

Trump`s security strategy and the middle east

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Abstract:

The United States 2016 election and Donald Trumps rise to power involved significant changes in Americans foreign policy, as well as, domestic policy. The Trump administration embarked on a new security strategy which revealed considerable change in Americans approach toward complicated problems in the middle East, problems such as the Palestine Israeli conflict, Iran`s nuclear deal, Syrian interior war and the Saudi Iran hostility. This article deals with these changes in Americans Middle Eastern policy and their implication for this troubled region. The article begins with a look to previous grand security strategy of the United States and the Trump administration revises it, and how these alterations relates to the conservative republican approach towards world order, as well as, Americans hegemony on that order. As will be argued the conservative internationalism stress on America primacy over word, as well as, over other states and peoples destination. In the Middle East this revealed itself most importantly in the trump administration decision to move Americans embassy to the Quds (Jerusalem).

Key Words: conservative internationalism; offshore- balancing; Iran unclear deal; Palestine; Saudi–Iran relation.

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Introduction

The election of president Trump has been a crucial event for the liberal international order which essentially has been created by the United States after World War II. Apart from many criticisms that can be leveled at the United States leadership of the order especially its claim to promoting democracy and human rights, it has been factually established under American hegemony and enjoyed UN operation logic which was accepted widely in the western world. Now the Trump administration advocates an economic nationalism that threatens to reverse globalization (Dombrowski 2018, 1013-69). Trump argues "It's possible that we are going to have let NATO go, we are paying and nobody else is ready paying... you feel like the Jerk." (Stokes, Doug 2018, pp.133-150).

No doubt the United States had to pay a costly global regime. Now Trump raises questions about its utility hinting to cost-benefit analysis. While system maintenance costs are rising and the United States is in the throes of a slow relative decline this question does not seem meaningless, at least from a merchantilistic point of view.

However, it is not difficult to argue that if Trump does not know no doubt his advisers and key officials know that this international order has been the main source of the United States' wealth and prosperity. The United States, as Doug Stokes remarks "remain a structurally advantaged hegemon in a number of very important areas. These include the continued use of the Dollar as a global reserve currency. The global security regimes in which it predominates, provide it with leverage over other states geopolitical and economic choices, and the still overwhelming command capacity of the American economy, most notably in its continued preponderance in global foreign direct investment" (Stokes 2018 pp.133-150). These are precisely the same levers now the United States employs to enforce Iran to renegotiate the JCPOA. As such, American postwar global grand strategy of deep engagement continues to make sense.

A reversal of American postwar grand strategy would undermine not only this potential leverage, but also the world economic order, which centers on America. Then why the Trump administration is dissatisfied with this international order? The answer is, as will be argued, that the

Trump administration seeks its conservative internationalism, an order which it deems to minimize some current losses impairing the United States and maximize its gains. The dilemma is that some constituents of the neo-liberal global economy such as free market, deregulated forms of capitalism and some reduction of state interference in the domestic economy especially over the last three decades has produced new global winners and losers.

In fact, the neo-liberal globalization over three decades involved negative effects for American living standards. These developments, not least the rising income inequality in neo-liberal economic order produced problems for the United States economy and also its strategy agency. Regarding rising income inequality the data shows that there has been huge growth in the rapidly industrializing economies of Asia. For example between 1988 and 2008 incomes increased three time in urban china tow time in Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia, with rural incomes rising by 80 percent. The other winners have been the global top one percent (Strokes, 2018, pp 133-150).

The other winners have been the global top one percent overwhelming to be found in the world richest countries. These grave inequality repudiates the neo-liberal order which has been dominate on the fate of world's economic and socio political area. These dynamics has provided promising condition for right wing populists such as Trump.

Conservative internationalism versus liberal internationalism revealing its conservative nature of thought, the Trump administration embark on conservative line of politics in international arena, especially in the Middle East. There has been questions about Trump ideological commitment. One of scholars, himself with a conservative commitment, in an essay examine the trump administration grand strategy in domestic and world politics confirms and support Its main political orientations (Ionut popescu, 2016-I-13). He argue that the Trump administration is attempting to adjust slightly rather than replace the traditional principle of conservative republican foreign policy" (Ionut popescu, 2018, I-13)

We are not here concerned with the conservative internationalism as such, but with its meaning for the Middle East political issues.

Ionut popescu in his essay tries to sketch the from twenty – First century conservative American grand strategy. Limiting ourselves to core element of this grand strategy, we might specify following assumption and principles: 1-A state – centric view of international politics that respects nationalism and sovereignty. 2- skepticism of international institutions and global governance, 3- maintain and expand the United States supremacy, 4- Armed diplomacy, 5- designating the rise of a hostile to America regional hegemon in Europe, Asia and the Middle East as main threats for America. 6-pursue military and economic power, while promoting the Americans idea and cultural values at the same time (popescu, 2018, 1-13). We might grasp the Trump administration policies in the Middle East in light of these assumptions and principles which sketches the conservative republican internationalism.

