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Conceptualising the Persian Gulf Crisis in the Left-Wing and Right-Wing US Media: A Critical Metaphor Analysis

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Abstract

This thesis explores the conceptualisation as well as underlying ideologies in the discourse of left-wing and right-wing US media on the Persian Gulf crisis of 2019-2021. It investigates conceptual structure patterns of the Gulf crisis as compared to the previous conflicts in the Persian Gulf, and the differences of metaphor use between the left-wing and right-wing media, *i.e.*, CNN and Fox News, respectively. The data was analysed by applying such research approaches as Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) and Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA). The analysis shows that both left-wing and right-wing media conceptualise the Persian Gulf crisis similarly in terms of conceptual structures and number of occurrences, where the target domain of politics is conceptualised as a journey, business, game, or play; power as physical force; states, governments, and military equipment are personified; conflicts are mostly conceptualised as physical force or heat; and finally, people are perceived as objects. The overall conceptualisation suggests a high correspondence with the previous metaphor studies on conflicts in the Persian Gulf, which also coincides with the metaphor structures prevalent in political discourse. At the same time, the lack of certain conceptualisations as compared to the previous studies is due to the state of escalating tensions, rather than of a full-scale war, making certain conceptual structures unnecessary and unimportant in the discourse and context of the crisis. While both left-wing and right-wing media recognise Iran as the aggressor, CNN, however, also acknowledges the role of the US in the escalation of the conflict, specifically Trump, whereas Fox News supports Trump and rather denies the United States' involvement in the escalation. However, such metaphorical representation of the crisis identified in both CNN and Fox News plays into the idea of the Iranian regime needing guidance from the US in becoming a democratic state, which dehumanises and demonises Iran.

Table of Contents

- Introduction 5
- 1. Literature Review..... 9
 - 2.1. Conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) 9
 - 2.2. Metaphor and political discourse..... 12
 - 2.3. Metaphorical representation of conflicts in the Persian Gulf 16
 - 2.4. Left-wing and right-wing ideologies in US news media..... 18
- 3. Data and methodology 22
 - 3.1. Sources of data..... 22
 - 3.2. Research methods 23
 - 3.2.1. Metaphor Identification Procedure..... 24
 - 3.2.2. Critical Metaphor Analysis 25
- 4. Research findings..... 27
 - 4.1. Conceptual metaphors identified in CNN and Fox News 28
 - 4.2. Ideological conceptualisation of the Persian Gulf crisis 44
- 5. Conclusions..... 47
- 6. References..... 50
- 7. Data sources 56
- 8. Summary in Lithuanian..... 57
- Appendix 1. Video titles, dates of upload, transcripts, links..... 58
 - 1. From CNN..... 58
 - 2. From Fox News 90
- Appendix 2. Metaphorical expressions with their corresponding conceptual structures 117
 - 1. Identified in CNN..... 117
 - 2. Identified in Fox News 146
- Appendix 3. Conceptual structures with the numbers of metaphorical expressions identified in CNN and Fox News..... 168

Introduction

The ongoing flaring of tensions between the US and Iran increased in May of 2019. Such rapid intensification of events was one of the most significant world events in 2019, and in 2020, war between the two countries seemed imminent at some point, with talks and fears of it developing into the Third World War. This crisis in the Persian Gulf, as it was named, was extensively covered by the media all around the world, especially in the United States of America. And as news media reach a large audience by providing some sense of the world by collecting and interpreting information, they also often introduce contradictory, false, and biased information. This means that the media are very careful in deciding what needs coverage and for what purpose. By now, it is well known that certain events are covered more frequently and extensively than others, which makes them more authoritative and truthful (van Dijk 1998b; Fairclough 2003; Happer & Philo 2013). Also, the way certain events are covered in terms of ideological presuppositions depends on the type and the stance of the media, and that ideologies and opinions of the media are rarely personal, but rather social, institutional, or political (van Dijk 1998b; Dinan & Miller 2009). Therefore, it is generally acknowledged that ideologies and opinions are transmitted through language.

The relationship between language and political communication has long been attested, as a large body of research shows (Fairclough 1996; Chilton & Schäffner 1997; van Dijk 1998c, 2003; Chilton 2004). Political discourse is very ideological, and its analysis can reveal beliefs and personal experiences (van Dijk 2003); it can also disclose the relationship between power and language in and behind discourse (Fairclough 2003). It is possible to conclude, therefore, that a) discourse is a form of social practice; b) power relations are textual; and c) discourse is ideologically driven (Fairclough 2003). As Wodak and Meyer (2015, 118) point out, discourse “with its recurring contents, symbols and strategies, leads to the emergence and solidification of knowledge and therefore has sustained effects”, and such effects of solidified knowledge lead us to the way we understand and cognize certain abstract and complex phenomena, and which, when used in a persuasive political discourse, can have an ideological impact on our understanding of the cognitive dimensions of politics.

Furthermore, it is also important to consider the functions of framing in the media, as there are always choices what to portray and how to contextualize certain events (Fairclough 2003). One could argue that framing is a powerful tool, especially in political discourse, as it may cast someone or something in unfavourable, negative light by often emphasising the ‘antagonist-protagonist’ portrayal, setting “the ‘good guys’ against the ‘bad guys’” (Fairclough 2003, 54). Such portrayal can also be achieved with the use of metaphors.

The prevalence of metaphor in political discourse has been discussed by numerous scholars in the field of linguistics and discourse analysis. Unlike the use of metaphor for artistic effect or rhetorical flourish, the use of conceptual metaphor is pervasive in everyday language and thought (Lakoff 1993; Gibbs 1999; Lakoff & Johnson 2003; Kövecses 2010a), as it is perceived as a cognitive means of understanding complex and abstract situations. In social and political conceptualisation, cognitive metaphors “play a central role in the construction of social and political environment” (Lakoff & Johnson 2003, 159) and the analysis of such metaphors in the political arena can disclose underlying ideologies and hidden power relations (Arcimavičienė 2014, 36). Therefore, the analysis of metaphors in political discourse in the media regarding various types of crises, including the Persian Gulf crisis, can reveal what kind of image of crises the media creates for its readers.

Throughout the years, previous conflicts in the Persian Gulf were extensively studied in terms of their metaphorical representation by different scholars. Lakoff (1991, 2003) analyses the metaphors used in the Gulf War and the Iraq War which the Bush administration employed to justify them. Some of the identified pervasive metaphors in reasoning about the two crises include THE STATE AS PERSON OR A NATION IS A PERSON which conceptualise the state or a nation as a person with friendly and hostile neighbours, friends and enemies; as children and adults, where “the children are the ‘developing’ nations of the Third World, in the process of industrializing, who need to be taught how to develop properly and to be disciplined” when not complying with the rules (Lakoff 2003, 1). Such conceptualisation of the state or a nation as a person justifies the war as The Self-Defence Story or The Rescue Story (Lakoff 1991, 26; 2003, 2). Other metaphors include WAR IS POLITICS and POLITICS IS BUSINESS, which justifies the war by “maximising political gains and minimizing losses” (1991, 28); WAR IS VIOLENT CRIME metaphor, which includes the discourse of murder, rape, assault, kidnapping, arson, and theft; WAR IS A COMPETITIVE GAME metaphor, where there is a winner and a loser; WAR IS A MEDICINE, which sees military control by the enemy as cancer; etc. For Lakoff (1991, 2003) then, such metaphorical representation of the two crises is what brought the US in those wars.

Pancake (1993, 281) argues that “the American people's acceptance of and support for the war was determined in part by the metaphors in which they read about it.” The author identified five metaphor categories (1993, 283) used by the media to report on the Persian Gulf War, which are: WAR IS A STORM, which leads people to believe that war is natural and inevitable; MACHINES ARE ANIMATE BEINGS, – machines are agentive beings that have a mind of their own; WAR IS A GAME and WAR IS ENTERTAINMENT, first of all, help perceive the war as having the sense of beginning, middle, end, and second, make the soldiers’ experiences less distant and abstract (1993, 288) ; and THE WAR ZONE IS THE WILD WEST, which represents “the residue of early America’s policies of expansionism and manifest destiny” and brings the threat from Iraq closer to the American territories (1993, 292).

Similarly, Bates (2004) analyses metaphorical representations of the war in the Persian Gulf, which were used by the Bush administration to justify it. The author identified two metaphors that dominated Bush's discourse: the CIVILIZATION metaphor, which was used to represent and justify America's motivation to take military action against Iraq, and the SAVAGERY metaphor – to represent Iraq and its invasion of Kuwait. Thus, Bates (2004, 454) argues that the SAVAGERY metaphors are dehumanising and decivilizing vehicles and serve as “comparisons to jungle animals, Nazis, machines, and criminals”, whereas the CIVILIZATION metaphors are civilizing vehicles used to maintain the world order and civilization.

Finally, Sandikcioglu (2000, 7) investigates the connection between the metaphorical representation of the Gulf War and the cultural cognitive aspects of the Self and the Other. The author analysed seven categories of the *Us-Them* dichotomy, which are civilization vs barbarism, power vs weakness, maturity vs immaturity, rationality vs irrationality, stability vs instability, alliance vs kinship, gambling table vs bazaar, where the West is portrayed and perceived as civilized, and the East as savage.

