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Trump and Iran: From Containment to Confrontation



By Nader Entessar and Kaveh L. Afrasiabi

“In the wake of the rising tensions between the United States and Iran in the aftermath of the Trump Administration’s withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal, the task of searching for genuine diplomatic and pragmatic solutions has emerged as one of the most formidable challenges facing the international community. In this book, Entessar and Afrasiabi offer a timely, engaging, and innovative contribution to this task.”

— **Mahmood Monshipouri, San Francisco State University and author of *Middle East Politics: Changing Dynamics***

“At a time of great uncertainty in U.S.-Iran relations, this book by Entessar and Afrasiabi provides a competent and contextual examination of Trump's confrontational Iran policy and its short and long-term implications for the region. The authors devote considerable and detailed attention to the economic and geopolitical dimensions of Iran's foreign policy towards the U.S., Europe, and the Persian Gulf. The alternative scenarios for war and diplomacy between Iran and the West in this book are of great significance for understanding the existing regional and global trends. Highly recommended.”

— **Kayhan Barzegar, Center for Middle East Strategic Studies, Tehran**

“Nader Entessar and Kaveh Afrasiabi have written a comprehensive and highly insightful analysis of U.S.- Iran relations since the election of President Donald Trump. They provide the necessary historical and regional context, and then proceed to explain, in a balanced and rigorous way, why Trump's shift from a policy of containment to one of confrontation can only fail.”

— **Thomas Juneau, University of Ottawa, Canada**

“For over four decades the conflict between Iran and the U.S. has been a constant fixture of regional and global politics and a major factor in shaping contemporary international relations. The Trump Administration’s dramatic withdrawal from the 2015 Nuclear Agreement, the re-imposition of the “maximum pressure” sanctions, and the threat of a region-wide military confrontation are the latest dynamics in this complex saga. Entessar and Afrasiabi’s excellent work is a very timely and welcomed contribution in unpacking this complexity. The authors navigate this highly charged conflict with a sound and yet jargon free theoretical framework, a balanced, multidimensional, and nuanced analysis, and a very accessible prose. A very valuable book for both the policy and the scholarly community. Highly recommended!”

— **Mohiaddin Mesbahi, Florida International University**

ABOUT THIS BOOK

With the advent of the Trump Administration, relations between Iran and the United States have become increasingly conflictual to the point that a future war between the two countries is a realistic possibility. President Trump has unilaterally withdrawn the US from the historic Iran nuclear accord and has re-imposed the nuclear-related sanctions, which had been removed as a result of that accord. Reflecting a new determined US effort to curb Iran's hegemonic behavior throughout the Middle East, Trump's Iran policy has all the markings of a sharp discontinuity in the Iran containment strategy of the previous six US administrations. The regime change policy, spearheaded by a hawkish cabinet with a long history of antipathy toward the Iranian government, has become the most salient feature of US policy toward Iran under President Trump. This turn in US foreign policy has important consequences not just for Iran but also for Iran's neighbors and prospects of long-term stability in the Persian Gulf and beyond. This book seeks to examine the fluid dynamic of US-Iran relations in the Trump era by providing a social scientific understanding of the pattern of hostility and antagonism between Washington and Tehran and the resulting spiraling conflict that may lead to a disastrous war in the region.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Nader Entessar is professor emeritus of political science at the University of South Alabama.

Kaveh L. Afrasiabi is political scientist and expert on Iran's foreign affairs.

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