1. Trump and the Iran Nuclear Deal

Trump's policy towards the Iran nuclear deal obviously reflects above mentioned strategy. Donald Trump in his election campaign during 2016, promised to "renegotiate the July 2015 JPOA (Joint comprehensive plan of action) an agreement has which been called Iran nuclear deal. The Trump administration agreeing Netanyahu argues that the deal dose not stop Iran quest to develop nuclear weapons, but, at best only delays it (Miller, 2015). The most important restriction on Iran's program begin to expire after 10 and 15 years and then, they argued, there is no bond preventing Iran from building nuclear weapons.

Moreover, the Iran nuclear deal does not address Iran's rapidly advancing missile program. Furthermore as Trump administration tell us, the deal will greatly strengthen the Iran's hand in the region, as Iran will use the cash from the deal project its influence throughout the region (kroening, 2018, 1-11). All these can effect on regional balance of power between Iran and Americas partners.

There are three line in strategical approach which the hardliners suggest to combat Iran and alter the dilemma. First, some argue that the

United States should aim to renegotiate the Iran's nuclear deal to revision some of its "short comings". This revision would include longer limits on enrichment program and restrictions on the Iran ballistic missile program. Second, others suggest a strategy aiming at shut down Iran's uranium enrichment program while allowing it to retain a "truly peaceful" nuclear program without making its own nuclear fuel. With its enrichment program eliminated Iran will not be able to produce nuclear weapons (Kroeing, 2018, 1-11).

It is unlikely that Iran to agree to these terms. So these less hawkish line of thinking suggest to intensify pressures. They argue that Tehran only responds to pressure and finally will give up.

The Trump administration have at its disposal highly effective secondary sanctions by means of which the states can threaten sanction against foreign firms and businesses that transact with Iran. If all these did not result desired goal and Iran leaved JCPOA then remains military threat and military attack to the nuclear facilities. Thirds, some more hard liner argue that the fundamental problem is the nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran and sole lasting solution is regime change they believe the regime is in a deficient situation, which makes it exposed to downfall (Conway, 2016). They deem another Iranian revolution possible (Takeyh 2017). How would this changes serve American aims and interest, they do not have anything to say.

2. "Offshore balancing" and the middle East

Since world war tow the United States policy has been based on global primacy trough various mean's including direct intervention in the governance of other countries and, where possible by, means of coup d` eta, and military invasion. Occupation of Iraq and military presence in Afghanistan is the last example of these actions. But this imperialistic strategy is very expensive and when meets local resistance, as in Iran and Iraq, has not promising result (see: Juan Gole, 2009)

Donald Trump represent that part of Americans that objects to Americans role as international policeman and protect the United States partner while typically they do not pay its costs. So the Trump

Administration try to impose a new strategy which involves finding local allies willing to act regionally on behalf of the United States and pay for it. This reinforce in the middle East that Saudi Arabia and the united Arab Emirates reinforce their engagement with Iran, as wellies let Russia to deal with Syria, where in United States has no obvious interests other than the defeat of ISIL (cole, 2018).

This strategy has been called "offshore balancing" by analysts (Mearsheimer and Walt 2016). Syria seem to have been a typical case for this strategy. As a fact, Russia tries to maintain Syria as its sphere of influence, and proved to be a result fighter against Muslims radicalism and terrorism in Syria. So offshore balancing strategy involves to let Russia to handle Syria n Crisis Thus the United States limited its involvement in Syria to unite with Democratic union party.

3. Trump administration and Iran Saudi Arabian relation

The relation between Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia, tow great Islamic state almost always marked with rivalry. This rivalry aggravated after Islamic revolution of Iran and factually turned to hostility. When war between Iraq and Iran began many Arab states, and in top them Saudi Arabia backed sad am against Iran. In 1990 the tension between Iran and Saudi arable relaxed when hashemi and khatami administrations began to ease regional tension and enhancing Iran Arab relations.

A side from religions and Ideological schism as well as geo strategical competition the United States prevention in the region had always played an important role in Iran Arab relations. The United States has always been a major agent in Iran Saudi Arabia relationship (Ahmadian, 2018, 133-150). During the cold war the United States encouraged Iran and Saudi Arabia to cooperate in a security scheme for Persian Gulf security, an alignment mainly aimed at controlling the Soviet Union influence in the region. From this emerged a strategic partnership served as "Twin pillars of regional order which lasted until 1979 revolution of Iran. Iran – Saudi relation after 1979, also, to a great deal related to Washington's politics in the Middle East and its global hegemonic claims. However now Iran was the United States foe while Saudi Arabia continued to be its ally. As such the Iran Saudi rivalry

followed American attitudes. There was an exception during Barack Obama's presidency duration. Saudi Arabia displeased by Obamas support for the Arab spring and his approach to resolve the Iran nuclear Issue peacefully.

