

Executive Order 12333: “Prohibition on Assassination”: What Do the Iranian People Think? U.S. Government Ordered Assassination of General Qassem Soleimani

License to kill?

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No Assassinations, Period. When Gerald R. Ford, James E. Carter, Jr., and Ronald W. Reagan were presidents of the United States of America, they issued Executive Orders prohibiting U.S. government employees from engaging in assassination.

Gerald R. Ford: Executive Order 11905—Section (g) *Prohibition of Assassination*. No employee of the United States Government shall engage in, or conspire to engage in, political assassination.

James E. Carter, Jr.: Executive Order 12036—Section 2-305. *Prohibition on Assassination*. No person employed by or acting on behalf of the United States Government shall engage in, or conspire to engage in, assassination.

Ronald W. Reagan: Executive Order 12333—Section 2.11 *Prohibition on Assassination*. No person employed by or acting on behalf of the United States Government shall engage in, or conspire to engage in, assassination.

These Executive Orders are still in force.

Executive orders are similar to statutes. They are the law of the land, and a violation can mean civil sanctions or criminal penalties...

...Executive orders have the same effect as laws created through the legislative process, but

they go through a simpler process that often bypasses the legislative branch.

(Source: Rebecca Pirius, NOLO.COM)

But. On January 3, 2020, Qassem Soleimani, a general in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps was assassinated at the Baghdad airport by an American drone, on order of Donald J. Trump, President of the United States and carried out through General Mark A. Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and unknown others. These were employees of the American government. Besides murder, this was an act of war against the Republic of Iraq.

While none of the previously listed Executive Orders prohibiting assassination have penalties listed for violation of those commands, it is reasonable to assume that the consequences for the Common Law crime of murder would apply. I.e., death or life imprisonment. Since Trump, Milley, and the unknown others have not been adjudged insane or lacking in mental capacity, they have no safe harbor from capital punishment or being jailed forever.

Who Condemned This Action As Unlawful?

Only one person, Agnes Callemard, UN Special Rapporteur for Extra-Judicial Killings. According to *BBC News*, July 9, 2020, she said: “the US had not provided sufficient evidence of an imminent threat to life to justify the attack.”

Continuing, the *BBC* noted “Her report says [the US had provided no evidence that showed Soleimani specifically was planning an imminent attack against US interests](#), particularly in Iraq, for which immediate action was necessary and would have been justified. Major General Soleimani was in charge of Iran military strategy, and actions, in Syria and Iraq. But absent an actual imminent threat to life, the course of action taken by the US was unlawful.” Moreover, “The drone strike therefore constituted an “arbitrary killing” for which the US is responsible under international human rights law, according to the report.”

Donald Trump’s response? Mr. Trump said he ordered the strike “to stop a war” between the U.S. and Iran. In his violation of existing Executive Orders on assassination, he nearly started one.

The State Department’s reaction? “It takes a special kind of intellectual dishonesty to issue a report condemning the United States for acting in self-defense while whitewashing General Soleimani’s notorious past as one of the world’s deadliest terrorists,” State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus said on Wednesday. “This tendentious and tedious report undermines human rights by giving a pass to terrorists and it proves once again why America was right to leave” the UN Human Rights Council in 2018, she added.”

The Congressional reaction? Typical huffing and puffing without results.

NBC News reported:

Democrats on Sunday [January 5, 2020] demanded answers about the [killing](#) of top Iranian [Gen. Qassem Soleimani](#) as tensions mounted with Iran and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo insisted that the United States had faced an imminent threat.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said on ABC’s “This Week” that he worried that President Donald Trump’s decision “will get us into what he calls [another endless war in](#)

[the Middle East](#).” He called for Congress to “assert” its authority and prevent Trump from “either bumbling or impulsively getting us into a major war.”

Speaking on “Fox News Sunday,” Rep. Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., said public assurances from the Trump administration that such a threat was “imminent” were simply not enough.

“I think we learned the hard way...in the Iraq War that administrations sometimes [manipulate and cherry-pick intelligence](#) to further their political goals,” he said.

“That’s what got us into the Iraq War. There was no WMD,” or weapons of mass destruction, he said. “I’m saying that they have an obligation to present the evidence.”

Democratic presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg said on CNN’s “State of the Union” that until the administration provides answers on “how this decision was reached...then [this move is questionable](#), to say the least.”

“I still worry about whether this president really understands that this is not a show, this is not a game,” he said. “Lives are at stake right now.”

However, more to the point, Benjamin B. Ferencz (aged 99), and chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg war crimes trials [1946-1949], wrote the *New York Times*, saying “The administration recently announced that, on orders of the president, the United States had ‘taken out’ (which really means ‘murdered’) an important military leader of a country with which we were not at war. As a Harvard Law School graduate who has written extensively on the subject, I view such immoral action as a clear violation of national and international law.”

Iran’s Reaction?