However, because the crisis in the Persian Gulf of 2019-2021 is relatively recent, there has not yet been ample research carried out regarding the metaphorical representation of this crisis which may disclose significant ideological implications. Therefore, this paper would be a valuable addition to the field in its attempt to examine the metaphorical representation of the recent crisis in the Persian Gulf in two ideologically driven media sources, namely, the left-wing and right-wing US media. More precisely, the thesis aims to disclose whether the two news outlets on the two opposite political leanings portray the crisis differently in terms of metaphorical framing of events. Hence, this thesis is a contribution to the analysis of metaphorical representation of the conflicts in the Persian Gulf.

The aim of this research is to establish the left-wing and right-wing US media's underlying ideological motivations through their use of metaphorical expressions that address the Persian Gulf crisis of 2019-2021. To fulfil the aim, the following objectives are set:

1. to identify metaphorical expressions by employing the Metaphor Identification Procedure in the close reading of the transcribed texts of selected videos from CNN and Fox News;
2. to reconstruct and interpret the use of conceptual metaphors that underlie the conceptualisation of the 2019-2021 Persian Gulf crisis by classifying the metaphors according to their conceptual structure TARGET DOMAIN IS SOURCE DOMAIN;
3. to establish similarities and differences of metaphor use in the political discourse of the chosen left-wing and right-wing media;
4. to situate the findings of this study in the wider context of existing research by comparing the metaphorical representation of the 19-21 Persian Gulf Crisis with the previous metaphor studies on the conflicts in the Persian Gulf;

5. to disclose the media's underlying ideological motivations through their use of metaphorical expressions that address the 19-21 Persian Gulf crisis.

However, one cannot bypass the general theoretical notions crucial to the present study before proceeding to the analysis of the metaphorical representations in the crisis of the Persian Gulf. The next section of the thesis presents the theoretical framework that the thesis relies on and in the light of which the results of the present study will be interpreted.

1. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptual metaphor theory (CMT)

Philosophers, linguists, and literary scholars have been preoccupied with defining the concept of metaphor and its role in language since ancient times. The answers to the question as to what a metaphor is have been varied, which has led to the development of different theories and approaches. In ancient times, scholars regarded metaphor as a figure of speech prevalent in the field of rhetoric and used for imaginative and poetic purposes, – metaphor was considered to have no place in the ordinary everyday language (Lakoff 1993, 202). Aristotle, in *Poetics* (c. 335 BC), defines metaphor as “a carrying over of a word belonging to something else, from genus to species, from species to genus, from species to species, or by analogy” (Sachs 2006, 52). Therefore, a key characteristic of the traditional approach to metaphor is a shift of one or more words from their original meaning to the new one in terms of their similarities. To Richards (1929) too, metaphors were transference of word from one meaning to another, though he believed it to be not merely a literary device for rhetorical and poetic purposes, not just a matter of language, but that metaphors are part of cognition.

In 1980s, a novel metaphor theory was developed by cognitive linguists, which is now known as the conceptual metaphor theory (CMT). Cognitive linguists have rejected the traditional theory of metaphor by arguing that metaphors used for poetic and rhetoric purposes are still conceptualised in reasoning, which are then realised through language. CMT suggests that metaphor is part of cognitive processes, which means that everyday metaphor is an essential part of everyday language and thought (Lakoff 1993; Lakoff & Johnson 2003; Kövecses 2010), and “is characterized by a huge system of thousands of cross-domain mappings” (Lakoff 1993, 203). Therefore, conceptual metaphor is part of the common everyday language and is perceived as a cognitive means of understanding complex and abstract ideas and feelings, such as love, beauty, anger, time, *etc.*

One of the main characteristics of conceptual metaphor theory is that conceptual metaphor draws on conceptual domain, which “is our conceptual representation, or knowledge, of any coherent segment of experience”, whose elements are either basic or rich in detail (Kövecses 2010, 324). Therefore, metaphor is the understanding of one conceptual domain in terms of another, or CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN A IS CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN B; hence, the word ‘conceptual’ in conceptual metaphor (ibid. 4). The formula, however, implies the existence of two domains, which are called source domain, or CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN B, and target domain, or CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN A. Source domains are concrete concepts “from which we draw metaphorical expressions to understand another conceptual domain” that is target domain, – an abstract concept, which is to be understood through the use of the source domain (ibid. 4). In other words, source domains depend on concrete concepts and connect them with very abstract ones,

i.e., target domains (Lakoff 1993; Lakoff & Johnson 2003; Kövecses 2005, 2010), producing a variety of linguistic instantiations. Thus, such abstract concepts, or target domains, as ARGUMENT, LOVE, TIME, THE MIND, IDEAS are perceived through concrete concepts, or source domains, such as WAR, PATIENT, MONEY, MACHINE, FOOD (Lakoff & Johnson 2003, 4-49; Kövecses 2010, 4), and many more. It is important to note, however, that there has been a convention to mark conceptual domains using small capital letters, and the formula to label a conceptual metaphor is A IS B, hence the formula TARGET DOMAIN IS SOURCE DOMAIN. For instance, the metaphorical concept TIME IS MONEY draws on the idea that the abstract concept of time is understood through the concrete concept of money – time is as valuable a resource as money, – with linguistic expressions such as *to run out of time, to invest a lot of time, to spend some time, to borrow time, etc.* (Lakoff & Johnson 2003, 8).

However, some scholars state that understanding of metaphorical meaning, which results from the close relation between thought and language, is influenced by and depends on a number of factors. For example, some scholars (Ibarretxe-Antuñano 1999; Lakoff & Johnson 2003; Gibbs 2006) argue that one of the key aspects in developing a conception of metaphorical meaning is that of sensorimotor and spatiotemporal experience. For instance, a wide variety of abstract ideas, events, feelings, etc., are understood in spatial relations, for example, HAPPY IS UP, *e.g.* “*You’re in high spirits*”, or SAD IS DOWN, *e.g.*, “*He’s really low these days*” (Lakoff & Johnson 2003, 15); or TIME IS SPACE or TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT, which suggests that people are moving along a straight line either ahead or back, *e.g.* “*I look forward to the arrival of Christmas*” or “*I can’t face the future*” (Lakoff & Johnson 2003, 42-43). However, this embodiment is not universal, – cultural background plays a significant role in understanding linguistic conception of meaning, which varies from person to person, whether cross-culturally or within one particular culture (Kövecses 2005, 2010; Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2013). In other words, different societies differ in terms of what kind of conceptual metaphors they use to construct and interpret the world around them.

Since the introduction of the conceptual metaphor theory in the 1980s, many scholars have analysed the natural occurrence of metaphors in language. For instance, Lakoff (1991, 2003), Kövecses (2000, 2010a), Chilton (1996, 2004), Musolff (2004, 2007) and other scholars studied conceptual metaphors and their ideological entailments in political discourse. The use of metaphors in language has also been analysed through the sociological lens, for example the role of metaphor in the relationship between gender and inequality (Koller 2004a, 2004b; Meier & Lombardo 2009; Lombardo et al. 2009), racial prejudice and dehumanisation (Musolff 2007; Steuter & Wills 2009), *etc.* For example, in his research on the ideological nature of conceptual metaphors, Musolff (2007) examines the antisemitic imagery in Hitler’s speeches, more specifically the framing of Jews as parasites through the source domain of microbes and agents of disease. Microbes are associated with dirt and work by entering the body and

causing disease, – disease, however, can be treated, or removed, from the body. The logic of this conceptualisation is straightforward: if Jews are metaphorically conceptualised as parasites, then the obvious rationale is to minimise the threat. Therefore, Hitler’s use of such metaphorical representation of Jews as parasites can be viewed as discursive legitimization of the genocide (Musolff 2007).

A number of scholars have incorporated different approaches to the analysis of conceptual metaphors. For instance, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) aims to analyse language as a social practice through discourse, which produces insights into the ways discourse perpetuates abuse of power, dominance, manipulation, inequality, legitimation, *etc.* (van Dijk 1995b; Weiss & Wodak 2007; van Leeuwen 2008; Fairclough 2013). Or as van Dijk (1995b, 18) puts it, CDA attempts “to uncover the discursive means of mental control and social influence”, which “implies a critical and oppositional stance *against the powerful and the elites*”. Thus, the analysis of conceptual metaphors in CDA serves to investigate ideologies of inequality and “is concerned with forming a coherent view of reality” (Charteris-Black 2004, 247). According to CMT, however, metaphor is part of cognitive processes and does not involve the speaker’s intentions. Conceptual metaphors in CDA, ‘are chosen by speakers to achieve particular communication goals within particular contexts rather than being predetermined by bodily experience’ (Charteris-Black 2004, 247).

Charteris-Black (2004, 2018) has developed a new approach to metaphor analysis called Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA), which integrates both CMT and CDA. The aim of CMA is to explore the context of metaphor, speaker’s implicit intentions, and covert socio-political power relations. CMA involves four stages: contextual analysis, metaphor identification, interpretation, and explanation. Contextual analysis proposes developing research question(s) surrounding the use of metaphor in social and political contexts. These questions help to narrow down the selection of data (Charteris-Black 2018, 217). The metaphor identification stage involves close reading of a given text to identify metaphorically used words and potential semantic tension between the target and source domains, *i.e.*, incongruous relation of domains. The stage of interpretation includes identification of “the relationship between metaphors and the cognitive and pragmatic elements that determine them” (Li 2016, 94). After the first two steps are complete, it becomes possible to explain the use of metaphors and their interaction with a certain context. Social power, role and cultural ideology of the speaker are important in the production and interpretation of metaphorical expressions (Charteris-Black 2004, 2016).

