

Trump's Global Political and Trade Gaffes

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Trump's gaffes are piling up, all within 18 months of his presidency. The tweets are coming at breakneck speeds causing mass confusion.

Trump scrapped the Paris climate accord, then pulled out of TPP (Trans Pacific Partnership) trade agreement, tore JCPOA P5+1 with Iran to shreds, humiliated EU leaders specifically close allies Macron of France and Merkel of Germany, keeps hitting snags with Mexico and Canada over NAFTA and recently humiliated Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at the G7 in Quebec, slapped trade tariffs on America's closest allies Canada and EU citing [national security section 232](#) (factors, to determine whether steel and aluminum imports threaten American economic security and military preparedness).

Next Trump with support from trade hawks **Peter Navarro**, **Steve Mnuchin** and **Wilbur Ross** started trade spats with China. Then he met his adversary **Kim Jong Un** of N. Korea in Singapore on July 12, 2018 and did an about turn lauding praises on him with claim that N. Korea has agreed to complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization (CVID). Would the "Rocket Man" agree to such a deal without China blessing it? China will not bless it.

Trump's **Secretary of State Mike Pompeo** met N. Korea's **Kim Yong Chol**, former intelligence chief on July 6. The N. Korean Foreign Ministry said in a statement that

"the U.S. betrayed the spirit of last month's summit between Trump and Kim by making unilateral and gangster-like demands on North Korea for CVID" and furthermore "the U.S. side did not offer constructive measures that would help build trust based on the spirit of the leaders' summit".

In sharp contrast Pompeo called the meeting with Chol as productive. After scrapping the JCPOA, China, N. Korea or any other country will have no reason to trust Trump and his team of "political and trade" gangsters.

Before the summit with Putin on July 16 in Helsinki, Trump will be meeting with British PM Theresa May and the Queen on July 12 outside London to avoid protests. Local councillors from the opposition Labour Party in west Oxfordshire near Woodstock also wrote in an open letter to Trump that they object to his visit to Blenheim Palace, principal residence of the Dukes of Marlborough. They wrote that "Winston Churchill's finest hour was to fight all the things you stand for: hate, bigotry, racism and fear."

Trump is also scheduled to meet leaders of NATO countries in Brussels to chastise them because they're not contributing enough for the US to protect them from Russia with the

key punch in the face expected to **Angela Merkel** of Germany. Only after the UK and NATO visits, Trump will meet Putin (who in sharp contrast is a master of diplomacy) of Russia on July 16 to either tell him he has reserved a place in hell for him or one in heaven. Of course that depends on Putin's behaviour. One news op put out that it is truly an enigma why Trump would meet Putin after UK and NATO visits.

Everyone has all the correct answers barring Trump's alternate right American camp. The best comes from an exceptionally interesting [opinion on CNN by Jeffrey Sachs](#), professor and director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University. In his words

"Donald Trump is really a Manchurian Candidate (reference to the 1959 political thriller book by Richard Condon) a stooge of some foreign potentate".

A high likelihood of the foreign power is Israel based on the fact that it has been Netanyahu who suffers nightmares of Iran's successful political influence in the region and who also convinced Trump to tear up the JCPOA. It was also Netanyahu who goaded Trump to move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Maybe Putin is privy to incriminating information about Trump but that is part of US **Special Prosecutor Robert Mueller's** investigation of Trump's collusion with Putin to influence the presidential elections and what else may come out of it should be no surprise.



President Donald Trump jokes with French President Emmanuel Macron about their prior hand shake
(Source: Oriental Review)

Jeffery Sachs then goes on in his opinion that

"The US has probably never before had a delusional President, one who speaks gibberish, insults those around him including his closest associates, and baffles the world. By instinct, we strive to make sense of Trump's nonsense, implicitly assuming some hidden strategy."

Sachs is correct there is no hidden strategy as he is not a strategist.

Another gaffe is one in which Trump tweeted that his close ally Saudi Arabia has agreed to ramp up crude oil pumping to bring the price of crude down but then he comes across as the bully that EU and other countries should stop buying Iran oil or he will slap punishing sanctions on them. Many of the countries under the threat of sanctions are complying with the exception of Turkey and China. The net effect is that that crude oil prices keep heading north.

Probably the biggest blunder (different from a gaffe) about to be implemented is the highest likelihood of a war on Iran following its economic strangulation. The five diehard Iran hawks besides Trump himself are his handpicked **National Security Advisor John Bolton, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Israeli PM Netanyahu, UN Ambassador Nikki Haley** and not forgetting the team of duo Arab leaders lumped in as one hawk with two wings- the **Mohammed bins Salman and Zayed** (MbS and MbZ). The military situation with Iran requires some explanation from the regional geopolitical aspect and that it is neither a weak Arab country nor tribally splintered nor easily exploited.

Based on Iran's website president.ir, Reuters reported on July 3 that President Rouhani appeared to threaten disrupting oil shipments from neighbouring countries if Washington presses ahead with its goal of forcing all countries to stop buying Iranian oil or as retaliation for any hostile U.S. action against Iran. Rouhani stated

"The Americans have claimed they want to completely stop Iran's oil exports. They don't understand the meaning of this statement, because it has no meaning for Iranian oil not to be exported, while the region's oil is exported."

Iran has a geographical advantage of being able to block the narrow Strait of Hormuz, a critical choke point for nearly 18-22 MMBOPD. Moreover Bab al Mandab ("gate of tears", a strategic link between the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean through Suez Canal) is another maritime choke point between western Yemen and eastern Djibouti through which another 4-5 MMBOPD passes. Iran has influence with the Yemeni Houthis while MbS and MbZ are trapped in Yemen trying to win a war that just cannot be won. Iran, Russia and Hezbollah made that clear to US in Syria. So Iran has full control of Hormuz and a good collateral grip on Mandab. Djibouti is another hot point and home to overseas military and naval bases by the US, China and Japan.

Given all these facts specifically Trump's hawkish and alt-right attitudes, Netanyahu's fear of Iran, the oil factor, Iran's growing influence in Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon and Syria, the threats of trade and military sanctions against China and Russia, the world is sitting on the precipice of a major conflict with one man's finger on the trigger to make America First.

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