Endless provocations and subversive actions of the US and Israel against Iran lead to the Iranian people getting increasingly bitter towards the two countries and their representatives.

Following the blatant US assassination operation against Iranian General Qasem Soleimani, commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) special forces, killed on the night of January 3, 2020 by the United States near Baghdad International Airport, another similar assassination attempt was carried out on March 7, near Damascus. According to a statement from the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, two Iranian officers were killed in an Israeli air strike there: “IRGC Colonels Ehsan Karbalaipour and Morteza Saibnejad became shahids, the responsibility for their deaths lies with the Zionist regime that launched the missile attack on Damascus. The Zionists will answer for their crimes.”

As early as 11 March, Israeli media reported, citing US intelligence, “Iran may dare to strike directly at Israel. This is how the Islamic Republic wants to avenge the Jewish state for the deaths of two IRGC officers on the outskirts of Damascus.”

And so on March 5, in the US state of Nevada, 21-year-old Nike Nikubin stabbed an American citizen in an attempt to avenge the death of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani at the hands of the US, local TV channel KLAS reported, citing the Henderson City Police.

And on the night of March 13, some twelve ballistic missiles were fired from the Hasanabad area in the Iranian territory at the Kurdish city of Erbil in northern Iraq, where the US consulate is located. However, some media outlets have highlighted the fact that the shelling took place at exactly 1:20 am, the same time that Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps General Qasem Soleimani was killed in a US drone strike on January 3, 2020. The
Associated Press reported, citing Iraqi security officials and US officials, that none of the missiles that had exploded near the US diplomatic mission under construction caused serious damage. There were no casualties either. After the explosion, US Air Force planes were airborne.

According to Israeli media, the Saudi Arabian channel Al-Hadath believes that the Iranian missile attack on the US Consulate General in Erbil was in response to the killing of two high-ranking Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps officers in Syria on March 7. The Iranians chose to respond with an airstrike not on Israel but on US facilities in Iraq. At the same time, it is acknowledged that the target of the missiles fired at the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan was not only the US consulate, but also the intelligence center of Israel’s Mossad foreign intelligence service in Erbil.

This fact was later acknowledged by an Iranian state channel, which reported that the target of the overnight missile attack was “secret Israeli bases” in Erbil.

Doron Kadosh, Israeli Galei Zahal columnist recalled in this regard that in October 2021, in response to the Israeli bombing in Syria, Iran launched a missile attack on the US Al-Tanf base on the Iraqi-Syrian border. Late last year, the Israeli military estimated that Tehran would not tolerate this any longer and would be striking back at Israel next time. But that has not happened yet. “The word “yet” should be emphasized,” writes Doron Kadosh on his Twitter.

In these circumstances, it cannot be ruled out that, following the Iranian missile strike on the area where the US consulate under construction in Erbil is located, negotiations on the Iranian nuclear deal could be terminated. This, incidentally, is precisely what Israel sought, including through its provocative sabotage attack on March 7, killing two high-ranking IRGC soldiers.

Meanwhile, in these realities, the EU and Washington are losing hope of replacing Russian oil with Iranian oil, with the result that oil prices will continue their unpredictable rise.

As for the US, its retaliatory military action against Iran and in the Strait of Hormuz, which will again become unsafe for navigation, cannot be ruled out. Preparations for such military action have already been announced recently to the Associated Press by Vice Admiral Brad Cooper, head of the US Navy’s Fifth Fleet, who said the US is building a fleet of more than 100 unmanned aerial vehicles — both sailing and underwater — to counter Iran. Under the new concept, UAVs will patrol vast maritime areas. It should be recalled that the US Navy’s Fifth Fleet has included in its area of responsibility the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow artery in the Persian Gulf through which more than 20% of the world’s oil shipments pass, with Iran and the US fighting for control of it. The Islamic Republic controls the northern coast of the strait, while the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman possess the southern coast.

Against the background of the March 13 shelling of Erbil, it must also be recalled that US troops stationed in this international complex have previously been subjected to missile attacks, which were carried out by means of UAVs. In general, however, the US military presence in Iraq irritates both Shia and Sunni Arabs.

There have already been several recent attacks on US military convoys in Iraq. So, in the last month alone, according to Iraqi media reports, a US logistics convoy was attacked in Salah ad Din province on February 13. On February 22, a roadside bomb exploded near the city of Nasiriya in Dhi Qar province in the south of the country while a US convoy carrying equipment and supplies destined for US troops was passing through. On March 1, a US military convoy was attacked in Iraq’s Al Muthanna province between the cities of Samawah and Nasiriya, and several bombs were detonated in the path of another military convoy in Al Diwaniyah and Al Anbar provinces. Another convoy carrying equipment belonging to the US military was attacked in Salah ad Din province on March 4. On March 8, a convoy carrying equipment was attacked in the city of Nasiriya, about 360 km southeast of Baghdad.

Iranian Major General Rahim Yahya Safavi told the Mehr News Agency on March 7 that the US will soon flee Syria and Iraq, just as it retreated from Afghanistan. According to the Iranian military commander, the US is politically and morally in decline.

Vladimir Odintsov, political observer, exclusively for the online magazine “New Eastern Outlook”.