

# Trump vs. Iran: Has the US Crossed the Escalation to War Rubicon?

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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*Wars occur when ideologues and/or reckless leaders in position of power are willing to engage in high risk brinksmanship in foreign policy military adventures—often as a distraction from their growing domestic problems. Their megalomania often leads them to misread the potential response of their targeted adversary, setting off a process of unavoidable tit for tat escalation by both sides until war actually breaks out.*

The historical examples are undeniable of the role of personality in the precipitation of War in the 20th-21st Century:

Germany's Kaiser 1914 mobilization of allies in response to Serbian archduke's assassination that set in motion quid pro quo escalations; Hitler's assumption that Britain-France would do nothing in the case of Poland as they in Czechoslovakia; Japan Tojo's belief that war with the USA would be short should the US navy's pacific forces be decimated in Hawaii and driven from Philippines; South Korea president Syngman Rhee's incursion into North Korea in 1950 that started the Korean war. LBJ's Tonkin Gulf lie and subsequent military escalation in Vietnam to destroy the Vietcong, based on the assumption that North Vietnam forces would thereafter not join the conflict. Saddam Hussein's miscalculation to invade Kuwait, based on (false) assurances from the US that the US would not respond. Osama bin Laden's and Taliban's assumption US would not mobilize and invade after 9-11. George W. Bush's embracing of US neocons' advice that military conquest of Iraq would mean the end of war there, not just the beginning. And now Trump's provocation of war with Iran by assassinating its most senior military general. Miscalculations all, by reckless, high risk-taking political leaders, with little understanding of the dynamics that often lead up to war.

Three questions to consider in light of the recent US killing of Iran's top general:

Does anyone doubt what would be the response of the USA if its top general and commander in Europe were assassinated by Iran—and Iran followed it up with a declaration that they did it and he deserved it?

Is it just coincidence that Trump's 'crossing the Rubicon latest escalation' has nothing to do with the timing of impeachment proceedings in Congress? Or what appears to be an increasing probability of US economic recession in an election year.

Trump could not unilaterally go to war with Iran without US Congress approval beforehand, given the US War Powers Act. Were he to do so it would constitute yet another violation of the US Constitution. But he could provoke Iran to start one, attack US military forces, which

under that same Act would allow him to respond militarily with as much force as he wanted. Is Trump trying to provoke Iran, in order to have it precipitate an equivalent response so that he, Trump, can bypass a Congressional vote to go to war he knows he won't get?

### Who's Running the Trump Foreign Policy Show?

Trump has already fired or driven out all the military generals and advisers from his administration who might have cautioned him on his growing military brinksmanship. US foreign policy for months has now been the policy of US neocons now running his administration in State, Defense, and elsewhere. (And recall it was the Neocons back in 2002-03 that advised and drove Bush to attack Iraq).

In all the foregoing historical cases, wars are precipitated by radical ideologue and non-military intellectuals and bureaucrats who advise the high risk taking and brinksmanship action by political leaders willing to 'roll the dice' on military adventures. Politicians who are short sighted about the dynamics of how wars are started, and once started aren't easily stopped (if at all). Politicians and intellectuals-advisers precipitate the conflict; but the conflict soon sets in motion forces of its own that are not controllable. The reckless, high risk politicians are then dragged along by the forces of war, controlled by it instead of controlling it.

Trump is dragging the US toward war, whether by choice (by creating a distraction from domestic troubles); or by advice (by intellectuals-advisers Neocons whose ideologies serve their fantasy imaginations of wielding power and advancing empire); or by the inevitable accident forthcoming once escalation passes a point of no return (as it always does if allowed to continue).

### Know Them by the Company They Keep

Trump is now in infamous company: with the Kaiser, Tojo, Hitler, and all the others after who have always miscalculated and pushed their countries to the brink of war-and over.

All reckless, high risk taking, believers in their own egos, and over-estimators of their ability to judge their opponents, the course of events, and their outcomes.

The similarity in personalities-and the errors they typically make that lead to war and destruction-is not easily ignored.

You can know the person by the company they keep! And that goes for Trump

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