Over the past four decades, the interest in metaphor analysis has greatly increased, especially in the analysis of political discourse, which provides “particular insight into why the rhetoric of political leaders is successful” (Charteris-Black 2016, 197). The next section provides a review of relevant previous research on the use of metaphor in political discourse.

2.2. Metaphor and political discourse

The definition of political discourse can be approached through different theoretical perspectives. A rather broad view on political discourse is that it describes the discourse practices that involve actors or authors in particular political environments or domains, *viz.*, “professional politicians or political institutions, such as presidents and prime ministers and other members of government, parliament or political parties, both at the local, national and international levels” (van Dijk 1998c, 12). Some scholars, however, claim that political discourse is not limited only to actors or actions that are political, but rather it is a means of political communication used by both speaker and audience and transmitted throughout different genres (van Dijk 1998c; Wilson 2005), including political speeches, interviews, press conferences, press reports on political events, *etc.* (Wodak 2009). Chilton (2004, 3), for instance, suggests that there are two broad perspectives on political discourse: first, politics can be “viewed as a struggle for power” between the participants who seek to keep or insist on their power and those that seek to resist it; on the other hand, politics refers to a society’s ability to resolve “clashes of interest over money, influence, liberty, and the like” through practices and institutions. Chilton (2004, 3-4) also highlights the two levels of politics: the micro level, which involves struggles for power, conflicts of interest, and cooperation between individuals and different social groups, and whose behaviours occur in discourse, *e.g.*, parliamentary debates; and the macro level, which refers to political institutions whose goal is to resolve conflicts and assert the dominance of an individual or a group. However, for an individual or a group to assert or gain power and dominance, various discursive techniques and strategies must be employed, especially those with persuasive and manipulative functions (Chilton 2004; Fairclough 1996; Wodak 2009). In political discourse persuasive strategies are achieved through language “because it projects shared social beliefs about what is right and wrong so that alliances can be formed around these beliefs” (Charteris-Black 2016, 2). Language, therefore, is a significant factor in conducting politics, in which the use of metaphor is one such strategy.

The prevalence and importance of metaphor in political discourse has been discussed by a number of scholars in the field of linguistics and discourse analysis (Lakoff 1991, 2003; Lakoff & Johnson 2003; Charteris-Black 2016). To reiterate, CMT suggests that metaphor is not only pervasive in language, but also in thought and action (Lakoff & Johnson 2003; Kövecses 2010). Therefore, in political discourse metaphor is not just a transfer of semantics from one domain of experience to another. In the analysis of the function of metaphor in political discourse, scholars have proposed two fundamental assumptions: a) metaphor is a powerful tool of constructing reality, and b) conceptual metaphors in language can act as a tool of control (Lakoff & Johnson 2003; Mason 2007). Metaphor transfers the understanding of abstract and complex concepts into concrete ones by focusing on one aspect of some issue and ignoring

another, “thereby helping one to concentrate upon desired consequences of favored public policies and helping one to ignore their unwanted, unthinkable, or irrelevant premises and aftermaths” (Mio 1997, 114). Lakoff and Johnson (2003, 159-160) argue that while most metaphors in cultures have developed over a long period, many are still imposed upon people by the media and power figures – politicians, business and religious leaders, *etc.*, and those that impose their metaphorical conceptualisation “get to define what we consider to be true – absolutely and objectively true”, as well as construct “social and political environment”. In political discourse, therefore, metaphor functions not as a basic component of discourse, but as a powerful discursive strategy in various political contexts aiming at pursuing personal political interests and influencing people’s beliefs and opinions through persuasion (Charteris-Black 2004; Lakoff 2002). Moreover, metaphors can stimulate emotional reactions, which is one of the elements of persuasion (Charteris-Black 2016). To appeal to large audiences, then, political figures’ goal is to select metaphors carefully for the ideologically loaded statements to be more significant and persuasive.

However, metaphor, as a feature of language and discourse, can be ideologically loaded (Lakoff & Johnson 2003; van Dijk 1998c, 2003; Koller 2004a, 2004b). Van Dijk (2003, 209) states that ideology denotes a system of beliefs, or social representations, that lie at the basis of a certain group and its members and affect discourse structures on many levels, including metaphorical one. According to this definition then, ideology relates to “socially shared mental representations, such as specific group knowledge and cultural common ground” (van Dijk 2003, 209). In other words, ideologies define characteristics of a certain group. For instance, the idea behind the two opposite political ideologies in the US – liberalism and conservatism – lies in their alliance with certain social and political visions: liberals generally opt for change and novelty, support civil liberties (such as free speech), support the social welfare system for the care of society, especially the lower class, often approve of non-traditional lifestyles, *etc.* (Smith 1990, 481). Conservatives, on the other hand, are resistant to change and emphasise social order, society’s protection and security, often do not approve of non-traditional lifestyles, *etc.* Furthermore, ideologies in political discourse are often transmitted through the metaphorical conceptualisation of the *Us/Them* dichotomy. For example, the West and the Middle East opposition in metaphorical terms refers to the former as civilised and mature nations that maintain the world order, whereas the latter is referred to as being savage and immature (Bates 2004; Sandikcioglu 2000; Esch 2010). Such contrast in metaphorical representation unconsciously creates sets of positive and negative associations, which are highly ideological.

However, such concepts of ideology as knowledge, beliefs, ideas, or values are abstract, highly subjective, and ideological. The function of metaphors in political discourse, then, is to make it more persuasive by shifting the conceptualisation of abstract concepts into the concrete ones. However, one

could argue that language of political discourse does not represent objective and unbiased reality because its main goal is to carry out ideological motives with the use of persuasive techniques, such as conceptual metaphor. Hidden ideologies instilled in language have great influence upon thought and understanding of reality (Goatly 2007, 27) because ideology itself includes “a systematically organised presentation of reality” (Hodge & Kress 1981, 15). In other words, ideologies concentrate upon and highlight certain facts while keeping those that do not align with their agenda in the background, thus resulting in ideological creation of different realities. Therefore, Lakoff and Johnson (2003, 236) argue that abstract political ideologies function in metaphorical terms by hiding certain aspects of reality, though such political metaphor, “by virtue of what it hides, can lead to human degradation”. In fact, metaphor in political discourse functions as a strategy of legitimisation. The act of legitimisation attaches various ideological or emotional values or beliefs as certain norms in a given society or group, which “often works by highlighting the contrast between ... different political choices” (Charteris-Black 2016, 197).

Charteris-Black (2009, 2016), for instance, argues that in addition to cognitive metaphor and ideology, political discourse can also become persuasive through various narratives of myths. He argues that ideologies, like reasoned arguments, appeal “through *consciously* formed sets of beliefs, attitudes and values”, whereas myths are linked to emotions through beliefs, attitudes, and values unconsciously. Metaphor, therefore, is the mediator between the conscious and unconscious, or between ideology and myth, “to create a moral perspective on life (or *ethos*)” (Charteris-Black 2016, 13). Myths can also transmit ideological values through storyline that is filled with metaphorical conceptualisations that highlight the “good” and the “bad” aspects of a particular situation, thus contributing to the aspect of legitimisation. To take the political myth of *American Exceptionalism*, for instance, which has “long defined America’s ideal image of itself and its place in the world” and whose key ideas are the portrayal of the US as a chosen nation with a mission to defend the good from the evil (Esch 2010, 366). This political myth is employed to “legitimize and normalize the practices of the ‘War on Terror’” and involves recurring words and phrases such as *freedom’s defender*, *responsibility*, *rightness/righteous*, which relates to America’s goal to defend good against evil (Esch 2010, 386-387). Similarly, the myth of *cowboy warfare* (Ismael & Ismael 1999) promotes America as a heroic and individualistic state, with progressive and rational culture. This myth is based on “American struggle to conquer the American West ... represented by nature and by heathens”, (ibid. 70) which denotes the latter as obstacles to progress. The metaphorical language to perpetuate this myth promote American military actions, namely in the Gulf War, as “a heroic battle to save the world against a dangerous alien force armed with weapons of mass destruction” (ibid. 71). Therefore, metaphors in the cowboy warfare myth serve as a tool for legitimising racism and genocide (Ismael & Ismael 1999, 70).

In summary, the three elements of political discourse – metaphor, ideology, and myth – create the perfect ground for manipulation, power, hegemony, persuasion, justification of action by means of legitimisation, *etc.*, by highlighting certain aspects and avoiding others for personal and political gain.

Therefore, the analysis of conceptual metaphors in political discourse can reveal hidden ideologies, subjective experiences, values, and power relations that a certain political subject has or is aiming to project towards the addressees. A number of scholars have analysed the occurrence and effects of metaphors in political discourse (Lakoff 1991, 2003, 2010; Sandikcioglu 2000; Musolff 2004, 2007; Chilton 1996, 2004; Charteris-Black 2004, 2016; Kövecses 2010a; Bates 2004; Pancake 1993; *etc.*). One of the most frequent and basic metaphors in political discourse is that of personification, STATE IS A PERSON, which conceptualises a country or a state as an intentional individual with friends and enemies. Similarly, a state can be either healthy or sick, industrious or lazy, peaceful or aggressive, *etc.* (Lakoff 1991, 2003). Some of the linguistic expressions for this metaphor represent the state as a living being who can perform actions and have emotions. This metaphor is often used to emphasise the good or the evil side of a state (Arcimavičienė 2008, 7) and relates to another set of political dichotomies as proposed by Bates (2004) and Sandikcioglu (2000), which are CIVILISATION vs SAVAGERY/BARBARISM. This metaphorical dichotomy presents the West as the civilised and rational nation with a mission to free the world from the evil, uncivilised, and irrational East.

