



America's Deal-Making & The Trump Factor



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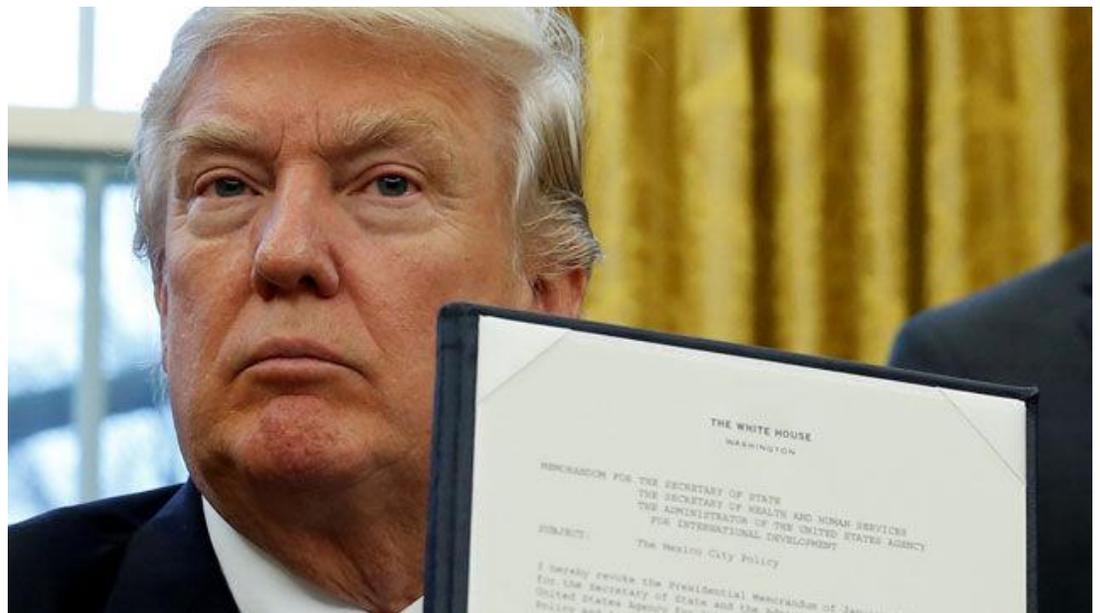
When America becomes insincere and unethical, the World becomes a more dangerous place. For decades now, certainly since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States has been the de-facto and undisputed 'Super Power' of the World, and hence the self-professed global policeman. As the global policeman, just as in real policing, if the police become self-serving and untrustworthy, the people stop believing that their safety lies with the police. In America's case, there are many instances that America acted in its interest in a manner that would hardly qualify it as the most ethical, upstanding nation. All countries act that way at times, some even criminally, but in America's case as the undisputed 'Super Power', and the self-professed global policeman, it behooves America to be as ethical as possible to engender the trust of other peoples and countries. Otherwise the risk quotient rises rather dramatically.

Trump has repeated often (*as often as he can squeeze it in*) that under him it's going to be 'America First' as the Administration's primary policy. He said that America had no need to be the global policeman, protector of allies, or the leader in Global Trade, but be the winner in every bi-lateral trade deal. In light of that improbable model, he has slammed every Agreement made by all previous Administrations, including the Free Trade Agreement between the U.S., Mexico and Canada (*now known as NAFTA*), but started by President Ronald Reagan as Free Trade Agreements, pushed forward by George H. Bush, and completed by Bill Clinton as NAFTA; all the while the Free Trade Agreements were always backed by more Republican Conservatives than Liberals, even under Clinton.

In Trump's easily accessed 'facts be damned' mind, he has labeled every Agreement the U.S. has entered into as 'the worst ever' he's ever seen. As if he actually looked at any of them, let alone studied or understood them, including the more recent ones – the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), the Paris Climate Change Accord, and the Nuclear Agreement with Iran.

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Trump pulls U.S. out of TPP

He has backed America out of TPP and the Paris Accord, and that has already isolated America globally and put-up-for-grabs its global leadership position, but even more seriously, Trump is now itching to break the Nuclear Deal with Iran, in spite of the fact that Iran has consistently kept its side of the bargain. And that is where the problem lies.

