are understood to include Israel (led by a thieving, corrupt, racist thug named Netanyahu), and Saudi Arabia (led by a murderous, viciously anti-Shiite, anti-democratic, genocidal Prince Mohammad) both of which seek the destruction of the Islamic Republic. Not because it is oppressive and intolerant (any more so than Israel and Saudi Arabia themselves) but because it is led by Shiites, commands the respect of regional Shiites, opposes Arab absolutist monarchies and Zionist racism, upholds the rights of Palestinians, and resists as best it can U.S. imperialism.

The Islamic Republic is just that: a state governed—in theory by the people themselves—through an elected legislature and president. There are about two dozen legal political parties, including Greens, and five seats in the Majlis reserved for religious minorities (Jews, Zoroastrians, Christians). Competition for office is reserved to candidates approved by a council of imams; Shiite Islam emphasizes religious authority as the premise for political authority so the Iranian republican system is a unique mix of democratic form (including hotly contested elections accompanied by lively press debate) constrained by the mullahs' religious guidance. It's much like the U.S. political process, which while “free” is guided by the high priests of Wall Street empowered to exclude “socialist” candidates from running. (A mullah can curtail a dissident politician's career in Iran; a Donny Deutsch on MSNBC can curtail a Sanders campaign in this country. Neither country is a “democracy” in the sense of one governed by its people.)

In any case the Parliament or Majlis is a powerful decision-making body within a sort of “democracy” as flawed as “our” own, as truncated by capitalist class relations, but allowing for a degree of public debate and the passage of laws. In February 2003, while President George W. Bush and his vice president Dick Cheney were lying their way into the criminal Iraq War, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage inadvertently opined to the Los

Angeles Times that “there’s one dramatic difference between Iran and the other two axes of evil [Iraq and North Korea], and that would be its democracy. [And] you approach a democracy differently.” He took a lot of flack for stating that truth.

### **Iranian Parliament Losing Patience**

But now this Iranian democracy is on track to expel the IAEA inspectors, per decision by the Parliament dominated by conservative clerical parties in January 2020. If the U.S. does not remove its sanctions by next week (Feb. 21) Iran will for its part, through the decision of its elected officials, withdraw far more significantly from the agreement—tired of the delays, insincerity and broken promises, tired of U.S. overt hostility and European impotence in the face of U.S. obstructionism. The elected president, Hassan Rouhani, will be powerless under the Iranian system to countermand the implementation of the law.

Slight digression. In the biblical Book of Daniel—a charming work of Hellenistic fiction set in the sixth century BCE—the Persian King Darius is informed by his high priests that his Jewish advisor Daniel (in the country as a result of the “Babylonian Captivity”) prays to a foreign god and must be fed to the lions as punishment. (There is in fact no non-biblical confirmation for the existence of this Darius, nor for any such Iranian law.) He is moreover told: “It is the law of the Medes and the Persians, it cannot be changed!” (see Daniel, book 6). Fortunately Daniel in the lion’s den survives due to Yahweh’s (God’s) intervention.

The story, like that of Esther (another Bible text authored around the second century BCE, set in exotic Persia where the heroic Jewess queen of Xerxes slaughters all her people’s foes) is pure fiction which, as it is currently exploited, serves Israeli propaganda purposes. (Netanyahu regaled the rapturous U.S. Congress in 2015 with the story of Esther versus Iran without noting that the Persian conquest of Babylonia actually resulted in the return of the Jewish exiles, after the “Babylonian Captivity”—at least for those wanting to return, since many Jews settled down in 6th century BCE Persia. He didn’t mention that the Bible lauds Cyrus the Persian, who liberated the Jews, as a “man of God.” Or that many thousands of the descendants of these early exiled Jews remain in Iran today, guaranteed parliamentary representation by the Iranian Constitution, permitted to run Hebrew schools, kosher stores, and of course about 60 synagogues.)

The biblical text—however dubious as history—points to the Middle Eastern emphasis on law and legalism that dates back to the Code of Hammurabi before the Laws of Moses. The laws of the Persians, like those found on the “Cyrus Cylinder,” are serious. The fatwas of the Iranian mullahs are serious, including the one forbidding production, possession, or use of nuclear weapons. The Iranian signature on the Iran Deal was serious. So is its threat to withdraw from the deal if the U.S. does not come back, and Europe remains unable or unwilling to challenge the capricious, mendacious U.S.A.

Blinken and the tired old boss he serves could avert this Iranian move by taking all practical means possible to allow the deal’s implementation as originally conceived. Instead it looks

like they'll dither. Meanwhile Biden tells the Saudis to halt "offensive operations" in Yemen (whatever that means) but also assures the murder-kingdom of defense against Iran! Iran, with 1/10 the Saudi military budget! And nary a mention of the refined execution and dismantlement (via bone saw) of a Saudi critical journalist in a consulate in Turkey at the prince's order. The clear message is that the Saudis, however dastardly their leadership, are friends to defend, while Iran can be provoked and insulted indefinitely with no blowback on its tormentors.

### **Biden Means Back to Normal**

The new administration will listen more to Zionofascists and Islamofascists about Iran than to Mercedes-Benz or German pistachio consumers. Its plan remains regime change, in Iran, Syria, and Yemen: maintenance of the status quo (and low thousands of unwanted U.S. troops) in Afghanistan and Iraq; and support for Israeli regional objectives and diplomatic cover for relentless provocations of the Palestinian people under occupation. Towards such ends it promotes its skewed view of an Iran out to dominate the Middle East (through the Syrian secular Baathist regime, the Shiite Hizbollah party in Lebanon, and the Houthis of Yemen) by confronting such bastions of the U.S.-headed "Free World" as Israel and Saudi Arabia for no good reason.

