

Unmasked: Trump vows Carnage for new 'axis of evil'

by Pepe Escobar via james - Asia Times *Thursday, Sep 21 2017, 8:12am*
international / prose / post

North Korea, Iran, Venezuela are targets in "compassionate" America's war on the "wicked few." It's almost as though Washington felt its hegemony threatened



This was no “deeply philosophical address”. And hardly a show of “principled realism” - as spun by the White House. President Trump at the UN was “American carnage,” to borrow a phrase previously deployed by his nativist speechwriter Stephen Miller.

One should allow the enormity of what just happened to sink in, slowly. The president of the United States, facing the bloated bureaucracy that passes for the “international community,” threatened to “wipe off the map” the whole of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (25 million people). And may however many millions of South Koreans who perish as collateral damage be damned.

Multiple attempts have been made to connect Trump’s threats to the [madman theory](#) cooked up by “Tricky Dicky” Nixon in cahoots with Henry Kissinger, according to which the USSR must always be under the impression the then-US president was crazy enough to, literally, go nuclear. But the DPRK will not be much impressed with this madman remix.

That leaves, on the table, a way more terrifying upgrade of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Trump repeatedly invoked Truman in his speech). Frantic gaming will now be in effect in [both Moscow and Beijing](#): Russia and China have their own stability/connectivity strategy under development to contain Pyongyang.

The Trump Doctrine has finally been announced and a new axis of evil delineated. The winners are North Korea, Iran and Venezuela. Syria under Assad is a sort of mini-evil, and so is Cuba. Crucially, Ukraine and the South China Sea only got a fleeting mention from Trump, with no blunt accusations against Russia and China. That may reflect at least some degree of realpolitik; without “RC” - the Russia-China strategic partnership at the heart of the BRICS bloc and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) - there’s no possible solution to the Korean Peninsula stand-off.

In this epic battle of the “righteous many” against the “wicked few,” with the US described as a

“compassionate nation” that wants “harmony and friendship, not conflict and strife,” it’s a bit of a stretch to have Islamic State – portrayed as being not remotely as “evil” as North Korea or Iran – get only a few paragraphs.

The art of unraveling a deal

According to the Trump Doctrine, Iran is “an economically depleted rogue state whose chief exports are violence, bloodshed and chaos,” a “murderous regime” profiting from a nuclear deal that is “an embarrassment to the United States.”

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif tweeted: “Trump’s ignorant hate speech belongs in medieval times – not the 21st century UN – unworthy of a reply.” Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov once again stressed full support for the nuclear deal ahead of a P5+1 ministers’ meeting scheduled for Wednesday, when Zarif was due to be seated at the same table as US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson. Under review: compliance with the deal. Tillerson is the only one who wants a renegotiation.

Iran’s President Hassan Rouhani has, in fact, developed an [unassailable argument](#) on the nuclear negotiations. He says the deal – which the P5+1 and the IAEA all agree is working – could be used as a model elsewhere. German chancellor Angela Merkel concurs. But, Rouhani says, if the US suddenly decides to unilaterally pull out, how could the North Koreans possibly be convinced it’s worth their while to sit down to negotiate anything with the Americans?

What the Trump Doctrine is aiming at is, in fact, a favourite old neo-con play, reverting back to the dynamics of the Dick Cheney-driven Washington-Tehran Cold War years.

This script runs as follows: Iran must be isolated (by the West, only now that won’t fly with the Europeans); Iran is “destabilizing” the Middle East (Saudi Arabia, the ideological foundry of all strands of Salafi-jihadism, gets a free pass); and Iran, because it’s developing ballistic that could – allegedly – carry nuclear warheads, is the new North Korea.

That lays the groundwork for Trump to decertify the deal on October 15. Such a dangerous geopolitical outcome would then pit Washington, Tel Aviv, Riyadh and Abu Dhabi against Tehran, Moscow and Beijing, with European capitals non-aligned. That’s hardly compatible with a “compassionate nation” which wants “harmony and friendship, not conflict and strife.”

Afghanistan comes to South America

The Trump Doctrine, as enounced, privileges the absolute sovereignty of the nation-state. But then there are those pesky “rogue regimes” which must be, well, regime-changed. Enter Venezuela, now on “the brink of total collapse,” and run by a “dictator”; thus, America “cannot stand by and watch.”

No standing by, indeed. On Monday, Trump had dinner in New York with the presidents of Colombia, Peru and Brazil (the last indicted by the country’s Attorney General as the leader of a criminal organization and enjoying an inverted Kim dynasty rating of 95% unpopularity). On the menu: regime change in Venezuela.

Venezuelan “dictator” Maduro happens to be supported by Moscow and, most crucially, Beijing, which buys oil and has invested widely in infrastructure in the country with Brazilian construction giant Odebrecht crippled by the [Car Wash investigation](#).

The stakes in Venezuela are extremely high. In early November, Brazilian and American forces will be deployed in a joint military exercise in the Amazon rainforest, at the Tri-Border between Peru, Brazil and Colombia. Call it a rehearsal for regime change in Venezuela. South America could well turn into the new Afghanistan, a consequence that flows from Trump's assertion that "major portions of the world are in conflict and some, in fact, are going to hell."

For all the lofty spin about "sovereignty", the new axis of evil is all about, once again, regime change.

Russia-China aim to defuse the nuclear stand-off, then seduce North Korea into sharing in the interpenetration of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Eurasia Economic Union (EAEU), via a new Trans-Korea Railway and investments in DPRK ports. The name of the game is Eurasian integration.

Iran is a key node of BRI. It's also a future full member of the SCO, it's connected - via the North-South Transport Corridor - with India and Russia, and is a possible future supplier of natural gas to Europe. The name of the game, once again, is Eurasian integration.

Venezuela, meanwhile, holds the largest unexplored oil reserves on the planet, and is targeted by Beijing as a sort of advanced BRI node in South America.

The Trump Doctrine introduces a new set of problems for Russia-China. Putin and Xi do dream of reenacting a balance of power similar to that of the Concert of Europe, which lasted from 1815 (after Napoleon's defeat) until the brink of World War I in 1914. That's when Britain, Austria, Russia and Prussia decided that no European nation should be able to emulate the hegemony of France under Napoleon. In sitting as judge and executioner, Trump's "compassionate" America certainly seems intent on echoing such hegemony.

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