If America breaks the Iran Deal, to which *five other countries plus the EU are signatories*, because of its current Administration's whim, then America's credibility to make and keep Agreements, bi-lateral or multi-lateral, will seriously be called into question internationally. Why would anyone want to sign an Agreement with America when it can break it at will, or at the whim of some nut-job of a President, or under the pressure of some fanatical American ideologues. Trump always talks about the Iran Nuclear Agreement as if it's a bi-lateral agreement, just between the two countries, the United States and Iran. But it's not - *the Iran Agreement is between SEVEN countries, and the EU.*

The Agreement regarding Iran's nuclear program is between the *five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, namely, Great Britain, France, Russia, China, the United States - and - Germany and the European Union - and Iran.* It is not just America's to nullify.

But if Trump decides to pull America out of the Agreement, even though Iran has kept to all the requirements of it, because of Trump's need to look tough to his base, or from the pressure of Israel, or from the Sunni Arab States, then once again its closest allies, Britain, France, Germany and the EU - and its competitors Russia and China - also become the aggrieved parties, as they were part of the negotiations, the agreements, and the signing.

Sometimes one has to wonder if Trump actually understands this, or has nobody bothered to tell him. Additionally there would be other complications.

Russia and China are not only the negotiators and signatories to the Iran Deal, but they are also Iran's allies. In particular, Russia is a partner with Iran in the defense of Bashar al-Assad of Syria. Trump, trying to damage Iran because of his core base or the fanatical conservative Republicans, or Israel, or the Saudi led coalition of Sunni States, or a combination of all those factors, still pits Trump and America directly against Russia and Putin, and we know how that ends – in a stalemate at best, and/or with Trump fawning in abject apologies to Vladimir Putin.

As for Iran, it will of course want to retaliate, and that would make the World a more dangerous place.

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And then there is the case of North Korea.

The certain possession of nuclear weapons, and the almost certain possession of chemical and biological weapons, and the will to use them in any war with the U.S. and its allies, makes the much smaller North Korea far more dangerous and prickly an adversary than Iran. Plus it has the physical backing of its long standing supporter, China, which makes any possible military move on North Korea that much more risky and difficult.

North Korea's 50 plus year old nuclear program was aided and abetted by some in Europe, and by Russia, Pakistan and China at a minimum, with perhaps Russia, China and Pakistan playing the more crucial and direct nuclear technology and know-how role, that allowed the successful development and accumulation of its nuclear arsenal.

Over the past decades, since the end of the 'Korean War', North Korea is estimated to have designed and built up to about 30 nuclear war heads, and has been working actively on their delivery systems, and hence the frantic missile testing of the recent past. The successful development and deployment of an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) with the ability to carry a nuclear warhead has been worrying the United States and its allies, and North Korea's close proximity 'enemies', South Korea and Japan.

Plus it is suspected, with a fairly high degree of certainty, that North Korea probably processes chemical and biological weapons that it will not hesitate in using if attacked by the U.S. Every American Administration since the Armistice, that stopped the Korean War, has found North Korea to be increasingly problematic, and yet increasingly dangerous to try and stop. That is why upon Trump's inquires as to possible U.S. military options, Secretary of Defense, James 'Mad Dog' Mattis, categorized a war with North Korea as potentially 'catastrophic', and nothing like what we have experienced till now.

Additionally, North Korea's determined and subsequently successful pursuit of its nuclear program that allowed it to construct multiple war heads and possible delivery systems, that dissuade major powers like the United States from attacking it, sends the message to other non-nuclear countries around the World, that the possession of nuclear weapons is an obvious highly effective military deterrent in this World.

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Iran, even though cleared by Israeli Intelligence, Mossad, and the U.S. CIA, for years, of not having a nuclear weapon and not seriously pursuing one, is still leaned-on and threatened consistently by both Israel and the United States, even when it keeps all the terms of the signed Nuclear Agreement. Israel and America, of course, themselves possess hundreds of nuclear weapons, as do most of their major allies and enemies, but more sanctions are proposed against Iran by the U.S. for not keeping to 'the Spirit of the Agreement'.

This piece is not about favoring Iran, but about treating all countries with some degree of fairness, otherwise it's back to the laws of the jungle, and then there is no usefulness in bothering to negotiate any type of agreements whatsoever, be they for trade or for anything else, including nuclear agreements. Obviously the same terms and conditions do not apply fairly to all countries, regardless of what they do, and that creates a credibility problem when it comes to the United States as it picks and chooses which agreements to keep and for how long, and which to break, and when. The election of Donald Trump as the most inconsistent President, in keeping any kind of word, except when it comes to Russia, has greatly exacerbated the problem, where even its closest allies in Europe are concerned that the U.S. cannot be relied any longer on to keep its word. And that is directly due to the additional Trump factor.