The Biden administration will not denounce Saudi-led anti-Shiite violence from Syria to Bahrain to Yemen, or the plight of the 20% of Saudis who as Shiites suffer persecution in the Wahhabi Sunni-dominated kingdom. That's not allowed under any administration. But it will double down on criticism for Iran, for withdrawing from the Deal! And cherishing ties with the only large Shiite-plurality Arab state—neighboring Iraq, with which it shares a 990 mile border—"interfering" in the U.S. efforts to interfere in a country 8000 miles away. The U.S. State Department continues to deplore the Iraqi Shiite militias that played a crucial role in defeating ISIL (that savage thing inflicted on Iraq by the U.S. invasion) rather than waiting for the U.S. to crush the child-beheading monsters before whom the U.S.-trained state forces had buckled.

Recall how proud Biden is about his late boy Beau! That's the major in the Delaware Army National Guard who "served" in Iraq from Sept. 2008 to Sept. 2009. He volunteered to serve in the war promoted so forcefully by his father, while it was still Bush's war-based-on-lies. He was allowed to travel to Washington DC in Jan. 2009 to attend his father's inauguration as vice president. He thinks of Beau when he says—as he always does—"God bless our troops."

This is another way of saying, "God bless U.S. imperialism, and God bless our wars, wherever they are, for whatever reason, no matter how many they kill. Love the killers, praise them, persecute the whistle-blowers who expose the evil. Never ever dare to compare them to Wehrmacht troops in Russia, Soviet troops in Afghanistan, Napoleon's troops in Spain because American troops are special you see and do not commit war crimes (or if they do

should be patriotically protected from exposure and shielded from any subjection to international legal bodies like the International Court in the Hague).

It was not until Nov. 2005 that Biden publicly regretted his 2002 war vote, and even then expressed no moral revulsion at a war-based-on-lies but merely bemoaned a “strategic mistake.” And he was proud of his boy for going and fighting in that immoral war.

The current president comes advertised as a devout Roman Catholic, famously “decent” and “compassionate” in an age crying out for such. His handlers during the campaign actively discouraged discussion of his actual (indecent, uncompassionate) record, in favor of his not-being-Trump credential. But now he is president, versus the Evil Fascist One, and must show some hints of palpable goodness at variance with his predecessor.

### **Wynken, Blynken, and Nod**

He could begin by treating Iran reasonably and decently, and observing those famous “U.S. commitments to its allies.” These would include a commitment to observing a joint agreement endorsed by the UNSC; ending the torture of the medicine-denied people of Iran, which is in no one’s interest (save perhaps the odd couple of MbS and Bibi); and supporting the (capitalist) ideal of free trade. If Wynken, Blynken and Nod sail off in their wooden shoe through a river of light into a sea of dew, and the old moon asks what they wish—and they say fish, thinking they can catch herring in nets of gold and silver, and that a wooden shoe will come down from the sky to take them home—well then they might just be confused.

I’m sorry; childhood verses momentarily came to mind, as they sometimes do to weed smokers confined to their homes. I meant to say: if Biden, Blinken and Sullivan think they can sail into the Persian Gulf and intimidate the Iranians, wave their power at them, trap them in their nets, get their “improved” deal leveraging Trump’s crime of withdrawal, and get out of there happy—they’re confused.

Blinken is an unconstructed Cold Warrior whose one-time anticommunism became jingoistic Russophobia as Russia began to protest NATO expansion. Meanwhile he threw himself aboard the neocons’ Middle East transformation project, as it entered Phase II under Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, destroying Libya, consuming Yemen, nearly annihilating Syria as aid and military contracts flowed to Israel and Riyadh. He is a traditional reactionary “liberal interventionist” who cannot understand that the U.S.’s rhetoric about human rights blah-blah-blah that inevitably accompanies its aggressions holds no water in the world anymore.

Just as young people now see police clearly, as instruments of systemic racism, they’re unlikely to continue to buy the line that U.S. military intervention anywhere in the world is anything other than an exercise in imposing U.S. white racist power on other countries. This is true whether the countries are inhabited by brown people (in Afghanistan or Iraq) or lily-white people like the Serbs and other Slavs. Traditional bipartisan ideology celebrates U.S.



wars as necessary statements of American military and moral power; it is as bankrupt as the doctrine of white supremacy.

U.S. failure to rectify the damage done when the Moron President withdrew from the Deal (and when his idiot Secretary of Empire preposterously demanded that Iran—to entice the U.S. to return to the deal—must transform its foreign policy to align itself with Israel), by an expeditious unconditional return, could lead to war. In that case Biden will ask, “Why didn’t Iran reach out to us when they could?” as though Wynken, Blyken and Nod had ever offered Iran anything to reach out to.

The State Department has nets of gold and silver, that’s for sure. And it’s always seeking an optimal catch, at others’ expense. Its giant wooden shoes zoom down from the sky to sweep the fishers away when the time comes. Biden and Blinken, Wyken and Blyken, fake figures from a dead world, may call out to the moon to grant their wishes but I think as Nawruz (the Persian lunar new year) approaches they will be disappointed and then get nasty.

Watch the timing of the delayed Netanyahu call. Then the delayed call to King Salman (with MbS standing by). Then the announcement that “after consultation with our allies” (including Macron, who showed his character by wavering on France’s commitment—when he was in his Trump-ass-kissing phase—and suggesting the deal needs to be expanded to address the missiles issue) the U.S. will demand Iran meet a list of demands before Biden will seriously re-engage. Then the formal “Fuck you” from Tehran, the Israeli-Saudi cheering at continuance of the status quo, acute European Union disappointment, dismay in oil importers Japan and South Korea, further U.S. isolation, more exposure of the dishonest workings of U.S. imperialism to people here and now in this country disgusted by the system and its choices.

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