Another prominent set of metaphors introduces politics or political aspects in competitive terms, such as POLITICS/WAR IS A GAME, POLITICS IS A GAMBLE, RISKS ARE GAMBLES, or POLITICS IS A SPORT, which conceptualise political power as a physical force: the focus of these metaphors is on winning or losing, which is the goal of competitive games or the outcome of a gamble; such metaphors emphasise “strategic thinking, team work, preparedness, the spectators in the world arena, the glory of winning and the shame of defeat” (Lakoff 1991, 29). Another explanation of the use of sports and war metaphors in political discourse is provided by Howe (1988, 87) (cited in Stojan & Mijić 2019), who argues that “politics is typically conceived as being either a rule-bound contest ... or as an unpredictable exercise of power”. The logic behind the prevalence of sports metaphors, Howe (1988) argues, is that mostly men have been allowed to participate in political activity, which suggests that because of women’s absence from the political arena, they lack understanding of such metaphors. Lakoff (1991, 28) introduces the metaphor POLITICS IS BUSINESS, where political activity becomes a financial matter of “maximizing political gains and minimizing losses”.

Though the research on the use and effect of metaphor in political discourse is substantial, it coincides with the metaphors identified in the analysis of the crises in the Persian Gulf. However, due to the novelty of the Persian Gulf crisis of 2019-2021, there has not yet been ample research carried out regarding the

metaphorical representation of the crisis. Therefore, the following section will introduce metaphors identified in prior studies on metaphorical representation of the Gulf War and the Iraq War.

2.3. Metaphorical representation of conflicts in the Persian Gulf

A number of scholars have argued that the analysis of metaphorical representation of the previous conflicts in the Persian Gulf – namely the Gulf War of 1990-1991 and the Iraq War (also called Second Persian Gulf War) of 2003-2011 – in political speeches and media, reveals beliefs, attitudes, experiences, and hidden ideologies of the West towards the crises.

For instance, Lakoff (1991, 2003) analysed the most prominent metaphor systems used in the Gulf War and the Iraq War which the Bush administration employed to justify them. First, Lakoff (1991, 26) argues that the state is conceptualised as a person, with neighbours, friends, and enemies, “they can be peaceful, or aggressive, responsible or irresponsible, industrious or lazy”, hence THE STATE IS A PERSON or NATION IS A PERSON metaphor. For instance, the nation of Iraq is conceptualised as a single person, Saddam Hussein, which is motivated by the idea that military action is being taken against this one person and not the Iraqi people (Lakoff 2003). The well-being and health of a state is conceptualised in economic terms, with decreasing economic health resulting in death. Strength of a state is another key factor, where industrialised states are seen as mature, rational, and moral, and unindustrialised as underdeveloped, immature, and irrational, which can also be conceptualised with the dichotomy of *Us-Them* and WAR IS A VIOLENT CRIME metaphor. This asymmetry is prominent in what Lakoff (1991, 26) calls a “fairy tale of the just war” with the traditional cast of characters: a hero, a victim, and a villain. The hero is mature, moral, and rational, whereas the villain is the opposite. For example, the Rescue Scenario portrays the US as a hero, Iraq as a villain, and Kuwait as a victim; or the Self-Defence scenario, with the US as both a hero and a victim, and Iraq as a villain. Thus, the fairy tale structure is one of the ways that people in power use to manipulate language for purposes of justifying the war. Second, the causal commerce system portrays risks of going into a war as either a gamble and a competitive game, with calculations of maximising gains and minimising costs, or as business, where “war becomes a matter of maximizing political gains and minimizing losses” (Lakoff 1991, 28). Therefore, Iraq and its leader are seen as irrational, immature, and violent villains, whereas the Bush administration portrays itself as a rational and mature hero defending either itself and other industrialised states, or Kuwait from danger and violence (Lakoff 1991).

A study by Pancake (1993) highlighted additional set of metaphors identified in the Gulf War narrative. For instance, WAR IS A STORM metaphor focuses on the characteristics of the war being storm-like with emphasis on its strength, speed, inevitability, ferocity, naturalness, *etc.* The author explains that the war

is perceived as a storm in terms of its inevitability “because few people seriously consider what causes a storm”, which prompts them not to examine the causes of the war; or that the naturalness of a storm naturalises the destructive nature of war (ibid. 284). Another metaphor proposed in this study is MACHINES ARE ANIMATE BEINGS, which denotes machines as “conscious beings acting on their own” (ibid. 285), which perpetuates the idea that the war is being executed by machines, and not by people. Such conceptualisation lessens the impact and losses of the war by directing attention from people to machines. Two other similar metaphors proposed by Pancake (1993) are WAR IS A GAME and WAR IS ENTERTAINMENT. The author argues that sports and entertainment are a means for understanding such a distant and abstract concept as war. The reasoning behind the use of WAR IS A GAME metaphor, for example, stems from some Americans feeling great after winning the war. In fact, some linguistic expressions came from soldiers who directly experienced the war, *e.g.*, “*leapfrogging* airborne units”, “*hopscotching* Iraqi Air Force”, calling Bush a *cheerleader* for the US Air Force, *etc.* (ibid. 288). Conceptualising the war in terms of games helps to create or alter the terrifying reality of war. The metaphor WAR IS ENTERTAINMENT conceptualises the war as having a script with a sense of beginning, middle, and end. It also focuses “on the success of Allied technology” and ignores the “Iraqi civilians suffering from the annihilation of their infrastructure” (ibid. 291). Finally, the last metaphor suggested by Pancake (1993) is THE WAR ZONE IS THE WILD WEST, which is associated with the American expansionary policy and manifest destiny. Through this metaphor the threat of Iraq appears to be closer to the American land, which may have had impact on people’s perception of US intervention in the Persian Gulf as “just” and “noble” (ibid. 292).

Building on Lakoff’s (1991) and Pancake’s (1993) findings, Sandikcioglu (2000) identified the link between metaphorical representation of the Persian Gulf War and the cultural cognitive aspects of the Self and the Other. The author introduces the dichotomy of *Us vs Them*, where the former is the West represented as civilised, powerful, mature, stable, rational, *etc.*, whereas the latter is the East depicted metaphorically as barbarous, weak, immature, instable, emotional, *etc.* (ibid. 7). Therefore, a number of metaphorical dichotomies arise, such as ORIENTALS ARE BARBARIANS and WESTERNERS ARE CIVILISED. The SAVAGE and CIVILISATION metaphoric clusters were also identified by Bates (2004) in his analysis of George Bush’s Persian Gulf War addresses. Both studies suggest that the Western society and its leader are metaphorically represented as moral and healthy, and vice versa, the Eastern society and its leader as immoral and sick. George Bush is conceptualised as a leader fighting the evil, whereas Saddam Hussein is represented as the reincarnation of Hitler, who is immoral and inhuman, driven by greed and revenge (Sandikcioglu 2000, 14-15). Therefore, Bates (2004) argues that the SAVAGERY metaphors are dehumanising and decivilizing vehicles and server as “comparisons to jungle animals, Nazis, machines, and criminals”, whereas the CIVILIZATION metaphors are civilizing vehicles used to maintain the world

order and civilization. Sandikcioglu (2000, 19) also argues that control is suggested by the metaphors THE ORIENTAL IS A STUDENT and THE WESTERNER IS A TEACHER, where the latter controls and educates the former in terms of knowledge of culture, politics, and economics with the end goal of restoring justice and peace. Moreover, the East, in terms of its culture and value system, is an emotional ruler whose thinking is circular, and the West is rational with linear thinking. Finally, life in the East and West is conceptualised in terms of the former functioning by the bazaar mechanism, which lacks certainty, and everything can be negotiated; the West, however, is rather conceptualised as a gambling table, where everything functions according to the rules known to and respected by the players. Therefore, this research suggests that Oriental frames assert the asymmetrical representation of the powers of the East and the West, which also highlight the seemingly unavoidable incompatibility of the respective cultures and civilizations (ibid. 7).

As previously mentioned, cognitive metaphors construct social and political reality by highlighting certain facts and hiding others, thus resulting in ideological creation of different realities. As seen in the examples above of the contrastive portrayal of the East and the West: in order to justify the military action in the Gulf, the two societies were metaphorically represented as opposite of each other, *e.g.*, the noble mission of the civilised West is to fight the evil of and educate the uncivilised East, which is also seen in the portrayal of the two leaders. However, the ideological aspect also comes from the ideological leaning of the speaker, be it power figures, political leaders, or the news media. For instance, Jeffords and Rabinovitz (1994, 1) argue that the way the US media responded and manufactured the Gulf War played an important role “in forging the social consensus needed for support of the war and the national identity that defined the shape that consensus would take”. Therefore, for the purpose of the present research, it is important to consider the effects of ideological leanings of news media in the US on the public.