On January 2, 2022, *Al Jazeera* noted “Iran has called on the United Nations to take formal action against the United States for the [assassination](#) of its top general two years ago...In a letter to the UN General Assembly published late on Saturday, the legal department of Iran’s presidential office called for “all legal initiatives in its power, including issuing a resolution” to condemn the US government and discourage similar moves in the future. The letter said US governments have, for years, displayed an “excessive unilateralism” in their actions that has granted them the power to violate international laws and agreements.”

After the Islamic Republic launched a flurry of rockets against U.S. positions in Iran, following Soleimani’s murder, the *Middle East Eye* wrote on January 15, 2020, “Tehran is reserving its potential next move for US allies in the region, such as the UAE and Israel... Iran’s retaliation thus far has achieved two primary purposes: firstly, to show that if Soleimani’s elimination aimed to deter Tehran, it failed; and secondly, to comfort a public distressed by the loss of its “national hero”. It would be ideal if the story ended here. Unfortunately, [it is unlikely](#) that the Iranian response is truly concluded. It may unfold for years through asymmetric, hybrid warfare targeting US troops in the Middle East, as [outlined](#) by one of Tehran’s most important partners, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah.

But What Do the Iranian People Think?

They were, by turns, outraged and saddened. CNN commented January 8, 2020, “The final burial had originally been set for Tuesday [January 7], but the ceremony was delayed due to the massive crowds. Tens of thousands of people poured onto the streets in Kerman on [that

day]...Large crowds gathered around Soleimani's coffin, kneeling before it and laying flowers on top. Many clasped their hands together in prayer and bowed before the casket, openly weeping." As the Iranian press reported, January 3, 2023, "From Baghdad to Kerman, the birthplace of General Soleimani, tens of thousands of people participated in ceremonies for the commemoration of the third anniversary of the assassination of General Qassem Soleimani, the late commander of the IRGC Quds Force." On that same day, *PressTV* added "People gathered in the southeastern city of Kerman, General Soleimani's hometown, to pay tribute to the iconic commander. Similar ceremonies were also held in the Iranian capital, Tehran, and other cities, including Esfahan, Yazd, Birjand, Rasht, Shahr-e Kord and Arak."



Crowds At Soleimani Funeral

When I journeyed to Kerman, I visited both Soleimani's former house and his grave in the Martyrs' Cemetery there. There was an enormous number of people honoring him and grieving over both him and others who died resisting American wars in the region. In fact, according to General Soleimani's wishes, his home is much enlarged and functions as a shrine to him and also as a religious center.



Soleimani Grave (in white) at Keman Martyrs Cemetery. Photo: J. Michael Springmann



Crowd Around Soleimani's Grave. Photo: J. Mchael Springmann



Afghan Women Mourning Their Dead at the Martyrs Cemetery (Photo: J. Michael Springmann)



General Soleimani's Much-Enlarged House in Kerman (Photo: J. Michael Springmann)

And the Threats Go On

The current White House occupant, Joseph Robinette Biden, Jr., is unalterably opposed to Iran and spends far too much time raving about his plans to fight the Islamic Republic.

According to *NBC News*, March 25, 2023, "President Joe Biden warned Iran on Friday [March 24] that attacks on American troops would be met with retribution after [militias launched a series of rocket and drone attacks](#) against [occupation?] coalition bases in Syria... Having tried [?] and so far failed to revive a landmark 2015 nuclear deal abandoned by Trump, the Biden administration has been tightening economic pressure on Iran and has sent a signal that military force remains an option if all other means fail to stop Iran from developing nuclear weapons."

Al-Monitor remarked March 23, 2023 that US Army Gen. Mark Milley [who helped murder Soleimani] told members of Congress on Tuesday that the US should target the Quds Force "harshly" in order to deter future rocket and drone attacks by Iran-backed militias on US

troops in Syria and Iraq.

Here's the "enemy" Biden and Milley are really fighting:



Comment: For the past three years, America's puling professional politicians, mostly of the Democrat variety, as well as the prestitutes of the U.S. "news" media have pilloried Donald J. Trump. They did not do this because he, with malice aforethought, murdered Qassem Soleimani, but, rather, failed to yield up his past tax returns. Additionally, he was, without any proof, "guilty" of encouraging a demonstration that caused minor damage to the U.S. Capitol Building. This so-called "insurrection" enabled a Capitol policeman to kill, with impunity, a protester questioning the 2020 general election results. Other "crimes" of which Trump is supposedly culpable are his attacks on prosecutors investigating various alleged illegal activities, including paying off a woman he had had sex with.

The silence of all and sundry about his accountability for the greatest crime of all, the murder of an innocent man, is more than astonishing.

It is proof that the United States is not a democratic republic based on law. Rather, it is a

country centered on identity politics, regional hatreds, and attacks on anyone who supports the Bill of Rights and the Constitution. It is governed not by officials elected by the people but, rather, by politicians subservient to parochial interests and big business. Moreover, it is a country that cannot provide basic human necessities: good jobs, decent housing, proper nutrition, and universal health care. It is even unable to end the 75-year-old perpetual war against the rest of the world that now threatens America's total destruction.

Astonishingly enough, the U.S. government doesn't attack these problems but spends its time looking for ways to attack Iran and the Iranian people. *Quo vadimus?*

*

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