



Statement by Helga Zepp-LaRouche on the Assassination of Qasem Soleimani

Immediate Emergency Summit Among Presidents of US, Russia and China to Save World Peace and Define Cooperation Among the Countries Who Defeated Fascism 75 Years Ago!

With the assassination on Jan. 3 of Iranian Maj. Gen. Qasem Soleimani, Commander of the Revolutionary Guards Quds Brigade and a national hero in Iran, as well as Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the deputy commander of the Popular Mobilization Forces of Iraq, through a drone attack near the Baghdad International Airport, the world is confronted with the danger of an escalation of retaliations and counter-retaliations, which could not only lead to a war in the entire southwest Asian region, but beyond.

The Pentagon issued a statement, accompanying President Trump's signing of the attack order, that Soleimani "was actively developing plans to attack American diplomats and service members in Iraq and throughout the region." The statement claims that General Soleimani and his Quds Force were responsible for the death of hundreds of Americans and wounding of thousands more, and that the strike was aimed at deterring future Iranian attack plans.

As Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova pointed out, it was the UN Security Council's purview to make a legal assessment of attacks on countries' embassies, and that Washington had not requested an extraordinary UN Security Council meeting on the issue. Obviously the Pentagon did not see a need to do that, since the 2001 AUMF makes it legal for the US military to attack any armed group deemed to be a terrorist threat. The US State Department officially designed the IRGC as a "terrorist" group in April 2019 (a move strongly supported by then National Security Adviser John Bolton and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo). This made it "legal" for the US Armed Forces to attack individuals associated with the IRGC under any circumstances that may occur. At that point Col. Pat Lang wrote in his blog:

The neocon nitwits (Pompeo, Bolton, Hannah, etc.) may think that Iran's reaction to this declaration of war will be submission to their will, but IMO [in my opinion] that is very unlikely. IMO it is more likely that the IRGC will absorb the new reality and will prepare for war with the US.

Unfortunately, with the assassination of Soleimani, Col. Lang's warning that the Foreign Terrorist Organization [FTO] designation could lead to a war with Iran has come closer to coming true. So, while Bolton is out of the administration, his confrontational policies have created a very dangerous

heritage—a set-up for war—for Trump. And, no surprise, Bolton said in a twitter posting this morning: "*Congratulations to all involved in eliminating Qassem Soleimani. Long in the making, this was a decisive blow against Iran's malign Quds Force activities worldwide. Hope this is the first step to regime change in Tehran.*"

As could be expected, Iran's Supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, promised "harsh revenge," and large crowds assembled in various Iranian cities screaming death threats to Trump and expressing their hatred for Americans. Whatever the views of other forces in the West and in southwest Asia are of Soleimani, it is a fact that he has probably done more than anyone to contribute to the defeat of ISIS, Daesh, al Nusra, al Qaida etc., and represents a national hero in the eyes of the Iranians. As is also to be expected, various Iranian proxies in the region have immediately promised revenge actions, while the Iraqi Government has announced it will introduce legislation in the Iraqi parliament on Jan. 4 to end the legal basis for the American military presence in Iraq.

Given the extreme complexity of the history of southwest Asia in terms of ethnic and religious strife, the century-old manipulations by (primarily) the British Empire with the Great Game against Russia, and with the entanglement in this region of all the world's nuclear powers, there is no question but that this present escalation has the potential of getting completely out of control, no matter what the forces involved in the coup against President Trump may think. If there is anything one can learn from military history, it is the recognition that wars almost never go as planned. If people would have known how World War I and II evolved, they would not have started them. Before any further escalation between the US, Iran and their proxies occurs, all peace loving people in the world should support an immediate summit among the Presidents of the US, Russia and China, now, in the spirit of the Meeting at the Elbe.

It is clear, that among the three presidents, President Trump, who promised to end the endless wars and has already taken several steps in that direction, and Presidents Putin and Xi, there is the intention and the capability to outflank the maneuvers of the war-mongers and to establish a higher level of cooperation. That potential is the reason that the coup, Russiagate and now the Impeachment, are orchestrated against Trump. It is now time for those three outstanding leaders to fulfill the potential that historical providence has bestowed upon them.