The 2016 election and Donald Trumps rise to power brought about change with itself. Trump seemingly want to alter status-quo. In the Middle East which Obama factually conceded to (Ahmadian, 2018, 133-150) in reaching the nuclear deal with Iran the status quo consisted of a stronger position for Iran and Hezbollah compared to less than two decade earlier. Barack Obama planned to bring about a more balanced regional policy as a means of establishing regional stability in turmioled Middle East. Trump opposed that policy and began to intensify pressures on Iran.

As Hassan Ahmadian argues Trumps regional policy in the Middle East has three main objectives: first try to counter against Iran's regional presence and influence in the region. Second try to undermine JCPOA as much as he can, and limit Iran's gains from it. Third, to look at Iran and its policies as a package, and reject issue by issue engagement. Trumps encounter against Iran accommodates Bin Salmons determination to depict Islamic republic of Iran as main source of all regional evils. Trumps first foreign visit was to Saudi Arabia where he gave his support for anti-Iran struggle. The change in the United States policy which came about by rise of Trump to power will increase tension in a region that already encounter alarming situation.

Trumps Middle East policy and his priority to contain Islamic Republic of Iran relies on to support an axis from Saudi Arabia, Israel and the united Arab Emirates. However there is no indication that this is a carefully deliberated policy (Watanabe, 2018).

4. Trump administration and Palestine Israeli problem

Obama's approach to Palestine Israeli conflict was the solution endorsed by international community, meaning a tow state solution. Donald Trump departed from all these policies. Trump administration

Promoted a most imperialistic policy on behalf of Israeli regime against Palestinian. Trump has gone to extraordinary lengths to please Netanyaho. He moved the United States embassy from Telaviv to Quds (Jerusalem) Trumps administration also

expelled all funding for the United Nations. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees. These policy change essentially eliminate the right of return of most Palestinian.

Doing all these, Trump has promised to resolve Palestinian - Israeli conflict. But after the transfer of the embassy to Quds, Mahmood Abas, refused to meet Trumps delegation, let alone discuss the possibility of settlement (Watanable, 2018).

The Donald Trump administrations announcement to recognize Jerusalem (Quds) as the capital of Israel and to move United State embassy there was a shocking shift in American position in Palestine problem. However, the decision was not a complete surprise. It is part of what has been American long bias in Israel's favour. Trump's announce was logical outcome of a set of previous trends in Israelis as well as American's politics (Khalidi, 2018).

Trump's predecessors, even stubborn pro-Israel ones such as Truman Reagan and George Bush were always open to advising of their senior officials who argued for the long term regional and global interests of the United States where these clashed with domestic consideration that favoured Israel. Now Donald Trump has intervened in Middle East personally heedless to his advisers and delicacy of situation (Khalidi, 2018). This policy has been called ambitious and due to lack of foreign policy experience on part of Trump's administration (Eriksson, 2018).

Trump's repeated statements that he want to solve Israel-Palestine Issue is nothing more than a smokescreen that aims at serving Benjamin Netanyahu's expansionist objective. Netanyahu continues the rapid expansion of colonization and annexation of Palestinian territories and entrenchment of Israel absolute security control over the entire territory of Palestine between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River. Trump administration prefers to Arab client states like Saudi Arabia to normalize relations with Israel to pressure the Palestinians to make further concession to Israel (Erik son 2018).

Netanyahu's tactic in dealing with the united state administration always has been to Ignore Palestine as much as possible, while trying to redirect attention to the alleged Iranian threat. The grave hostility to Iran of both republican and democratic Parties leadership helps this policy enjoy a measure of

success in Washington. As Jacob Ericsson says the Netanyahu government has launched a campaign in Washington to convince the Trump administration to provide a green light for possible attack on Lebanon and Syria (Ericsson, 2018). Persian Gulf Monarchies try induce Israel to launch such a risky operation. The United States as well tries to inforce Palestinians accepting long standing Israeli position that would be fatal to the Palestinian cause. The new policy regard Quds (Jerusalem) aimed at strengthening Trumps domestic base without considering the United States foreign policy account.

Conclusion

The unique personality of Trump has increased uncertainty about American`s place in the word as well as in the Middle East political trends. Trump`s national security strategy as defence secretary James Mattis proclaimed (Nye, 2019) opposes both George Bush`s national security strategy which pursued a military interventionist line and Obama`s national security strategy which rebuked Bush for overreach and called for more moderate policy. In the Middle East this involves both changes and challenges. Most important changes has been discussed in this article. The most significant feature of them is partnership with most aggressive regimes such as Israel and Saudi Arabia against Palestine and Iran and to support rulers such as Netanyaho and Bensalman. But this strategy surely confronts with powerful resistance in nationalistic population in the Middle Eastern milieu and contain sever threats for the Middle East and the whole world.

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