Information and Insights about Trump’s New War Against Iran

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**Trump’s reckless violence provokes a new unwinnable war against Iran:**

On Thursday night January 2, 2020, Trump ordered the U.S. military to assassinate Iran’s top military commander. The military obeyed and used a drone weapon to murder General Qasem Soleimani.

Almost no Americans can name the U.S.’s Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. But Iran’s top general, Qasem Soleimani, was very well known and very popular among Iran’s population. Iran’s public – across the political spectrum – united in opposition to Trump’s reckless violence. Trump has provoked certain retaliation against Americans.

**The “Iran nuclear deal” – the JCPOA that Obama had negotiated with Iran and several of the world’s most powerful nations to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons – had been working well. Iran was complying with it, but Trump stupidly pulled the U.S. out of this agreement and escalated danger in the world.**

To protect its own national security, Iran was forced by Trump to consider developing its own nuclear weapons to protect Iran from Trump’s repeated threats of war.

For context, note that although Trump has been marketing himself as a great deal-maker, he actually has weakened or destroyed a number of crucially important deals. Besides gutting the JCPOA, Trump destroyed the INF treaty with Russia, which had reduced the danger of nuclear war in Europe. Also, Trump pulled the U.S. out of the Paris climate agreement, making the U.S. the world’s only nation refusing to protect earth’s climate. Trump has been making the U.S. a brutal “rogue nation” in a number of ways in addition to these.

Trump’s response to Soleimani’s actions was wildly disproportionate. Trump violated international law, the U.N Charter, the theological “Just War” criteria, and any concept of good sense or ethics.

**The “bad guy” label is often used as a grossly misleading excuse for using military violence:**

The Trump regime’s blunt rationalization for murdering Qasem Soleimani is that he was “a bad guy.” This was the same blunt rationalization for overthrowing Iraq’s government in 2003 and killing not only “bad guy” Saddam Hussein but also a million innocent Iraqi civilians! **The “bad guy” label is a sloppy, superficial accusation with no meaning in international law, but the U.S. keeps using it as a simplistic and reckless excuse for using military violence and starting wars.**

Actually, the U.S. had armed Saddam Hussein during Reagan’s administration before that war, and the U.S. has militarily armed many other dictators and “bad guy” leaders of other countries around the world for decades. Labeling these violent, oppressive bullies as “bad guys” occurs only selectively when we apply that label in preparation for making wars against them, many of whom were former allies.

For example, Panama’s General Manuel Noriega had helped the CIA run drugs from Central America until he fell out of favor, and then the older George H.W. Bush launched a war against Panama because Noriega was a drug runner. Bush himself had been head of the CIA, which had a long history of running drugs from Vietnam and Laos before it started running drugs out of Central America. But our government failed to label Bush a drug-runner or “bad guy.” Instead our government rallied behind Bush in his brutal war, which killed many innocent Panamanians and resulted in the capture and torture of Noriega, our former CIA “asset” who was now labeled a “bad guy.”

A few days ago Trump murdered Iran’s top general Qasem Soleimani because the general had allegedly supported Shia insurgency in Iraq. But Saudi Arabia funded Sunni insurgencies there too. Trump’s logic would cause him to kill Saudi generals too and provoke war against Saudi Arabia. But Trump himself and U.S. oil companies are doing profitable business in Saudi Arabia, so the moral principle of fighting terrorism is outweighed by capitalistic greed.

On October 2, 2018, Saudi Arabia’s leader (Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman) accomplished the assassination of Jamal Khashoggi, a prominent journalist for *The Washington Post* who was living in the United States after having come from Saudi Arabia, where he disagreed with their government. The murder occurred at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey. The assassination team of 15 Saudi citizens were directed by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, a truly “bad guy” who is ironically also a great ally of Trump because they have business dealings together. Masterminding an assassination does not disqualify Saudi Arabia’s leader from maintaining Trump’s favoritism and protection, and certainly does not cause the U.S. government or media to label him a “bad guy.”