2.4. Left-wing and right-wing ideologies in US news media

It is common knowledge to perceive the news media as having persuasive power over their audience: power is transmitted through ideologies and opinions, which are rarely personal, but rather social, institutional, or political (van Dijk 1998b; Dinan & Miller 2009). However, the audience itself has the power to resist the persuasion by selecting the exposure to certain media with different ideological leanings due to pre-existing and preconceived viewpoints (van Dijk 1995a; Bennett & Iyengar 2008). For instance, in 2019 it has been found that 23% of Democrats get political news from Fox News, whose average consumer is “to the right of the average U.S. adult” (Gramlich 2020a). However, van Dijk (1995a, 11) suggests that the media are most persuasive “when the media users do not realize the nature or the implications of such control and when they change their minds of their own free will, as when

they accept news reports as true or journalistic opinions as legitimate or correct”. This view also coincides with the idea that cognitive metaphors are most persuasive in political discourse when they are not evident to the audience. In other words, the media and cognitive metaphors in political discourse are complementary to each other in the way that both highlight and hide certain aspects and facts. For example, conceptualisation of the West as a victim and the East as an evil aggressor resulted in justification of both the Gulf War and the Iraq War (van Dijk 1995a; Lakoff 1991, 2003; Sandikcioglu 2000; Bates 2004), and which was maintained and promoted through the various news media. However, the information that does not fit the agenda of a certain news media is deemphasised or fully concealed, for example, “such as the death of many thousands of innocent Iraqi civilians as a consequence of the United States (not so smart) bombs” (van Dijk 1995a, 16). Therefore, the news media control what kind of messages their audience receives. It can be argued that those messages depend on the ideological leaning of the news media, which in turn depend on certain ideological values and the political system that they represent, whether they confess to it or not.

Political ideology in the US stretches throughout the left-right spectrum (Balliet et al. 2018, 798), which corresponds with the left-wing and right-wing politics. At present, there are a lot of differing political ideologies, some mainstream (*e.g.*, liberalism, conservatism, libertarianism, *etc.*), and others “on the political ‘fringe’” (*e.g.*, Nazism) (Farmer 2005, 5). However, the US politics is mostly dominated by a two-party system, which are the Democratic Party, mostly liberal, and the Republican Party, mostly conservative, which represent certain ideological beliefs and values. However, it is important to note that although there is a certain overlap in political ideologies of the two parties, there is no definite correspondence between them. As Lakoff (1996) argues, political ideology can be viewed in terms of radial category: a certain political ideology consists of central or main models and variations of these models. For instance, liberalism as a political philosophy has its own subdivisions to either more left, centred, or more right on the ideological spectrum. Therefore, although liberalism encompasses people with similar values and beliefs on different subjects, there will still be different attitudes and solutions to various political problems.

American liberals, for example, generally believe in powerful government that can help solve problems with regulation and higher taxes. The system that favours higher taxes on the wealthy and businesses aims at protecting the environment and the social welfare system for the care of society, especially the lower class and minority groups. Liberals opt for progressive, egalitarianism, change and novelty, support civil liberties (such as freedom of speech, freedom of expression, *etc.*), often approve of non-traditional lifestyles (Smith 1990, 481; Ballier et al. 2018, 798). For the most part, liberals believe that national defence is already adequately funded and that the right to carry arms, following the Second Amendment, should be regulated. Finally, in terms of their primary ideological value, American liberals

tend to value equality. American conservatives, on the other hand, tend to see their primary ideological value as freedom: they believe in limited government, meaning that the government poses a threat to the American conception of individual freedom and liberty, which presents itself through basic governmental functions such as national defence, or the right to carry arms. Economy-wise, conservatives support the free market and believe in its power to provide greatest opportunities and benefits for people. Patriotic and traditional Judeo-Christian values and beliefs are also common among conservatives, *e.g.*, many conservatives are against abortion, non-traditional lifestyles, climate change, *etc.* Moral absolutism, whose source is the Bible, is another key characteristic of some conservatives, who advocate for morals being universal, making it “irresponsible to allow people the freedom to do things that are morally wrong and therefore harm society” (Farmer 2005, 52).

Such labels as ‘liberal’ or ‘conservative’, however, “are badges of belonging for politicians when they use them to describe themselves, but can carry either positive or negative connotations when used about them by others” (Beard 2000, 7). For instance, Farmer (2005, 48) argues that traditional conservatives “tend to demonize their enemies” not only as “a political opponent, but as evil by very nature”. The result of such dehumanisation, he argues, is that “torture and killing are prescribed with little violation of conscience” (2005, 48). As aforementioned, ideologies have their own subdivisions and variations, which means that there are still different perceptions of various political problems. This, in turn, means that the ideological beliefs and values of extreme groups (*e.g.*, radical right or radical left) have the power to instil negative perception of the broader ideology. For instance, some people tend to associate conservatives with racism because of certain radical movements within the ideology, *e.g.*, neo-Nazism, whose members promote racism, homophobia, antisemitism, white supremacy, *etc.* Such associations, however, can have negative connotations towards the whole group of people, which results in the overall perception of larger groups. Nevertheless, ideologies infiltrate a lot of aspects of everyday life: from language to discourses of various types and of various institutions, from values of a small group to big organisations and political parties, *etc.* The media is one such social institution able to transmit power through ideologies.

Whether they confess to it or not, all news media (be it newspapers, magazines, television, *etc.*) are ideologically labelled, which means they support and promote certain ideological values, ideals, and political movements. What is more, van Dijk (1995a, 12) argues that powerful figures and news media are co-dependent in terms of the exercise of power: elites exercise power through participating in and controlling media discourse, making them more powerful than the media; on the other hand, the media themselves are more powerful than elites because they control access to and decide upon participants in media discourse. Therefore, both powerful figures and news media exploit power and dominance (van Dijk 1995a). For instance, the two biggest and ideologically opposite news media channels in the US

are CNN and Fox News. In terms of their ideological bias, CNN is identified as left-wing and popular with the Democrats, whereas Fox News as right-wing, mostly watched by the Republicans (Mitchell 2014; Grieco 2020; AllSides 2020a, 2020b). Morris (2005) found that the Fox News audience prefer news that align with their personal views, while CNN audience prefer in-depth interviews on certain events. However, because certain news media promote ideological values of different groups and parties, their commentary and expert opinion can result in bias, different takes, fake news, selective reporting, *etc.*, which in turn have the power to shape opinions and perceptions. For instance, the Fox News audience were more likely than viewers of other channels to have misconceptions about the death toll in the Iraq War (Morris 2005, 74). In another study conducted by Feldman et al. (2012, 23) it has been shown that the CNN and Fox News audiences have different perceptions and understandings of climate change due to different coverage among the networks: CNN reporting on climate change was shown to be consistent with expert scientific opinion, which resulted in higher acceptance of the issue among the audience; Fox News, on the other hand, promoted a negative outlook on climate change with more coverage than other networks, which resulted in lower acceptance of the issue among the audience. Therefore, it is evident that CNN and Fox News and their audiences align themselves with ideologies, with liberalism and conservatism, respectively.

The theoretical section in this study is meant to introduce some crucial notions for the analysis of metaphorical representation of the Persian Gulf crisis. However, before moving on to the analysis itself, the following section provides details on the methodological aspect of the study.

3. Data and methodology

3.1. Sources of data

As proposed in the introduction, the aim of the thesis is to establish the left-wing and right-wing US media's underlying ideological motivations through their use of metaphorical expressions that address the Persian Gulf crisis of 2019-2021. Therefore, CNN and Fox News were chosen as news sources representing left-wing and right-wing ideologies. The choice behind these two news sources for the research is due to several reasons. First, as mentioned in the previous section, both CNN and Fox News represent certain ideological values and political views: CNN is aligned with liberal values, making it left-wing, whereas Fox News is rather aligned with conservative values, making it right-wing in terms of its ideological bias (Mitchell et al. 2014; Grieco 2020; AllSides 2020a, 2020b). Therefore, the content and the coverage of news is different depending on the ideological leaning of the two news outlets. For example, CNN's "homepage is dominated by anti-Trump/anti-GOP narratives" (AllSides 2020a), whereas Fox News is pro-Trump and in support of the Republican party in general. As in the case of coverage of the Iraq War in 2003, both CNN and Fox News were leading news outlets in the US, with CNN reaching 2.65 million average daily viewers, and Fox News reaching 3.3 million (Rutenberg 2003). Both channels provided "two distinct ideological news cultures" (Silcock 2008, 174), with the former being anti-government and the latter "decidedly pro-war, pro-Bush news outlet" (Harmon & Muenchen 2009, 16). Regarding the ideological bias, CNN's coverage of certain cultural, social, and socio-political movements has been highly positive, which corresponds with liberal values. Fox News, on the other hand, has been critical of such movements and rather reports in favour of conservative values (Grieco 2020). Third, CNN and Fox News were two of the most watched news networks in 2020, with Fox News having 3.78 million primetime viewers, while CNN – 2.37 million primetime viewers at that time (Watson 2021). Similarly, both Fox News and CNN were found to be the most commonly used sources for political news in 2019 among the US adults, with 16% referring to Fox News, and 12% referring to CNN as their main source for political news (Grieco 2020).

