

# PEACELINE



Jan-Feb  
2020

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## The killing of General Soleimani – another crime against the peace

On 3 January a US drone strike on Baghdad Airport in Iraq killed Iranian General Soleimani and 6 others including leaders of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces.

Iran's Foreign minister said the US had violated the foundations of international law and was threatening to do so again.

The US Department of Defense said it had "taken decisive defensive action to protect US personnel".

British ministers rushed to justify the killings. Prime Minister Boris Johnson

said General Soleimani had been "responsible for a pattern of disruptive, destabilising behaviour in the region" and was "a threat to all our interests". Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said Soleimani had been a "regional menace" who was "attacking Western countries" and the US had the "right of self defence".



London Jan 11 - 'No to war on Iran!'

President Trump said that if Iran retaliated the US would respond "perhaps in a disproportionate manner". He tweeted that "52 Iranian sites, some at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture ... will be hit very fast and very hard".

The Director of London's V&A museum pointed to the 1954 treaty outlawing such attacks and to the Geneva Convention prohibiting the targeting of "historic monuments, works of art or places of worship which constitute the cultural or spiritual heritage of peoples". He said that Iranian influence had "played a signal role in the development of British design".

Iran vowed revenge and renounced the restrictions on its uranium enrichment under the 2015 deal. The British government said that was "extremely concerning" and the deal should stay.

On 5 January Iraq's parliament passed a resolution calling on its government to expel US and other foreign forces. Its Prime Minister spoke for the resolution and put forward a plan for American troop withdrawal.

The US Secretary of State refused to respond to him. President Trump said U.S. forces would not leave unless Iraq 'paid it back'. He said "if there's any hostility, that they do anything we think is inappropriate" or if Iraq expelled US forces "we will charge them sanctions like they've never seen before ever". US sanctions on Iraq in

### London CND New Year social

**6.30pm Fri. 24 January**  
**Ev Café, 97-99 Isabella**  
**St Waterloo SE1 8DD**

Enjoy hot and cold mixed mezze with a large selection of vegetarian/vegan options, convivial company, a charming Anatolian atmosphere and a mystery guest speaker. Wide choice of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks can be bought at the bar – wines, spirits, beers, cocktails and fruit juices.

£19 per guest, payable in advance

Tickets from:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/london-cnd-new-year-social-tickets-88395209451?aff=website>

**5 mins Waterloo Station, 2 mins Southwark Tube. Disabled access.**

### London CND AGM & Conference

**Saturday 7 March**

**'An Ethical Foreign  
Policy Agenda for  
Britain'**

**At the School of Oriental  
and African Studies**

**Thornhaugh St WC1H 0XG**

**Russell Square tube 5 minutes**

**10-11.30am** • AGM in Room B104, Brunei Gallery; Register at [info@londoncnd.org](mailto:info@londoncnd.org); Open to CND members

**11.30am:** Conference on the theme 'An Ethical Foreign Policy Agenda for Britain' in the Khalili Lecture Theatre; Open to all

the 1990s were estimated to have killed 500,000 children.

On 8 January Iran fired missiles at two American military bases in Iraq, one housing US drones. Iran's foreign minister tweeted that Iran had thereby "concluded proportionate measures in self-defence".

Trump defended the assassination of Soleimani. He was copying the logic of President Bush's "Axis of Evil" speech in 2002 which started phase 2 of the 'War on Terror' and paved the way for the Iraq war. He said "Iran has been the leading sponsor of terrorism and their pursuit of nuclear weapons threatens the civilized world". The U.S. had eliminated "the world's top terrorist". It would "immediately impose additional punishing economic sanctions" on Iran. He said Britain, Germany, France, Russia and China must "break away from the Iran deal" and make a new one. He wanted to get NATO "much more involved". He warned that the U.S. Armed Forces had been "completely rebuilt under my administration" and were "stronger than ever before".

Boris Johnson condemned the Iranian missile strikes while defending the US killings, claiming that "most reasonable people would accept that the United States has the right to protect its bases and its personnel". He said Soleimani had "the blood of British troops on his hands" and warned Iran not to repeat "reckless" attacks.