Trump tried to cover up Kashoggi’s murder, but later he said that the assassination was OK because Trump’s business dealings and the U.S. oil companies were making a lot of money by dealing with Saudi Arabia’s rich, powerful leaders.

The Pentagon stated that Iran’s General Qasem Soleimani was responsible for the deaths and injuries of Americans. Actually, so also were the deliberate actions of Bush-Cheney, Richard Nixon, Lyndon Johnson, and other presidents and bi-partisan Congressional majorities going back for decades. These American politicians have truly been “bad guys” too. Should the U.S. even-handedly implement our government’s simplistic assumption that it’s OK to murder “bad guys”? That is a reckless policy. We need to obey laws, including laws against murder, and including international laws that prohibit what the U.S. government continually does.

For years Vladimir Putin was a foreign intelligence agent for the Soviet Union’s notorious KGB. He rose through the ranks to a position of power, and after the USSR split up, he became the highest-level director of the Russian agency that replaced the KGB. Putin must certainly have committed many horrible behaviors. He would certainly qualify to be designated a “bad guy,” as used by our government and media when accusing other nations’ cruel, violent leaders. Would Trump call for assassinating Putin or even his highest-ranking general?

Trump’s Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, had served as the CIA’s Director for more than a year early in Trump’s administration. Certainly Pompeo must have done some very bad things in that role. Is he the kind of “bad guy” who should be assassinated? Pompeo has been supporting Trump’s lies about Iran by lying that hundreds of Americans were in imminent danger from General Soleimani.

**Military “solutions” only make problems worse!**

Bush-Cheney’s reckless, illegal 2001 war against Afghanistan and their 2003 war against Iraq provoked insurgencies and civil wars among various factions of Sunnis, Shia, and other groupings that have extended very widely throughout that part of the world, including Syria and elsewhere. The incredibly stupid Bush-Cheney wars have been persisting and escalating and spreading elsewhere in the world to this very day. The U.S. keeps adding more military violence and provoking reactions worldwide with no end in sight.

**Trump’s assassination of Iran’s top general was also stupidly short-sighted. This is not the final action in this case. Violence provokes violence in an endless chain of escalations.** Certainly Iran and/or others who are outraged by Trump’s violent outburst will retaliate by killing Americans who are overseas. Their blood will be on Trump’s hands – and on the hands of other Trump regime officials and members of our bi-partisan Congress and members of the media who blessed Trump’s violence.

The U.S.’s long-standing abuse of Iran goes back to 1953 when the U.S. and Britain violently overthrew Iran’s democracy (democratically elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh) because he was working for a more fair arrangement so Iran’s people would benefit economically from that nation’s oil revenues, instead of letting a British oil company rip off the profits for itself. Britain and the U.S. installed a monarch (the Shah of Iran) who was an extremely brutal and oppressive dictator. In the 1970s Amnesty International’s research proved that Iran had the very worst abuses of human rights of any nation on earth. Nixon-Kissinger arranged for the U.S. to arm the Shah with the U.S.’s very most sophisticated weapons, and he continued his horrible violence – with the U.S.’s blessings – all the way until 1979 when a nonviolent revolution overthrew him. Ever since 1979 the U.S. government and mainstream media have held a grudge against Iran and have sought ways to retaliate.

Iran’s population extends across a political spectrum that includes a mixture of hardline conservative Islamists and moderates and liberal dissidents. Qasem Soleimani was very popular among Iran’s people across the political spectrum, so when Trump assassinated him, Trump unwittingly unified Iran’s population in opposition to the U.S. Trump’s behavior was stupid for this reason too.

During the 1980s Iraq and Iran fought a long war against each other. The U.S. actually armed and supported both sides. The Reagan administration actively supported and armed Saddam Hussein, but Reagan also armed Iran secretly through the “Iran-Contra” scandal – in violation of a federal law that prohibited arming Iran.

