
Will Donald Trump kick the can over Iran nuclear deal?

08/05/2018



US President Donald Trump has used a bombastic approach to gain the attention of European nations, using them as leverage as he bids to alter the Iran nuclear deal, former Pentagon official Michel Maloof tells RT.

Despite international pressure, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani [says](#) his country plans to stay in the agreement even if the United States backs out – as long as the other members agree to honor the agreement.

Meanwhile, Trump has left the world waiting after firing off a [tweet](#) saying he would decide on the fate of the Iran nuclear deal on Tuesday.

British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson [paid](#) a last-minute visit to Washington in a bid to sway his thinking on the matter. Johnson met with newly-appointed Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and appeared on Trump's favorite TV show Fox & Friends.

RT discussed the current situation over Iran with former Pentagon official Maloof.

RT: *UK Foreign Minister Boris Johnson appeared on American news programs saying that Trump should not “junk the deal” but rather fix those issues that he doesn't agree with in order to keep Iran in line and not to start an arms race in the Middle East. Do you see Mr Johnson's request as an accurate characterization of the problems here?*

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Michael Maloof: I think he does reflect the European point of view. And I think, on the other hand, you have President Trump who has shown a bombast initially, and then he seeks to leverage other countries, to do what he wants them to do in order to gain control. He has the attention of the Europeans, that's for sure. And I think that the Europeans all of a sudden say, "Yeah, the deal is not perfect. We will work on it." The question is will Iran go along with it? And so far they don't appear to be forthcoming with any fixes, whatsoever, at this point. And that has to be weighed into the equation when Trump makes his decision...

RT: *President Rouhani said: "What we want for the deal is that it's preserved and guaranteed by the non-Americans. And then the US pullout will be okay. We would get rid of the mischievous element that always causes trouble. And if what we want is not fulfilled, we have our own legal and lawful path and have our own plans." He said they have their own plans, they're going to go through with it anyway, we don't know what those are. But we do know that a little over a week ago the French President Emmanuel Macron was in the US, Angela Merkel was in the US. They paid a visit to the White House. We know that the Iran nuclear deal was a major topic to be discussed when they were in the US. It's not a secret that all the other five world powers want the US to stay: Great Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China. They all say that even if the US withdraws, they are still going to move forward with it. Rouhani did say he has a plan...*

MM: His plan is to stay with the Europeans, at this point. That is what he has announced so far and so has Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif. It really benefits them to do that because any sanctions imposed, if all the other countries dropped out, it would severely cripple an already serious economic problem that Iran has. They don't want to do that. I think Iran is playing both sides at this point. They know that if Trump does something economically, it could really affect them – particularly if he imposes sanctions should he drop out. We don't know yet. My personal view is, he is going to kick the can, give the Europeans another three-months to try to improve the existing arrangement, although he is under severe pressure from the neocons to abandon it.

There is a lot of pressure on Trump to make a decision one way or another. Boris Johnson went there to try to speak to him and maybe talk some sense into him so he doesn't pull out of the deal... Trump is being pressured by Benjamin Netanyahu and the hawks in the White House such as John Bolton and Mike Pompeo to push the state forward, to pull out of the deal. Essentially, these war hawks just want to start a war somewhere because it is what these people thrive on –
political analyst Shabbir Hassanaly

RT: *Trump tweeted that he is going to make a major announcement about Iran Tuesday afternoon, so I guess we have to see what he is going to say there. But you know what else he [tweeted](#) about was former Secretary of State John Kerry. And he is saying that he has allegedly been meddling with the deal that was brokered under Kerry's watch and Obama's watch. President Trump is calling this "shadow diplomacy," blasting Kerry on Twitter. What do you make of this ex-statesman still communicating with Iranian officials?*

MM: It is not unusual for former secretaries of state to continue relationships, to talk to their foreign counterparts. There's nothing wrong with it. He is not trying to change anything per se, to come under the purview of the so-called Logan Act which has never been violated by anybody. From Kerry's standpoint, he is trying to preserve what he has worked so hard to accomplish. Even though it's limited in scope.

France has tried, Germany has tried, no one seems to get through to Trump except Netanyahu and the war hawks...Now, they will be pushing harder and harder to get a war with Iran. With the deal dead, there is going to be a lot more warmongering, you'll have accusations of WMD's like we had in 2002-2003 in the run up to Iraq – political analyst Shabbir Hassanaly

RT: *You don't see this as a taboo move given that he's not a part of the administration?*

MM: No, it's really not. You've seen (Madeleine) Albright when she was a former secretary of state, she was involved in talking to counterparts to try to maintain a certain amount of diplomacy. The question is will Trump go along with any of this? That is the big question.