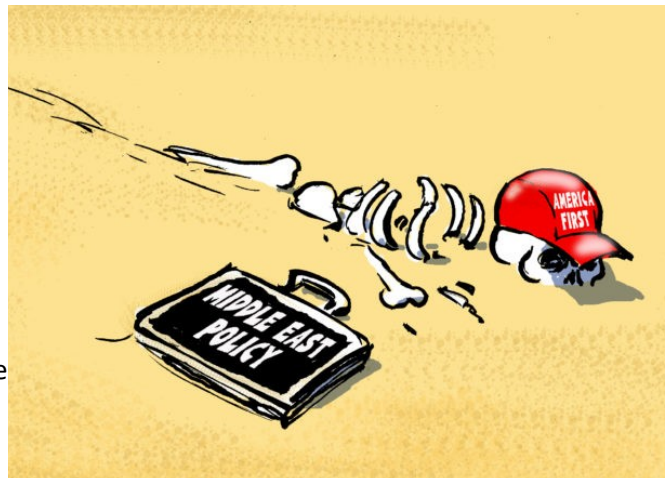
Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn questioned the legality of the drone strike and said the US had provided no evidence of an imminent threat. Boris Johnson said it was not up to the UK to say whether the strike was legal. He defended the 2015 Iran nuclear deal but later caved in to the U.S. saying "let's replace it with the Trump deal".

Trump claimed Soleimani posed an 'imminent threat' and had targeted 4 U.S. embassies, but he gave no evidence of this. Later he said "it really doesn't matter" whether Soleimani posed an imminent threat. U.S. Sec-

retary of State Pompeo had argued that Soleimani's attacks were 'imminent'. But he couldn't say when or where or how they were supposed to happen. But he "knew" Soleimani was "probably" up to no good.

But in a keynote speech on 13 January titled "The Restoration of Deterrence: The Iranian Example" Pompeo dropped all claims of the excuse of an 'imminent threat'. He said Soleimani was killed as part of a broader strategy of 'detering' challenges which also applied to China and Russia.

Pompeo said the "bigger strategy" behind the killing of Soleimani was to establish "real deterrence". He said "the importance of deterrence isn't confined to Iran. That's the whole point of President Trump's work to make our military the strongest it's



ever been."

He cited the U.S. sending lethal military aid to Ukraine, US withdrawal from the INF treaty, a new U.S. missile which was being developed, stepped-up U.S. naval exercises in the South China Sea and Trump's imposition of tariffs on China as examples of the administration's "deterrence strategy". Pompeo said "we're restoring credibility to deterrence".

'Deterrence by assassination' has been adopted alongside 'nuclear deterrence' in the continuing process of smashing up the foundations of international law agreed but never implemented after world war II.

Trump adopted the language of George W Bush's 'Global War on Terror' and his Axis of Evil speech from 2002 in defending the assassin-

ation of General Suleimani.

The War on Terror was used to override the restraints on the use of armed force in international relations which were imposed at the Nuremberg Tribunal in 1946. This adjudged that a crime against the peace - waging aggressive war - was the 'supreme international crime'.

But the Trump regime has taken the gangster logic to new depths: The Iraqi government invites a foreign general to visit. The US calls Iraq a 'strategic partner' but uses a killer drone of the type it bases in Iraq itself to bomb Iraq and assassinate the general. The Iraqi parliament then votes to expel US forces from the country. Its Prime Minister speaks in favour of that.

The US President then threatens its 'strategic partner' to which it claims to have brought 'democracy' that it will face sanctions even harsher than the ones that killed 500,00 of its children if it implements its decision.

Britain too is a 'strategic partner' of the US. Boris Johnson will have to pay attention.

Britain claims to have an 'independent nuclear deterrent' which only works if British submarines sail across

the Atlantic Ocean to pick up their missiles from the US navy stockpile.

Meanwhile the British navy is being reorganised around new aircraft carriers which will have to be escorted by US navy warships. The carriers fly US-built jets and their first operational voyage will be with a joint force of US and British planes on board to the Pacific. Meanwhile Britain has opened its first base for 50 years 'east of Suez' - inside the US base in Bahrain.

That explains why Boris Johnson first stuck with the French and Germans in saying they must preserve the 2015 Iran deal. But when Trump told them to "break away from the Iran deal" Johnson dutifully said "let's replace it with the Trump deal".

**Jim Brann**

## What came out of NATO's 2019 London Summit?

Nato held its 70th anniversary 'London' Summit in December 18 miles away in the Hertfordshire countryside to avoid protests.

The summit was marked by 'front of house' theatrics while backstage NATO continues its transformation as the world's only integrated military-political bloc. Its course is intervention, expansion, an increasing worldwide role, confronting Russia & China and increased military spending. French President Macron had earlier said he was not sure if America would really defend a Nato ally, that the bloc was experiencing "brain death" and should reassess its purpose, focussing more on 'terrorism' and less on Russia. He also criticised Turkey.