The stupid Bush-Cheney war against Iraq led to civil wars and insurgencies in Iraq that ultimately led to a national government dominated by the Shia kind of Muslims – the overwhelming majority kind of Muslims in in Iran – so Bush-Cheney unwittingly moved Iraq into a political alliance with Iran that actually strengthened Iran’s role in the region. Iran’s population is 4 to 5 times the size of Iraq’s, so Bush-Cheney unwittingly gave Iran much power relative to Iraq.

**Over and over again throughout history – including the history of Iran and Iraq – military “solutions” only make problems worse!**

This has been true in nation after nation. The U.S. has practiced the same stupidity regardless of which political party dominates the Congress or the Executive Branch. The military-industrial complex donates many millions of dollars to political campaigns and lobbying, so it has enormous political power over both the Executive and Congressional branches. The government commonly chooses military violence instead of honest diplomacy.  **But military violence nearly always backfires!**

Trump’s stupid, reckless violence regarding Iran is only the latest example. Both of the U.S.’s big parties general go along with this. In December 2019 when Congress – with bi-partisan support – approved the next fiscal year’s National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Congress stripped away several amendments that would have restrained Trump’s stupid, reckless violence regarding Iran and the endless wars.

Nowadays nearly every nation or faction calls its adversaries “terrorists” as an excuse for justify using violence against them. Decades ago people used to call their adversaries “communists” as an excuse to justify attacking them or overthrowing their governments. Now the accusation of “terrorist” is used for justifying military violence. Nearly all politicians and mainstream media go along with this simplistic, deceptive charade.

Trump’s latest violent action violates U.S. law and international law. But nearly all mainstream politicians and media refuse to acknowledge that.

Do you remember the Republicans’ absolute obsession with Benghazi? President Obama and his extremely hawkish Secretary of State Hillary Clinton recruited NATO to overthrow Libya’s government and turned Libya into a nation of chaos consumed by factions of various terrorist groups using violence against each other. In 2010 some people attacked the U.S. mission at Benghazi, Libya, and set it on fire. The Republicans who dominated the U.S. Congress began a seemingly endless series of investigations into Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s alleged failure to protect the U.S. the U.S.’s mission in Benghazi. Their intention clearly was to politically damage Obama and especially Clinton.

Now in early 2020 the U.S. embassy in Iraq has many thousands of Americans working there. Now Trump has put those Americans’ safety in extreme danger by assassinating Iran’s top general while he was visiting in Iraq. Do you expect Congress’s Republicans to convene endless investigations into Trump’s reckless endangerment of Americans in Iraq? Don’t hold your breath!

After the U.S. installed a puppet government in Iraq in 2003, Iraq’s government changed hands several times, and finally during Obama’s era their government forced the U.S. to mostly get out. When the U.S. military is heavily present in a nation (Iraq, Okinawa, etc.), the U.S. forces that host nation into a “Status of Forces Agreement” by which the U.S. military is allowed to avoid legal responsibility for crimes its troops commit against local people. This is why so many rapes and assaults against women in Okinawa and South Korea occur – and go unpunished. When President Obama tried to renew the “Status of Forces Agreement” for the continued U.S. military occupation of Iraq, the Iraqi government refused. Without this blank check of immunity Obama was forced to remove nearly all U.S. troops. Obama deceived the public by claiming he had successfully ended the U.S.’s military occupation of Iraq. He deceived people about the real reason why the U.S. mostly left Iraq.

But many thousands of Americans still remain in the U.S. embassy in Iraq, and Trump has made them sitting ducks for retaliation by Iran or even Iraq.

Some mainstream media had just recently thanked Trump for ending the “forever wars.” Now he is starting yet another one – and sending thousands of U.S. troops into that region to be bogged down in a new “forever war” and to become targets for the retaliation that Iran and others will certainly provide. When Trump’s reckless war against Iran inevitably causes U.S. troops and American civilians to be killed, Trump will use their killings as an excuse to escalate his wars in order to avenge their deaths. **Military “solutions” only make things worse! We must STOP the cycle of violence!**

This is clearly Trump’s fault. The JCPOA (“Iran nuclear deal”) was working well until Trump ruined it. Obama had proved that diplomacy with Iran and other nations who crafted the JCPOA can work, but Trump’s ego, narcissism and machismo make him unable to cooperate with other people and cause him to think he alone can unilaterally do whatever he wants regardless of international law or other realities. This is a recipe for disaster. Trump must be held fully accountable for his crimes against international law. Trump’s unilateral assassination of Iran’s top general and his provocation of an illegal, unconstitutional war are impeachable offenses.

