

# Iran's Strikes Against the U.S. Demonstrates the Unipolar System Is Truly Over

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*When U.S. President Donald Trump ordered the assassination of Iranian General Qassem Soleimani, he certainly had not expected that Iran would respond in the way it did by bombarding two U.S. military bases in Iraqi territory. It is likely that his advisers had convinced him that no country in the world had the courage to attack the U.S. so blatantly as no one else had since the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor during World War II. The Iranians did of course, as was expected by those who understand the ideology of the Islamic Republic that has a deeply ingrained martyrdom complex that stretches back to 680AD when Imam Ali Ibn al-Husayn was killed in Karbala, Iraq.*

Trump has claimed that there were no American casualties while Iran has claimed there were at least 80. With the Erbil and Ain al-Assad bases bombarded and several U.S. aircrafts, drones and helicopters destroyed, it is unlikely that there were no U.S. casualties – however there is no way in knowing at this time whether there were 80. We can expect Washington to keep the true number of casualties a secret, in complete opposition to Iran who openly celebrate their martyrs.

The Ain al-Assad military base is the largest and most equipped U.S. base in the region, and one of a few U.S. special bases around the world, at the size of about half of Lebanon. The fact that the Americans have deployed their most sophisticated radar systems in Iraq, many of which have been destroyed, demonstrates the ineffectiveness of the Patriot missile defense system. This was despite U.S. forces in the region being put on high alert. This will only be in Russia's favors as it continues to lure the S-400 system to potential buyers.

Not only did the attack on the Ain al-Assad military base expose the ineffectiveness of the Patriot system, Iran also targeted the Erbil base in Iraqi Kurdistan. This base was a center to try and encourage the Iraqi Kurds to rebel against the central government in order to put pressure on the central Iraqi government. The attack on the Erbil base was a warning that even a U.S. withdrawal into Kurdistan does not make them any less safe.

It was expected by most commentators that Iran's retaliation for the martyrdom of Soleimani would be in the form of utilizing its regional paramilitary allies on U.S. positions. By directly attacking U.S. forces brazenly and openly, Tehran has demonstrated that the U.S. are not safe in any part of the region. However, Iran had no choice but to retaliate as it would demonstrate the country's leadership only had empty rhetoric in defending itself. The U.S. would certainly be more inclined to carry out further attacks against Iran and its allies if Tehran did not respond.

If there is a war going on in Iraq between the U.S. and Iran, it probably will not be limited to

one country and will engulf the whole region, and potentially, across the world. Washington cannot be counted on to abide by international laws and regulations. The countries in the region, particularly the Gulf States, should also bear in mind that the presence of U.S. bases on their land will not only fail to provide security, but will also endanger their national security as all states who assist the U.S. in any aggression against Iran will become legitimate targets, as Tehran has already warned.

Rather, the murder of Soleimani has only united Iranians, including those who have been protesting across the country since November, blaming the government for the increased fuel prices and difficult economic situation, ignoring the crippling U.S. enforced sanctions. The major demands of the Iranian people are now for the expulsion of the U.S. military from the region, something that the Islamic Republic's leadership has loudly and clearly demanded as well.

Now that Iran has made its first response to the U.S. so directly, Trump for now is refusing to respond militarily and will impose greater sanctions against Iran. However, Iran has already made the demand that the U.S. withdraws from the region. To achieve this without directly provoking Trump again, Iran is likely to employ the militias it backs in Syria and Iraq to target U.S. military installations. With any Israeli involvement in this war effort, Iran can use Hezbollah and various Palestinian militias to pressurize the Jewish state internally and externally.

Therefore, since Iran has already promised to expel the U.S. from the region, the next phase of the anti-U.S. war effort will be asymmetrical warfare by Iran. If Iran engages in asymmetrical warfare, the return of dead and wounded American soldiers will severely hamper Trump's re-election campaign this year as he originally ran on the ticket of criticizing wars in West Asia when he was competing for the presidency against Hillary Clinton years earlier. The Iranian leadership are now in control of the future of the West Asia and have demonstrated they are willing to retaliate against the U.S. who is seeking to maintain the unipolar hegemonic world order that emerged with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Iran has once again shown that the 21st century is not one of unipolarity that Washington hopes to maintain, but rather multipolar with several strong middle and Great Powers.

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