Turkey's president said Macron should "have his own brain death checked out first". President Trump refused to say if he US would defend a NATO member that he said was "delinquent" in its military spending. Meanwhile he summit

- marked the 5th year of rising Nato military spending, noting that its European members and Canada had added \$130 billion in spending and by 2024 will have added \$400 billion
  - condemned Russian 'aggression'
  - put China on its agenda for the first time
  - affirmed that 'as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance'
  - marked the increased readiness of Nato forces
  - declared space to be NATO's 5th operational domain
  - drew up an action plan against terrorism
  - ensured Nato's 'technological edge'
  - strengthened Nato's partnerships
  - adopted a process to strengthen Nato's political side
- Trump said "a lot of countries have stepped up, I think at my behest."

## The 2020 US military budget

A key pledge of Donald Trump in 2016 was to "spend what we need to rebuild our military. We will develop, build and purchase the best equipment known to mankind. Our military dominance must be unquestioned". His 2018 and 2019 budgets carried that forward. His \$738 billion 2020 military budget, an increase of \$22 billion, was passed in December.

Trump tweeted: "Wow! All our priorities have made it into the final NDAA: Pay Raises for our Troops, Rebuilding our Military, Paid Parental Leave, Border Security, and Space Force!"

The U.S. has almost the largest military budget in its history and spends as much on its military as 144 other countries combined.

Speaking on 8 January about the assassination of General Soleimani Trump boasted that "the American military has been completely rebuilt under my administration, at a cost of \$2.5 trillion. U.S. Armed Forces are stronger than ever before".

The budget authorises the creation of a U.S. Space Force. Trump said this would "establish space as a warfighting domain" and guarantee that "the US will dominate in that environment just like all others."

The US military budget has been passed every year since 1961 and is one of the few major pieces of legislation that always gets through Congress despite party divisions.

The budget deficit widened to almost \$1 trillion with much of the budget being funded by borrowing.

The budget law allows the U.S. to quickly deploy the new W76-2 low-yield tactical nuclear warhead on its Trident submarines.

The President of the Union of Concerned Scientists wrote that "the bill fully funds almost every element of the Trump administration's trillion-dollar plan to replace the entire US nuclear arsenal with new, more deadly weapons".

## After scrapping the INF treaty ...

The 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty banned the United States and the Soviet Union from having land-based missiles with ranges between 500km and 5,500km. It was a major de-escalation of tension.

In 2014 the U.S. started claiming that a Russian missile violated the INF treaty. The Russians denied it. US allies were sceptical.

Then from October 2018 the U.S. piled on the pressure. By December Nato had caved in and endorsed the idea of the 'Russian threat'.

The US gave notice of leaving the INF treaty. On 2 August 2019 it did so.

On 18 August it carried out a test of a previously-banned land-based cruise missile. The U.S. Defense Department said "data collected and lessons learned from this test will inform the Department of Defense's development of future intermediate-range capabilities".

On 12 December 2019 the US carried out a test of a previously-banned land-based ballistic missile.

Land-based missile launchers are cheaper and can be loaded with missiles more easily than ships, subs and planes, which can then be freed to do other things.

Both tests recycled existing missiles but brand-new ones are planned.

The US army tested its new Precision Strike Missile for the first time on 10 December. Its range had been capped at 499km but may be raised to 800-km. An even longer-range hypersonic missile is also in the works. The US says that its new missiles would not be nuclear.

China has about 2,000 non-nuclear intermediate-range missiles. The US Defence Secretary said he wanted to put new missiles in Asia "sooner rather than later", although no country there has said it would accept them.

The great 'Russian missile scare' of 2018 looks ever-more cooked up. It's how the US runs NATO.

# Coming Events

## London CND Events

[info@londoncnd.org](mailto:info@londoncnd.org) 020 7607 2302

**Fri Jan 24 • 6.30pm** • London CND New Year social at Ev Café, 97-99 Isabella Street, Waterloo SE1 8DD; 5 mins Waterloo Station, 2 mins Southwark Tube; £19 per head. See page 1

**Sat Mar 7** • London CND AGM and Conference at SOAS University of London, Thornhaugh Street WC1H 0XG; Russell Square tube; • **10-11.30am** • AGM in Room B104, Brunei Gallery; CND members welcome; Register at [info@londoncnd.org](mailto:info@londoncnd.org); • **11.30am** • Conference in Khalili Lecture Theatre: 'An Ethical Foreign Policy Agenda for Britain'; open to all