**Lies, lies, lies:**

In the U.S. the corporate-owned media are saying that Trump’s war against Iran will be “easy” and “quick.” That’s what the media and Bush-Cheney promised for their 2003 war against Iraq. Bush-Cheney promised that their 2003 war against Iraq would take only a few weeks and the public would welcome the U.S. troops as “liberators.” Actually, the U.S. never won that war, and nearly two decades later we are still bogged down after losing thousands of lives.

Trump’s war against Iran will NOT be “easy” or “quick.” Iran has 4 or 5 times the population of Iraq, and Iran’s population supports their government much more enthusiastically than Iraq’s population supported theirs. Iran’s industrial base is several times larger than Iraq’s, and Iran’s military (previously equipped with the U.S.’s most sophisticated weapons including helicopters and jet fighter planes) is much more powerful than Iraq’s was.

Trump has proven himself to be a chronic, compulsive liar with absolutely no respect for truth. Various reliable sources have identified the numbers of outright lies and misleading statements that Trump has told. By early November 2019 more than 12,000 of his statements have been proven to be lies, and he has told about 20,000 misleading statements. **We should NOT believe anything Trump or any of his supporters say about this newest crisis Trump has caused.** Bush-Cheney and many people who worked for them kept telling and repeating lies – and the mainstream media obediently publicized their lies – leading up to the 2003 war against Iraq. **Most politicians of both big parties and nearly all of the mainstream media are obediently accepting the Trump regime’s lies at face value.**

In 2003 Bush-Cheney lied and lied in order to fool the American Congress, media and public into supporting their aggressive, unjustified war, which illegally overthrew Iraq’s government, killed a million innocent Iraqi people, and plunged that nation into horrible suffering and violence that persists now almost two decades later. That war against “bad guy” Saddam Hussein – as if he would be the only victim – was based on lies that have become not only famous but also infamous. (The U.N.’s inspectors kept insisting there were no “weapons of mass destruction.” Condoleezza Rice’s “mushroom cloud” was an absolutely false scare tactic. CIA Director George Tenet’s “slam-dunk” was a lie. Bush’s Secretary of State Colin Powell lied to the United Nations on February 5, 2003. The list of lies goes on and on.)

Honest, knowledgeable people **DID** know the truth in 2002-2003 and spoke out vigorously, but politicians and media refused to listen. The weapons inspectors from the United Nations kept declaring that Saddam Hussein was NOT building nuclear weapons. The peace movement’s many experts kept exposing the Bush-Cheney lies, but nearly all politicians and news media ignored us.

Now here we go again! Politicians and mainstream media are obediently giving credibility to chronic liars!

On January 3, 2020 I watched a videotaped interview that an expert had conducted in 2015, more than a year before Trump was elected. The expert mentioned General Soleimani and asked Trump if he knew who he was, and Trump said he did, but the interview’s next few minutes showed clearly that Trump had no idea who Soleimani was. Nor did he know who any of the other key people were, nor did Trump understand the issues. Trump kept bluffing his way through the interview in total ignorance but bold self-confidence and self-marketing.

Trump has lied many thousands of times already, and he keeps getting away with lying. Eventually when the truth comes out about his current lies about Iran, the damage will already have been done and many, many people will have been killed because of Trump’s lies – and the willing complicity of nearly all U.S. politicians and mainstream media. There will be no consequences for Trump, just as there have been no consequences for Bush-Cheney for their 2002-2003 lies that directly caused their 2003 war, which has killed a million innocent Iraqis and continues killing innocent people in Iraq and elsewhere..

