

WIN WITHOUT WAR



Questions for Classified Congressional Briefing on the Soleimani Strike

Wednesday, January 8, 2020

It is [clear](#) that the administration's legal justification for taking preemptive military action to assassinate Qasem Soleimani, an Iranian military commander and government official, lacks any basis in statutory or congressional authorization, and violated U.S. and international law. At classified briefings or public hearings, Congress should ask the following questions:

- In detail, please explain the intelligence that forms that basis of what the administration claims was an imminent threat to American assets, personnel, or property. What is the link to Qasem Soleimani?
 - Chairman of the JCS Gen. Mark Milley said on Monday that the intelligence did *not* say exactly who, what, when, where. Describe to me how this threat was so extreme and imminent that it would be unreasonable to seek the necessary approvals before taking action to defend the country if you can't who, what, when, or where the threatened attack would take place.
 - How does the executive branch define imminent?
- Does the executive branch believe it has the legal authority from Congress to launch further preemptive military actions against Iranian government actors, its military, or its paramilitaries?
 - Under what specific authorities?
- The administration has continued to claim it does not want war with Iran, yet it assassinated a senior Iranian government official – an act that makes all Americans, including our servicemembers, less safe. What is the administration's plan to deescalate the situation? Will the United States end its maximum pressure campaign and seek to come back into compliance with the Iran nuclear deal?
- The administration has sent 7,000 troops to the region since escalating tensions with Iran began last June. Where are they deployed and what is the mission, scope of responsibilities, and timeline for these troops? Are they merely a tripwire to stoke further conflict with Iran?
- The Soleimani strike alienated us from our allies around the world, and resulted in the Iraqi parliament from voting to expel U.S. forces from the region. Influential cleric Muqtada al-Sadr issued a warning that U.S. troops must leave or they could be attacked. Given the heightened threats against our forces, wouldn't it be in our troops' best interest to redeploy them elsewhere or bring them home?
 - What is the administration's plan to de-escalate tensions with the Iraqi government?
 - What conversations have U.S. government officials had with Iraqi government, military, and police officials?
 - Will the United States issue an apology for violating Iraq's sovereignty?
- The Pentagon, in an apparent mistake, sent a letter to the Iraqi government noting that U.S. forces would be "re-positioned" for "onward movement." Where are U.S. troops being re-positioned? Are troops being withdrawn from Iraq? If so, what is the timeline for withdrawal?
- Is counter-IS mission "on hold" as has been reported?
- Why is the War Powers report classified? Will you commit to declassifying the report?