## Local Group Events

### Bromley Borough

**1st Saturday every month • 2.30 - 4.00pm** • Leafleting; 020-8460 1295 [anncgarratt@yahoo.com](mailto:anncgarratt@yahoo.com)

### Wimbledon

**Every Friday • 6-7pm** • Vigil for Peace at St. Mark's Place, Wimbledon. Has been held for 16 years. Info: Maisie, 020 8001 5167; [info@wdc-cnd.org.uk](mailto:info@wdc-cnd.org.uk)

## Other Events

**Sat Feb 8** • "Unite against war and military aggression." 38 Degrees mass performance action against the BP-sponsored Troy exhibition. A mass creative takeover of the British Museum, to take action against BP, colonialism and the climate crisis. Featuring a Trojan Horse. Contact; To BP or not BP.

**Tue Feb 11 • 7pm** • "Nonviolence and Sanctions." London Pacifism and Nonviolence Discussion Group meeting. At Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, Kings Cross, London N1. Contact: 020-7278 4474 [SecondTuesday@groupmail.com](mailto:SecondTuesday@groupmail.com)

**Wed Feb 12 • 7pm** • "The Clamour

of Nationalism: Race and the Nation in Twenty-First Century Britain."

With Sivamohan Valluvan who seeks to find a meaningful understanding of the new nationalism sweeping Europe. Tickets in advance at £1-£5 from [www.housmans.com/events](http://www.housmans.com/events); At Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, N1 9DY; 020 7837 4473

**Wed Feb 26 • 3pm** • Ash Wednesday Witness against nuclear weapons outside the Ministry of Defence. Meet in Whitehall Gardens (near Embankment tube) and process around the MOD building to the entrance in Horseguards Avenue. Org. by Pax Christi, CCND and London Catholic Worker. Contact: 020 8203 4884

**Sat Feb 29 • 11am** • Peace Pledge Union AGM. Free for all PPU members, hear more about our work over the past year – and to help us shape what comes next. At Friends House 173 Euston Road, NW1 2BJ; 020 7424 9444; Euston tube

**Wed Mar 4 • 7pm** • International Women's Day event with Kate Hennessy, granddaughter of Dorothy Day, supported by Pax Christi. At Bloomsbury Baptist Church, 235 Shaftesbury Ave. WC2H 8EP. Contact: 020 8203 4884

**Tue Mar 10 • 7pm** • "Can a Pacifist ever be a nationalist?" London Pacifism and Nonviolence Discussion Group meeting. At Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, Kings Cross, London N1. 020-7278 4474 [SecondTuesday@groupmail.com](mailto:SecondTuesday@groupmail.com)

**Wed Mar 11 • 5.30-7.30pm** • Fukushima 9<sup>th</sup> Anniversary vigil outside the Japanese Embassy, Piccadilly, Org. KN & JAN. Info: [www.kicknuclear.org](http://www.kicknuclear.org)

**Sat Mar 14 • noon** • assemble outside Japanese Embassy, 101-104 Piccadilly, Mayfair, London W1 for Fukushima anniversary march to

opposite Downing Street, for rally. Org. KN & JAN: [www.kicknuclear.com](http://www.kicknuclear.com)

**Sat Mar 21 • 11am-1pm** • Nuclear Train Action Group stall and leafletting outside Brixton tube station (Trains carrying highly-radioactive cargoes cross a bridge near the entrance to the station.) Info: 020-7700 2393.

## Regular events

**Every Wed • 6-7pm** • Women in Black silent vigil against militarism & war; Edith Cavell Statue, St Martin's PI WC2; [wibinfo@gn.apc.org](mailto:wibinfo@gn.apc.org)

**Every Fri • 10am-12.30pm** • "No More Fukushimas" Vigil outside Japanese Embassy, 101-104 Piccadilly. Green Park Tube **1-1.30pm** • Vigil at Tokyo Electric Power Company offices, 14-18 High Holborn (Chancery Lane tube); Info: David 020 7700 2393; [www.kicknuclear.com](http://www.kicknuclear.com)

**1<sup>st</sup> Sun each month • 10.55am** • Walk in Peace; Slow, silent 1-hour walk for peace; Speakers' Corner café, Hyde Park (Marble Arch tube); Clare 020 8755 0353; [beatrice@b-millar.com](mailto:beatrice@b-millar.com)

**Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues of the month • 12.30-1.30pm** • Refugee Vigil in front of the Home Office; Organised by London Catholic Worker. Contact: 020 8348 8212