In 1971 the “Pentagon Papers” revealed that the Pentagon had been lying persistently from 1945 to 1967 about the U.S.’s political and military involvement in Vietnam. In December 2019 a somewhat similar exposure of Pentagon documents revealed something similar about the U.S. in Afghanistan, and these have been dubbed the “Afghanistan Papers.”

Clearly, these and other examples show that **the U.S.’s national security establishment routinely and persistently lies. They should have no credibility left whatsoever**, but politicians and mainstream media routinely and persistently believe them and give them credence in interviews and as sources of information.

TV news interviews feature hawks but almost never doves. Their “balance” is having a Republican hawk and a Democratic hawk who both support the U.S.’s wars, or an active-duty general and a retired general who both support the U.S.’s wars – and who might be serving on the boards of directors of major military weapons manufacturers, although the TV interviewers never disclose that truth.

Mainstream news media deceive us rather than honestly inform us. Instead of the one-dimensional “bad guy” label, the public should know that General Soleimani’s fighting against ISIS had actually helped the U.S. in addition to helping Iran. This nuanced reality is not mentioned by politicians or news media. They demonize him in a one-dimensional way. Actually, reality is more complex than the simplistic plot lines reported by mainstream news media or politicians.

During the Bush-Cheney era, how many times did the U.S. government and news media gloat that we had killed the #3 person in al-Qaeda, as if that was a major step toward victory? Those repeated news stories were NOT evidence of progress in the endless wars. Suppose the #3 person at Microsoft were murdered. Would that cause Microsoft to go out of business? No, they’d just hire someone else to be their #3 person. The Bush-Cheney propaganda machine and mainstream media kept gloating over killings that did not really hurt al-Qaeda at all.

But without meaningful victories in their endless “war on terror” and their endless wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, they felt the need to contrive propaganda that would create the illusion of frequent victories and progress toward “winning.”

Throughout the Vietnam war, the U.S. government kept claiming that the huge “body counts” proved that we were winning, that we could see “the light at the end of the tunnel,” that victory was in sight, and – as Nixon lied during his 1968 presidential campaign – that we would achieve “peace with honor.” None of that was true.

Now Trump is making his war against Iran by bombing parts of our ally Iraq where its new ally Iran has been working in. Iraq’s government opposes the U.S.’s bombing, but Trump is bombing there anyway. Trump’s bombing is antagonizing our ally Iraq in addition to provoking retaliations by Iran and other forces in the region.

Many officials around the world have condemned Trump for assassinating General Soleimani. Of course, Bernie Sanders also sharply criticized Trump for this.

The great historian Howard Zinn once asked, “How can you have a “war on terrorism” when war itself is terrorism? One of the signs we hold at Olympia’s peace vigils says, “War is terrorism with a bigger budget.”

**The U.S.—and the entire world – would be more secure if the U.S. were to create a nonviolent foreign policy based on truth, fairness to all people everywhere, and sustainability:**

People keep worrying about “national security.” But that is a narrow dead end — and a misleading distraction — unless we understand that **MILITARISM ITSELF IS THE PROBLEM** and that our nation can be secure **ONLY** if we help the rest of the world to be secure in more profound ways than mere militarism can accomplish.

See the insightful article I wrote at this link: [**www.parallaxperspectives.org/how-to-achieve-peace-and-true-security**](http://www.parallaxperspectives.org/how-to-achieve-peace-and-true-security)

**See more information on my blog,** [**www.parallaxperspectives.org**](http://www.parallaxperspectives.org)**:**

See much more information at various parts of the “Iran” category and the “Peace” category on my blog, [**www.parallaxperspectives.org**](http://www.parallaxperspectives.org).

On Monday or Tuesday January 6 or 7, 2020, I will compile more information about Trump’s incredibly stupid blunders regarding Iran – and I’ll include links to petitions to Congress. Look for that by Tuesday night January 7 or Wednesday the 8th.