Has Trump set a Precedent for Killing US Personnel?

The Soleimani funeral is going on as I type. I was lined up for some of the Iranian domestic coverage, but the funeral started earlier than planned which bumped me to tomorrow’s coverage. I had been reviewing the updated coverage, waiting for some of the smoke to clear. Gordon Duff covered for Veterans Today on the early morning coverage.

News updates have been pouring in all day, as a virtual army of journalists have been searching for every scrap to analyze why an American military, who have handled Trump so carefully to keep him from doing something crazy, blew their fairly good record by putting the Soleimani assassination on a list of reprisal options for Trump to choose.

After he choose Soleimani, no one had the cojones to stand up and admit that putting it on the list was a huge mistake. Why?

Well first, before getting into the legal issues, we hope that killing him the way they did is not going to set off a wave of American-killing like we have not seen during any of this dispute.

As news flowed in about Iran’s response, expected to be measured as it always is, word came from one of its top generals that Iran would only consider attacking US military targets, no civilians. Then came the report that the US had passed along through the Swiss asking that Iran’s retaliation be on a similar level to what the US had done. We know this was true, as Zarif mentioned during the day that he had gotten a “silly” message from the Americans.

Was Soleimani lured to his assassination location?

The biggest surprise came this evening. A VT source in Baghdad reported that the killing may have been a staged ambush. Soleimani was lured to Baghdad with news that Prime Minister Mahdi, who been acting as in emissary between Washington and Tehran, had received an important message for him.

Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi has made some shocking revelations that put the assassination of Soleimani in a completely different light. He told the Iraqi parliament on Sunday that he “was supposed to meet Soleimani on the morning of the day he was killed, he came to deliver me a message from Iran responding to the message we delivered from Saudi to Iran.”

Here are some of the notes taken the Washington Post reporter on Mahdi’s address to the Iraqi Parliament, for full context:

“Abu Mahdi Al-Mohandus played a major role in controlling the PMU forces and put them under the control of the state” Iraqi PM said...

“The assassination of Soleimani and Muhandus was a political assassination that cannot be accepted”...

“The United States told us that some of the attacks against PMU headquarters in the recent months were conducted by Israel”...

“The government refused to give any cover for the protests around the US Embassy in Baghdad and I threatened to leave my position if they don’t retreat, which they did”...

“I received a phone call from Donald Trump when the embassy protests ended thanking the government efforts and asked Iraq to play the mediator’s role between US and Iran”...
“But at the same time American helicopters and drones were flying without the approval of Iraq, and we refused the request of bringing more soldiers to US embassy and bases”...

“I was supposed to meet Solemami in the morning the day he was killed, he came to deliver me a message from Iran responding to the message we delivered from Saudi to Iran.”

“Legally, the ministerial council for national security can take the decision which they find on the benefits of Iraq without the approval of the parliament, we agreed in the national security meeting that the benefits of Iraq is the end of forces existence in Iraq” said PM

“But I want the decision to be agreed by all therefore I put to the parliament two options. 1. ending the existence of these forces immediately and start the immediate arrangements for this” 2. Set a timeline for the departure of these forces” said Iraqi PM

“I recommend the first option and keep the friendship between US and Iraq. It’s the interests of Iraq and US to Reorganize the relationship between both sides in a way keeps the sovereignty of Iraq” Iraqi PM said.

The Iraqi parliament voted on a “decision” not binding on the government to cancel the Iraqi request from the US in fighting ISIS and to end the existence of the whole foreign troops within a timeline.

If this account is true, Trump, perhaps deliberately, acted to scuttle an effort to reduce tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia. It also shows, as the United States was signaling it would not go to war with Iran as Trump did earlier this summer, this compelled Saudi Arabia and the UAE to begin quiet negotiations with Iran to resolve their tension.

As long as the Saudis and the Emiratis felt they could push the US to go to war with Iran, they had no interest in diplomacy with Iran. The US’ military protection of these countries removed their motivation to pursue peace.

In the past few months, under the impression that Trump had opted against war, they began careful diplomacy with Tehran. The US should have welcomed this development. But the killing of Soleimani may have killed that effort, and once again given Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and the Emiratis a license to continue reckless destabilization.

Soleimani had diplomatic standing as Iran’s military representative to Iraq. His route from the VIP section of Baghdad airport was readily known, as was his arrival time and the party would have had surveillance on the ground.

Gordon Duff has been through the airport many times and is familiar with the location. Soleimani may have underestimated that the US would attempt to kill his entourage in such a sensitive place as Baghdad, with the US relationship there already under strain.

The consensus around the world is that Trump and Pompeo efforts to tag Soleimani as the big American killer is only being bought in the hardline Iran hating countries like Britain, with Boris Johnson clapping his hands.

What happens now?

The Iranians have been cool and calm as usual, with no hint or plans for a quick response. But Iran does not control what Muslims worldwide might want to do, including those extremist groups who make it their business to kill civilians. Will they initiate killing sprees on Americans as a personal revenge of their own?

Remember the key admission in Prime Minister Mahdi’s note, where the US said the Israelis had done some of the PMU headquarters attacks. Will that trigger Mahdi looking into whether those attacks, assuming they are drone attacks, are being based out of and in coordination with the Iraqi Kurdish areas, or will he prefer to duck that issue with all that he has on his plate?

Does it make sense for him to go through all the gyrations to reign in the Americans, but leave the Israelis and their
Kurdish friends to continue their drone attacks, destabilizing not only Iraq but the Syrian border and the oil looting in the Deir Ezzor region?

**Will the chickens come home to roost on Americans?**

As the US has shown in Syria with its NATO partners, importing extremist killers to do dirty work for you is a competitive business. Europe has seen its share of hapless lone killers, but not the organized slaughtering that some of the Western Intel and Israeli terrorist handlers have engaged in.

American servicemen are sitting ducks all over the world in quite safe places, where their guard is low where they can be visited like Mr. Soleimani. This could even be named getting the “Trump Treatment” that he has stupidly put his seal of approval on as a fair way of dealing with killers without due process. What is good for the goose is good for the gander.

The dead civilians left in the wake of the US military incursions are carved in stone, with their purposeful undercounting even pouring salt in the wound. Single mass graves were uncovered in Raqqa that contained more women, children and elders dead than what the US military claims to have officially killed by accident during the whole Syrian war.

When I was in Syria during my first trip, I learned that over 400,000 Syrians had already been killed, 50,000 military (equal to the US’ official KIA in Vietnam), leaving 350,000 civilians dead. Many of these were directly due to US, NATO country and Rogue Royal Gulf State mass murderers who accepted no responsibility for their slaughter while shining the spotlight on Assad and the Syrian army, when the former were not fit to shine their shoes.

No Syrians perpetrated reprisal attacks against American military families or citizens in towns like Fort Bragg and countless other military base areas with endless soft targets because they are better than that. It bears noting what they have done to save their country and what they have not done, certain actions that the US has done with a sneering “Whadaya going to do about it?” And it continues.

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