

## The Human Catastrophe of War

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[War Agenda](#)

*The year 2020 began with news of President Trump's bold military adventure which garnered the attention of the people around the world. 82 Iranians, 63 Canadians, 11 Ukrainians, 10 Swedish, 4 Afghans, 3 Britons, and 3 Germans lost their lives innocently January 8<sup>th</sup> in the deadly downing of a Ukrainian airliner over Tehran.*

*They were professionals, university students, newlyweds, families with their children who became the victims of "human error". Their passenger jet was accidentally shot down by the anti-aircraft missiles of the Iran's Air Defense Unit over Tehran just a few tense hours after Iran launched missiles attacks against American Airbases in Iraq.*

*After almost 3 days of denial and unjustified hesitation, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani finally offered his apologies and condolences on Twitter and wrote:*

*"The Islamic Republic of Iran deeply regrets this disastrous mistake" and promised that "Investigations continue to identify & prosecute this great tragedy & unforgivable mistake."*

*However, no apologies or punishments can resolve the anguish of the families who lost their loved ones. Subsequently and understandably, sizeable demonstrations in Tehran and other cities in Iran took place which displayed people's dissatisfaction of the government's misconduct.*



A vigil in Toronto, Canada

These demonstrations without conscious leadership (which can win the hearts and minds of

the majority in Iran) can easily be dispersed either by the security forces (like in any other capitalist countries these days) or gradually be demoralized like the past demonstrations.

Iran's classical revolution in 1979 (in which all layers in society participated and supported historical change) toppled the monarchy and Pahlavi Dynasty once and for all. Revolution opened the gate of freedom in hope for a new form of governance, a Democratic Republic. The nation's aspiration to enjoy democratic rights, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and association was suppressed by the new ruling religious cast which was unable to end to the economic system that puts profit over people but at the same time for its own survival had to stand against the imperialist powers. After 4 decades, the Iranian people are still struggling to gain their democratic rights in order to create a better future for all working families in Iran. This fact is reflected in the statement issued on January 12<sup>th</sup> by the students demonstrating in Amirkabir University in Iran. The statement (translated from Farsi by Farhang Jahanpour) in part reads:

“The events of the past two months have been a clear testimony to the complete incompetence of the regime ruling over Iran, a regime whose only answer to every crisis is to resort to force. It is our duty today to direct all our efforts at the totality of the system of suppression, whether in the form of an oppressive government or an imperialist power. During the past few years, America's presence in the Middle East has produced nothing but increasing insecurity and chaos. Our approach towards that aggressive power is quite clear. However, it is also clear to us that America's adventurism in the region should not be used as an excuse for domestic suppression. As today everybody is repeating the mantra of “national security”, we should ask which social groups, classes and strata they have in mind. We are not afraid of saying loud and clear that the security of the poor, deprived and marginalized has been undermined for many years. The economic policies of the past 30 years have resulted in creating a whole host of neglected groups, alongside a group of privileged, rich and corrupt individuals.”

Meantime, some participants in these demonstrations intentionally or unconsciously would imagine creating a scenario that has been plotted by the Trump administration in Venezuela or recently in Bolivia. Iranian people who wish to end all sanctions and all military conflicts should reach out to the peaceful American people who think the same way and indeed are dissatisfied with their own government also.



The Trump administration's justification to assassinate an Iranian General was said to be because it had the knowledge of an "imminent" threat and to "prevent further casualties"! This clear lie has been already exposed by the politicians in Washington. At the same time, the Iranian government in response to the President Trump's lies, claims that their military decision in targeting the American airbases in Iraq is solely to "de-escalate" the tension and not a call for an all-out war! This is an illogical claim. People around the world are following the conflict between the U.S. and Iran with much anxiety. It must be realized that so-called "surgical" drone assassinations or "accurate" missile attacks have deadly consequences that are unavoidable and cannot be prevented or even anticipated in advance. The problem lies in the nature of war. No one believes that drone and missile attacks will be the last of the military operations and the tragedy of the Ukrainian plane crash is the last accidental disaster.

On the contrary, after the recent events, the militarists of every government are vigorously pushing their war agenda forward. In the U.S., the phrase "Military Options" has been replaced by the reality of Military Operations. According to *Aljazeera* on the same day that General Soleimani was assassinated, the U.S. conducted a separate military operation in Yemen targeting Abdul Reza Shahlai, a high-ranking commander in Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), but the mission was not successful. Also on January 8<sup>th</sup> 2020, more than 60 civilians were killed or wounded in a U.S. drone attack targeting Mullah Nangyalay, a top Taliban splinter-group commander in Herat Province. Considering that the Iraqi parliament has already approved a resolution to expel all foreign forces from Iraq, there is no doubt that U.S. aggressive military operations in the region will be increased.

Both the phony and toothless antiwar resolution by Democrats and the elusive message of ready to "embrace peace" by the U.S. fascistic minded President should not distract and pacify the peace activists. The true peace activists rely on **PEOPLE TO PEOPLE DIPLOMACY** rather than be used as cheap pawns in the impeachment saga or phony debates about who really has the constitutional power to declare war on sovereign nations! Peace activists will not benefit from the current insoluble 1% family feud.

Professor Ussama Makdisi's informative article in the *Houston Chronicle* (Jan. 11, 2020) is a good reminder to all peace activists that how we have reached this point of chaos in the Middle East after decades by the same type of "leaders" that now are promising us a peaceful and prosperous Iraq, Iran and beyond. He wrote: "Drone killings, after all, were embraced by the Barack Obama administration. Iraq was invaded by the George W. Bush administration — and many of the falsehoods that today are justifying violence against Iran are recycled from the neoconservatives of 2003. The Clinton administration oversaw a devastating sanctions regime against Iraq — with then US ambassador to the UN Madeleine Albright telling "60 Minutes" in 1996 that the death of an estimated half a million Iraqi children as a result of sanctions was "worth it" to ensure U.S. goals in the region. Even today's affable Jimmy Carter declared in 1980, for example, that the U.S. reserved the right to use military force to repel any threat to U.S. hegemony over the Gulf region."



American Airbase in Iraq

Fear and fright, death and destruction are the components of war. Those who have experienced the sound, smell and horror of war beside their family and shivering children, will never justify any military option.

They will tell the truth. A short video report from Al-Asad Airbase by the CNN reporter Arwa Damon, which was aired 3 days after the missiles strikes by Iran, simply shows even in the heart of the most powerful and dreadful army, the human factor is still alive and critical.

Lt. Col. Staci Colemsan standing next to a cradle and remains of the damaged living quarters, in response to the question “what was that night like?” said: “It is very hard to describe it. I will tell you, it was extremely scary ... you could feel the shock waves ... even inside the bunker...”.

One can imagine how defenseless, ordinary people who are the victims of constant U.S. drone attacks must feel. FEAR is the universal emotion of people who witness the wickedness of war. The effect of war for the American soldiers in the heavy bunkers in Iraq or theater of operation elsewhere, are as strong as the frightened children in a modest elementary school in Gaza under Israeli missiles attacks or horrified patients and medical staff in a poor structured public hospital in Yemen under Saudi bombardments.

The peaceful nature of humans seeks for progress, innovation and creation. As mothers give birth and nurture their children around the world; nations must create peace and protect it in unity from the warlords and their evil nuclear arsenals. **People to People Diplomacy**, independent from the wealthy elite’s politics is the only practical option against endless wars.

No US war against Iran!

US out of the Middle East now!

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