

How Iran Decided to Bomb US Bases and How Trump Avoided All Out War

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On the third of January, after midnight, news about the assassination of Iranian Major General Qassem Soleimani, Brigadier General Hussein pour Jaafari, Colonel Shahrud Muzaffari Nia, Major Hadi Tameri and Captain Wahid Zamaniam reached the Iranian Embassy in Baghdad. Officers at the embassy were in contact with the convoy, and suddenly the communication was interrupted. Sardar Soleimani had diplomatic immunity and had been officially asked by the Iraqi government to help in defeating ISIS. Moreover, the convoy was attacked just before an Iraqi checkpoint that knew the Iraqi commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandes was in convoy along with his protection team. The news was communicated to Tehran and from it to the house of the Iranian leader of the revolution Sayyed Ali Khamenei.

“We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return”. These verses of the Qoran a believer would pronounce when the death of someone he knows is announced, whether close to him or not. It is a reminder that all humans are mortal. That was the first reaction of Sayyed Khamenei when the news reached him of the death of “a son”. That was Sardar Soleimani’s closeness to Sayyed Khamenei. Soleimani earned the title of “living martyr” due to the many occasions his life was in danger while fighting ISIS and al-Qaeda in Iraq and Syria.

Soleimani left Beirut and slept in Syria on the first of January, not far from Damascus airport. On every trip to Syria, he used to hold a meeting with all commanders, after morning prayers and just before the sun rises, for a maximum of two hours. That day he kept all commanders for lunch and allowed them to leave just before sunset. He didn’t stop talking, leaving his instructions for his team of commanders in the Levant. Captain Wahid Zamaniam used to be his inseparable companion. The Major General was greeted by Iranian and Iraqi officers at Baghdad airport when arriving, where a US drone assassinated them.

According to a well-informed source within the “Axis of the Resistance”, when he learned about the assassination, Sayyed Khamenei called for a meeting of his commanders in the first hours following the murder and instructed: “prepare yourself for a strong reply. We shall announce our direct responsibility, so our enemy knows we are challenging it face to face and not in the cowardly way the US killed Soleimani and his companions. Hit the US army hard to break their arrogance in the same theatre they have executed this vile assassination”.

Many scenarios were laid down in front of Sayyed Khamenei. The first choice was Ayn al-Assad, the most significant and most substantial airbase in Iraq, where President Trump landed in what he considered the safest location in Iraq. Iran knows every single detail about

the base. Its drones and intelligence were good enough to identify the contents of every hangar and construction.

A plan for a second hit was also prepared against a US base outside Iraq across the Persian Gulf, more powerful and painful than the first objective, in case the US responded to the Ayn al-Assad hit.

A third hit was also organised, much more powerful and destructive than the first two against the most significant US base in the Middle East. This hit aimed to cause many casualties, many more than the US other possible retaliation.

Three plans, three scenarios, all planned to be executed one after the other for three consecutive hits. Sayyed Ali Khamenei approved all these responses so there would be no need for his commanders to ask for his blessing. After that, Sayyed Khamenei instructed his commanders to return to him for further instructions and to declare a general mobilisation of the country where an all-out war would be announced against the US if there were military responses to all the Iranian hits. In this last scenario, Sayyed Khamenei ordered a plan where hundreds of missiles would have been launched simultaneously against all US military bases in the countries surrounding Iran, in the Levant and beyond. All Iran allies in the Middle East would have been involved, and US allies would be directly hit. But this ultimate decision would require the last evaluation by Sayyed Khamenei.

That was a foreseeable scenario that the US President – with his decision to stand down, notwithstanding the human casualties and destruction inflicted on Ayn al-Assad military base – managed to avoid.

“Iran didn’t use any missiles in its silos to hit US targets at Ayn al-Assad. On the contrary, missiles were deployed overtly and prepared for launching two days before under the eyes of US satellites. Messages were flocking to Iran from diplomats asking to refrain from retaliating or at least to soften the response. All requests were turned down. Iran avoided surprising the US; had Iran wanted to surprise the US, missiles would have been launched from its silos with no warning. It was a direct challenge to US hegemony. Moreover, Iran informed the US that the hit was coming, further challenging President Trump and his military apparatus in the Middle East by showing that Iran is not afraid of the consequences”, said the source.

Iran sent its drones over Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Emirates and other nearby countries in daylight over US bases. It was a signal that Tehran was prepared for war and an indication of some of the Iranian bank of objectives. The Iranian leadership was ready to go to the point of a no-return if necessary.

No one in Iran accepts to give up the missile programme that has become the pride of the Iranian people and its armed forces. When the US bombed hundreds of Russian contractors in Syria, Deir-Ezzour, who were crossing the Euphrates river to chase ISIS remnants, Russia decided not to respond. No country or army in the Middle East ever challenged the US, notably when the US deployed tens of thousands of troops and effective equipment in the Middle East. Only Iran has directly challenged US hegemony and military power.

The “Axis of Resistance” confirmed the balance of fear and imposed a deterrence policy on the US in the Middle East. Iran overtly challenged the US and declared its responsibility with

no fear of the consequences. So far, the US has confirmed at least 64 casualties suffered; some time ago Iran announced that “US casualties were not less than 80.”

President Trump thought he was living a historical moment in his life where he could do anything he wants with no fear of consequences. He believed no country in the world would dare to challenge him. He also advised that Iraq was divided, that no government could contest violation of its sovereignty, and that Iran is no longer tolerated in Mesopotamia. He was most likely informed that the burning of two Iranian consulates was enough to kick Iran out of Iraq. Perhaps he imagined that assassinating Sardar Qassem Soleimani would go unpunished, and he bragged about killing “two for the price of one.” He and his warmonger team also wrongly believed – and I guess still find – that his “maximum pressure” and harsh sanctions would bring Iran onto its knees begging him for mercy. He said he would be waiting by the phone for Iran to call, proving his ignorance of Iran, its mentality, culture, patience, harshness and pride.

The magic turned against the magician and Trump gave Iran a massive gift by allowing it to bomb his army and challenge him face to face. Trump was afraid to announce the number of casualties in the first week. The Pentagon is now releasing a part of the reality every week. The US, not Iran, has shown fear.

“All US military bases have become a threat to the hosting countries in the Middle East. These bases no longer serve to protect these countries but have become perfect targets for Iran in case of war. They provide an overwhelming list of targets for Iran. No place will be safe for US forces in the Middle East if red-lines are crossed, as happened with the assassination of Sardar Soleimani,” said the source.

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