Since both CNN and Fox News provide news primarily through cable networks, the focus, therefore, was on videos rather than written articles on their official websites. The videos, however, were gathered from CNN's and Fox News's channels on YouTube due to easier accessibility and simplicity of the process. Therefore, the data gathering approach was developed according to the following criteria: (a) to limit the number of videos and make the results more specific, several keywords related to the Persian Gulf crisis were used, such as *Iran*, *Gulf of Oman*, *Soleimani*, etc., which mostly correspond with the timeline of events; (b) the videos were selected either from the official CNN and Fox News channels or from the interviewees' official channels on YouTube due to reliability and the exact upload date provided in the description of the videos. The time span originally was set to a year, from June 2019 to

June 2020 for both CNN and Fox News videos. However, upon further investigation of the content, the number of videos did not correspond with the set time span because both channels were not consistent in reports on the Persian Gulf crisis after January 2020, resulting in the lack of data. Therefore, (c) the videos were selected according to a time span of approximately one year and seven months, from June 2019 to January 2021, up until the end of Trump’s presidency. In order to avoid political input from reporters or interviewees with different political alignments, ideological leanings, or stances on certain event, (d) interviews with or reports from people not associated with either CNN or Fox News were not considered. Because the paper aims to analyse the ideological language towards the Persian Gulf crisis in the two US news outlets that represent certain ideologies, CNN and Fox News, other stances were not taken into consideration. The final step in the data gathering process was to transcribe the selected videos into text. The table below shows the total number of words in each of the sub-corpora compiled for the study:

Table 1: *Research data*

	CNN	Fox News
No of videos	20	20
No of words	24,507	17,685
Time span	June 2019 – January 2021	

As the table indicates, the total number of 20 CNN videos and 20 Fox News videos dating from June 2019 to January 2021 were transcribed into text that consist of 24,507 and 17,685 words, respectively. However, the difference between the total number of words in CNN and Fox News transcriptions is evident, which is due to the fact that the selected videos from Fox News were shorter in time as compared to those from CNN. Therefore, the average number of words per one transcribed video is approximately 1,225 for CNN and 884 for Fox News.

3.2. Research methods

In order to achieve the set objectives, several methods and approaches were applied to the analysis of the data: qualitative, quantitative, and comparative methods, Metaphor Identification Procedure, and the procedure of metaphor interpretation proposed by the developers of the Critical Metaphor Analysis.

The qualitative research methods were used in reviewing and synthesising the theoretical scholarship necessary to grasp the key notions of the paper, such as the conceptual metaphor theory and its role in political discourse, which was the main framework applied to reconstruct conceptual patterns that underly linguistic metaphorical expressions. To compare the findings, previous studies on the conceptualisation of the past conflicts in the Persian Gulf region were also analysed. Finally, theoretical approach was also applied to left-wing and right-wing ideologies in the US, specifically in the US media.

The quantitative method in this research was applied to collect and generate the numerical data: by collecting the selected videos and transcribing them into text, and by counting the total number of words and metaphorical expressions identified in the corpus. Finally, the comparative method was used to situate the findings in the wider context of existing research by comparing the metaphorical representation of the Persian Gulf crisis with the previous studies on the conflicts in the Persian Gulf region as well as the ideological underpinnings of the use of metaphors in the two selected media sources.

3.2.1. Metaphor Identification Procedure

In order to locate conceptual metaphors in the context of the Persian Gulf crisis, the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) was applied. Formulated by a group of scholars called the Pragglejaz Group (2007), MIP provides “an explicit, reliable, and flexible method for identifying metaphorically used words in spoken and written language” (2007, 2) and consists of four steps: the first step aims at close reading of the text and establishing a general understanding of its meaning; the next step is to determine the lexical units of the text. The third step in MIP consists of three stages: first, the meaning of each lexical unit should be located in context of the text; next, each lexical unit in the text should be checked for a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts (basic meanings are more concrete and precise, related to bodily action, and historically older, though not necessarily the most frequent meanings); the last stage is to decide whether the contextual meaning of the lexical unit contrasts with its basic meaning. The final step is to mark the lexical unit as metaphorical if it conforms to the three steps (2007, 3). Therefore, following the four steps formulated by Pragglejaz Group makes MIP a coherent tool for identifying metaphorically used words in language.

To check basic meanings, three online dictionaries were chosen: the Macmillan Dictionary and Lexico (previously known as the online Oxford Dictionary) were consulted to double-check meanings of words in question and used as an addition to each other, with the former providing corpus-based definitions, and the latter providing definitions with their origins and developments throughout history. The Online Etymology Dictionary was also used to check historically older meanings of conflicting definitions provided in the two dictionaries.

In addition to MIP, Low’s (1999) approach was applied to the identification of personification metaphors and metonymy. In his paper on personification metaphors in academic texts, Low (1999, 223) highlights two approaches to interpretation: if the emphasis of the analysis of a certain expression is on a verb, then the expression uses personification. For example, if the phrase “This essay” is followed by verbs such as “believes, thinks, or intends”, then such expression falls under the conceptual structure AN ESSAY IS A PERSON, which acts as a tool of humanisation of the essay (Low 1999, 223). On the other hand, if the

emphasis is on the subject of the expression, then the expression is classed as metonymy. The expression “This essay thinks”, then, is “part of a strategy for avoiding or reducing subjectivity”, in which self-reference is replaced by the product (Low 1999, 223). However, after the identification and initial analysis of metaphorical expressions in the two sub-corpora, the personification approach was chosen for the analysis of a certain type of metaphors. Low (1999, 227-228) argues that several factors are important in the identification of personification, which include agentivity of the verb or lack of it, nominal groups, adjectives, and adverbials, that refer to activities and emotions typical to humans, *e.g.*, “this paper *deliberately chose*”, “a *happy paper*”, “an *optimistic paper*”, *etc.*

The following step of metaphor analysis involved metaphor classification and interpretation of ideological meaning or intention behind the use of certain metaphorical expressions in a certain context, which was achieved with the Critical Metaphor Analysis approach.

3.2.2. Critical Metaphor Analysis

As already mentioned in the section on conceptual metaphor theory, Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) is an approach to the analysis of metaphors that combines both conceptual metaphor theory and critical discourse analysis, and whose aim is to examine the context of metaphor, the speaker’s implicit intention, and covert socio-political power relations (Charteris-Black 2004, 2016, 2018).

As proposed by Charteris-Black, CMA involves four stages: contextual analysis, metaphor identification, metaphor interpretation, and metaphor explanation. The stage of contextual analysis suggests developing “research questions about metaphor that should emerge from an awareness of its potential for rhetoric impact in social and political contexts” (Charteris-Black 2018, 217). Such research questions are important to the data gathering process because they influence the choice of the speaker, the time span, the number of texts, *etc.* Next, the metaphor identification stage involves close reading of a text with the aim of establishing potential metaphors. However, the context within which the text is situated plays an important role in determining “the semantic tension that justifies classification as metaphor” (Charteris-Black 2004, 37). Interpretation of metaphors refers to “a relationship between metaphors and the cognitive and pragmatic factors that determine them” (*ibid.* 37), thus resulting in the classification of the identified metaphors into their conceptual structure TARGET DOMAIN IS SOURCE DOMAIN. Finally, metaphor explanation implies interpretation of the social aspect involved in production of metaphors and their persuasive role. Furthermore, identifying the role of metaphors in discourse leads to discerning of their ideological and rhetorical motivation throughout the selected corpus, which can also be situated within or compared with a larger corpus for the same metaphors (*ibid.* 39).

Critical for the present study, however, is the step of interpretation and explanation since MIP provides a more thorough guide to metaphor identification. Therefore, MIP was used for metaphor identification, whereas CMA was used for classification of metaphors according to their conceptual structure TARGET DOMAIN IS SOURCE DOMAIN and for explanation of ideological and rhetorical aspects behind the use of metaphors.

4. Research findings

The complete number of metaphorical expressions in the identified source domains in the two sub-corpora is 976: 548 metaphorical expressions were identified in the corpus of CNN with 24,507 words and 428 expressions in the corpus of Fox News with 17,685 words in total. However, despite having more metaphorical expressions, the normalisation of numbers reveals that CNN and Fox News use a similar number of expressions per 1,000 words, i.e., approximately 22 expressions per 1,000 words for CNN, and 24 for Fox News, respectively. The number of identified conceptual structures is 37. However, only a small number of the identified conceptual structures were used extensively throughout the two sub-corpora, which are indicated in the table below:

Table 2. *Prevailing conceptual structures identified in CNN and Fox News*

	Conceptual metaphor structures	Number of metaphorical expressions	
		CNN	Fox News
1	STATE IS A PERSON	330	268
2	POWER IS PHYSICAL FORCE	42	20
3	MACHINES ARE ANIMATE BEINGS	30	26
4	CONFLICT IS A PHYSICAL FORCE	25	8
5	POLITICS IS A JOURNEY	21	10
6	POLITICS IS BUSINESS	8	15
7	CONFLICT IS HEAT	14	3
8	POLITICS IS A PLAY (THEATRE)	13	13
9	POLITICS/WAR IS A GAME	13	11
10	PEOPLE ARE OBJECTS	11	6
	OTHER	41	48

It should be noted that the table only includes conceptual structures with a prevailing number of metaphorical expressions. Structures that have ten or fewer metaphorical expressions in either CNN or Fox News were counted together and ascribed to the category named Other, consisting of 27 conceptual structures, which are discussed in more detail in the following section. The complete table of conceptual metaphor structures with the total number of identified metaphorical expressions, however, is presented in Appendix 3.

As indicated in Table 2, both CNN and Fox News use a similar number of conceptual structures, with the former using 28 structures, and the latter 30. However, there are some similarities and differences in the use of conceptual structures between the two channels. For instance, both channels are more likely to use the same metaphor structures consistently: 21 out of 37 structures are applied to the discourse of

the Persian Gulf crisis by both CNN and Fox News channels, whereas 7 are employed solely by CNN, and 9 by Fox News, though such structures have five or fewer metaphorical expressions.

However, the following section elaborates, first, on the analysis of the identified conceptual structures with examples collected from the two sub-corpora that are either sentences with metaphorical expressions highlighted in bold or in-text metaphorical expressions in italics. In addition, the findings are also compared with the previous studies on the conflicts in the Persian Gulf. Finally, similarities and differences of the conceptualisation of the Persian Gulf crisis are also established between the left-wing and right-wing media, CNN and Fox News, respectively.

4.1. Conceptual metaphors identified in CNN and Fox News

Before moving on to the analysis of the identified metaphorical expressions in CNN and Fox News channels, it is important to analyse the word ‘crisis’ in the Persian Gulf crisis. According to Lexico (2021), crisis is “the turning point of a disease when an important change takes place, indicating either recovery or death”, which generates the conceptual structure CRISIS IS A DISEASE. Therefore, just like the definition suggests, the Persian Gulf crisis is also the turning point of the relationship between the US and Iran that can either be fixed and stabilised, or can turn into a full-scale war. The definition of crisis also suggests that it is an autonomous process and something that is beyond individual responsibility, which, then, implies that the crisis developed naturally, and the parties involved in the conflict are absolved from all responsibility and blame. However, because the emphasis of this thesis is rather on the conceptualisation of the crisis in the discourse of CNN and Fox News and neither of the channels mention the conflict as ‘Persian Gulf crisis’, the structure CRISIS IS A DISEASE was, therefore, not counted with the rest of conceptual structures presented in Table 2.

As indicated in Table 2, personification metaphors, whose source domain is PERSON, are among the most common conceptual metaphors identified that appear consistently throughout CNN’s and Fox News’s discourse on the Persian Gulf crisis. Metaphors under this category tend to characterise abstract target domains, such as state, regime, government, *etc.*, as more concrete source domains represented by a person. It is possible to highlight several patterns in the use of personification. First, the analysed data shows that personification is mainly used when talking about countries, governments, or administrations and their actions, for example the STATE IS A PERSON metaphor, which was also identified in the discourse on the Gulf War and the Iraq war by Lakoff (1991, 2003). Such metaphors perform certain actions and functions, make decisions, give their opinions on certain events, communicate with or blame others, *etc.* However, countries and governments not just perform such human actions, but also experience them: for example, the sentence *they’ll probably blame the United States* involves the verb *blame*, whose definition refers to either blaming someone or something. Therefore, the use of *blame* in the context of

the sentence would be non-metaphorical because the US, according to the definition, is not an animate being. However, the action of blaming involves the accuser and the accused, where the latter acts as a being capable of performing actions deserving of reprimand and blame. Therefore, such contexts yield personification of both parties. Thus, the conceptual structure STATE IS A PERSON consists of metaphorical expressions containing verbs such as *say, deny, lie, blame, kill, show, attack, threaten, etc.*:

- (1) *This is after **the US killed** Iran's most powerful military commander overnight.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (2) ***The Trump administration says** Kata'ib Hezbollah is responsible for a missile attack Friday on an Iraqi military base that killed an American contractor.* (Fox News, Dec 31, 2019)

The two examples above show the US and the Trump administration as personified beings: *to kill* is “to make a person or other living thing die” (Macmillan Dictionary 2021) and the syntax of sentence (1) provides evidence that the actor performing the action of killing is not the military representative of the US, but the US itself. Similarly, the Trump administration in example (2) consists of people who make decisions, rather than the administration performing actions that are inherently human.

Second, countries and nations have relationships with others, either neighbours, friends (in terms of allies), or *dedicated enemies*. For instance:

- (3) *I think he's going to speak very bluntly to the Iranian leadership that this is activities, this is the type of... if you're going to be **a part of the community in this world**, you cannot attack your **neighbors**.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)

The example above clearly illustrates the personification of countries belonging to a wider group of people and interacting with others: the word ‘community’ refers to “a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common”, and ‘neighbour’ is a person living next door to someone (Lexico 2021). Therefore, the world is conceptualised as a community consisting of countries as people who also have neighbours. However, the example also implies the opposition between being part of the community, which involves peaceful and stable relationships with neighbours, and being excluded from the community as a result of attacking neighbours. Thus, being part of the community highlights positive aspects of countries being united with the goal of establishing and maintaining peace and order in the world. Iran, however, is not a part of this community, which enforces the Otherisation and to some extent demonisation of Iran. The US and other members of the community, therefore, are the ones setting and abiding by the rules, which does not apply to Iran. This kind of personification also relates to feelings and emotions: countries are given traits inherent to humans, which then become objects of empathy, shock, and anger, *e.g.*, countries are *stunned, concerned, on tenterhooks, frustrated, embarrassed, not affectionate* for others, or described in terms of their competitiveness, responsibility, credibility, and overall behaviour. Therefore, what emerges is a complex picture of a relationship

between countries conceptualised as human beings: these metaphors evoke an image of countries as people acting on their own or interacting with others, *e.g.*, *accidentally slouching into a war*, *getting too close* to each other, *picking a fight with the other people*, *pushing off the United States*, *Iran lashing out at the United States*, or *confronting Iran*, with the US and Iran being the main actors working against or with each other, and the rest of the world being distant participants being able to *jump in* the conflict. Such a relationship inevitably creates a power dynamic between countries involved in the conflict, especially between the US-Iran relations. It becomes evident, then, that the former acts as a teacher or mentor to the latter, which is also what Lakoff (1991, 2003) and Sandikcioglu (2000) identified in the discourse of the previous wars in the Gulf. Therefore, the conceptualisation of the oriental as a student or the westerner as a teacher generates metaphorical expressions situated under the idea of control: the role of the US in the Persian Gulf crisis is to restore justice and peace in the economic and political domain with the intention of establishing influence over Iran. It is reported that *the US is watching Iran with intelligence and surveillance*, arguing for the need of Iran *to get back in compliance with the Nuclear Deal*; however, *unwelcomed conduct will be deterred* because *Iran cannot be allowed to get by with this type of activity*, – otherwise, *they are going to have to pay a price and could pay a very dear price economically* or *the US will have to respond in a way Iran understands*. Some of these examples also correspond with the idea of the Self vs the Other suggested by Sandikcioglu (2000) and Bates (2004), where Iran as a country is depicted through such metaphorical expressions as *incompetent*, *sloppy*, *aggressive and fearless*, which should act *like a normal nation*, making the Other immoral, immature, and finally uncivilised or barbarous, whereas the United States' aim of controlling and maintaining world order is seen as rational and justified, making it civilised.

Personified countries and governments also exude power and control through physical force and physical manipulation, and can *squeeze*, *put economic* or *military pressure* on others, which is also in the power of political leaders. In the US-Iran relations, the US has more power and is able to limit Iran in its activities through economic sanctions or military action. On the other hand, the conceptualisation of power and control are not only limited to the US, its allies, and their leaders, but also to Iranian leaders: the influence of Qasem Soleimani in the Gulf region, for example, is described in the following way:

(4) *Qasem Soleimani, his footprint, his handprints are all over that place.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)

The non-metaphoric meaning suggests that 'footprint' is "the impression left by a foot or shoe on the ground or a surface" and, similarly, 'handprint' is "the mark left by the impression of a hand" (Lexico 2021). This creates the understanding of Soleimani leaving physical marks on countries, as if those were surfaces, that also remain for extended periods of time if untouched. Metaphorically, however, such conceptualisation creates a sense of influence and power over individuals or places. Thus, leaving footprints and handprints in the context of example (4) rather refers to the long-term effects of

Soleimani's influence in the East even after his death. On the other hand, countries are also able to physically manipulate objects: *e.g., Iran was picking up ships, Iran seized or took this vessel*, where the verb 'seize' means "take hold of suddenly and forcibly" (Lexico 2021), which inevitably involves hands. Therefore, within such a conceptual structure these examples produce an understanding of Iran having hands and being able to physically pick up and seize vessels. The US is also portrayed as presiding over Iran, with the US having the need *to contain Iran and its influence*, – to control or restrain, which also involves physical involvement. Therefore, the POWER IS PHYSICAL FORCE metaphor goes along with personification metaphors which involves countries conceptualised as human beings taking forceful actions, *e.g., applying bodily pressure, taking control of objects by using hands*.

The personification of the Iranian regime itself works in a slightly different way: even though it is conceptualised as having the same human features as countries and nations mentioned above, *e.g., regime's behaviour, break the regime's back, the soul of the regime*, and performing the same actions of *speaking, telling, and shooting down*, the Iranian regime is clearly personified in a controlling, oppressive, and negative way, *e.g., the regime wants to dictate, abuses street protesters and others, and is so evil*. The regime and its political leaders are also conceptualised as an instrument, who are *the main instruments of suppression and oppression on the streets of Iran*, which generates the REGIME IS AN INSTRUMENT metaphor. Such conceptualisation yields perception of the regime as a mechanical device or a tool, which works as a distancing mechanism between the regime and the people behind it responsible for oppression, which in turn absolves them of responsibility and guilt. Rather, the regime is a tool or an instrument that the political leaders of the Iranian regime use for control. Both personification and REGIME IS AN INSTRUMENT metaphor act as a justification for military action: if the Iranian regime is seen as evil and oppressive, then it is easier for the US to maintain power and influence over it without being questioned.

It is important to note, however, that several examples of personification coincided with what traditionally could be regarded as metonymy, *e.g., the Pentagon, the Trump administration, the government, the Iranian regime, etc.* However, as mentioned in the Data and methodology section, such expressions were rather regarded as personification metaphors because the emphasis of the analysis was on several factors that denote human qualities other than the subject of the expression. Therefore, various institutions were rather regarded as instances of personification. Like the personification of countries, the Pentagon and the White House are able to *say* something, accuse others, *send* and *deploy* troops, *etc.*; cities are also given human qualities in terms of interaction with one another, or *tensions between Tehran and Washington*, or in terms of actions, with *Baltimore* and *Atlanta* paying a certain sum of money. However, several cases of metonymy were identified in both CNN (nine metaphor-related expressions) and Fox News (seven metaphor-related expressions), which refer to major political leaders,

who played an important part in the Persian Gulf crisis, exuding power over others. For example, the expressions *Trump put Iran in a box*, *Trump killing of Soleimani*, and *Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei didn't stop civilian flights while attacking US bases* put the emphasis rather on the responsibility aspect via the CONTROLLER FOR CONTROLLED metonymy. Neither Trump nor Khamenei did the acts of killing or attacking themselves, but the metonymic representation suggests that they are the ones responsible and thus should be held accountable. Another type of metonymy is THE PART FOR THE WHOLE, with President Rouhani having *his eye on the prize*, Soleimani being *the head of the Quds Force*, *the major arm of Iran's foreign policy abroad*, or *the soul of the regime*, or Mike Pompeo having *the President's ear*. In these examples one entity is being replaced by the other, which becomes the focus or the main point of understanding, for example *eye on the prize* means to keep attention on a certain interest; *the head* or *the major arm* of an institution refer to the person in charge of it, or *the soul of the regime* the person who embodies the regime, most probably referring to negative qualities; and *have someone's ear* means “to know someone with power or authority who will listen to you” (Macmillan Dictionary 2021). The two channels seem to employ the two types of metonymy similarly, with CONTROLLER FOR CONTROLLED being used more than THE PART FOR THE WHOLE. However, one instance identified in Fox News suggests that the killing of Soleimani bears the consequences similar to those of the killing of Franz Ferdinand, which creates THE PERSON FOR AN EVENT metonymy:

- (5) *I would say the deep concern is, look, a general in the Iranian forces being assassinated is not necessarily something to mourn or begrudge the US getting involved in. The question is, though, is this a **Franz Ferdinand moment**? Is this a situation where a great power gets involved with the middle tier power and gets the world into a world war?* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)

The assassination of Franz Ferdinand and his wife led to World War I, which resulted in the formation of new borders in Europe and millions of deaths. Therefore, the context of example (3) points to similarities between the two cases: the assassination of Soleimani by the US could also lead to a war with Iran, eventually resulting in a world war. However, the context also reveals the lessening of seriousness of killing Soleimani by suggesting it is not something to mourn and by shifting the blame from the US that was responsible for the killing, which in turn justifies the killing as something that was inevitable. Therefore, the comparison of the killing of Soleimani with that of Ferdinand implies the emphasis on the consequences that the killing could bring to the US with involvement into a world war as a potential outcome rather than the act of killing itself.

Conceptualisation of political power as physical force also emphasises the competitive nature of politics: the focus of these metaphors is on winning or losing, which is the goal of competitive games or the outcome of a gamble, which is also highlighted by Pancake (1993). Hence the emergence of such conceptual structures as POLITICS IS A GAME/ENTERTAINMENT or WAR IS A GAME/ENTERTAINMENT. The

Persian Gulf crisis is described as a *sequel* to the Iraq War; military actions and attacks as *game changers*, *shows*, the analysis of which is the *postgame*; political decisions and strategies as *strong suits*, *tricks up our sleeves*, *playbook*, and can be *ping ponged* or cautiously dealt with – *Trump playing his cards close to the vest*; conflicts as *dominoes* or a *game of chicken* that have losers and winners, and supporters of Iraq are referred to as *cheerleaders*. These expressions highlight political competitiveness between countries, which are also frequently personified: Iran, for example, *is racing to a nuclear weapon*. An assault ship, *USS Boxer*, is also named after a contender in a boxing match with the sea as a boxing ring, where fights occur, indicating the competitive nature of politics, or battle, even between vessels. Therefore, the conceptualisation of political strategies and conflicts as games or entertainment downgrades their seriousness and significance: the desire for power is like a competitive game whose contestants play by certain rules that are not universal, but rather imposed by a more powerful player. Eventually, however, such conceptualisation makes people less perceptive of human losses because political decisions are presented as game-like and entertaining.

Similarly, power and politics are also conceptualised as a theatre play. Theatre plays involve actors who play different characters and are performed mostly in theatres. Likewise, the POLITICS IS A PLAY structure involves the understanding of the political relations between countries as a play, with *bad actors* and *fascinating characters* that *orchestrate* or *stage attacks*, play very destructive roles, appear *in the global spotlight* or *on the international stage*, or act *behind the scenes* and in *theatres*. *Theatre* itself is an established military term denoting wartime operation and the place where they occur, with every party performing certain roles in terms of duties and actions. The rationale behind the use of theatre metaphors is that conflicts have participants who have their own roles, interests, and goals on the world stage: conflicts are only happening in particular places and are only limited to such circumstances, without having any influence elsewhere. Therefore, just like game metaphors, this set of metaphors has a function of downgrading the serious aspects of conflicts by justifying losses and suffering with the idea of politics being a theatre.

As indicated in Table 2, both CNN and Fox News employ the POLITICS/WAR IS A GAME and POLITICS IS A PLAY structures in their discourse on the Persian Gulf crisis similarly in terms of numbers. Such conceptualisation tends to represent politics as entertaining and show-like, which in turn diminishes the seriousness and destructiveness and conflicts. The two structures are mostly used in a similar way and most are not ideologically loaded. However, several instances from the two sub-corpora indicate that Fox News refers to Iranian protests after the killing of Soleimani and to the funeral of the Supreme Leader of Iran Khomeini in 1989 as a *theatre* and a *show* revealing an entertaining factor of these events. CNN, on the other hand, refers to Iran as *the bad actor* on the international stage after Iran shot down a US drone despite a series of military developments involving both the US and Iran in the beginning of

the Gulf crisis. CNN is also critical of Trump's actions arguing that he is *suddenly playing coy* with the intention of making a deal with Iran: *playing coy* suggests that Trump is rather playing pretend to accomplish his goal.

Another conceptual metaphor structure associated with personification is MACHINES ARE ANIMATE BEINGS. Similar to Pancake's (1993:285) study on the Gulf War, machines and vessels in the Gulf crisis function as conscious beings with minds of their own: decisions made by people are carried out by man-made and by man-controlled objects, which absolves the responsible party of all blame and involvement and instead puts it on machines. Aircrafts are able to *approach* others, *intervene*, *conduct strikes*, *behave aggressively*, drones *violate* and *invade airspace*, *hit targets*, vessels can be *contacted*, *take control of others*, *attack*, etc. Other devices, for instance, are also conceptualised as autonomous beings:

(6) *The Pentagon is confirming that they brought down an Iranian drone and it wasn't shot down, it was brought down, kind of, with this new device that jams the drone and kind of confuses it and brings it down.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)

As seen in the example above, the device is able to *jam*, *confuse*, and *bring down* the drone, which rather denote inherently human actions that involve some kind of mental or physical activity. For instance, the verb 'jam' means "to block something so that it stops working or moving", or the verb 'confuse' "is to make someone feel that they do not understand something", and 'bring down' is to physically "make someone or something move or fall to the ground" (Macmillan Dictionary 2021). Therefore, both the device and the drone are denoted as animate beings that act on their own and perform certain actions and roles. What is left in the background, however, is the fact that such devices are partially under human control, which means that those responsible for the attacks are absolved from accountability for unintentional mistakes, such as civilian losses. Another point Pancake (1993) makes is the persuasive nature behind the names of machines, which was also identified in the discourse of the Persian Gulf crisis of 19-21. Despite not being named specifically for the Gulf crisis, the names of vessels, aircrafts, and missiles still insinuate certain connotations: some are named in honour of notable individuals in the US history, e.g., *USS Bainbridge*, *USS Abraham Lincoln*, *USS Nimitz*, whose metaphorical labelling emanates power and national pride; some in honour of states, e.g., *USS Georgia*; others in honour of historical weapons, such as the *Tomahawk* missile, – tomahawks were defensive weapons used by Native American tribes, hence naming missiles after a weapon that played a significant part in the US history also gives off a sense of national pride, which also fall under the conceptual structure identified by Pancake (1993), which is THE WAR ZONE IS THE WILD WEST.

As indicated in Table 2, the STATE IS A PERSON and MACHINES ARE ANIMATE BEINGS structures generate the highest number of identified metaphors as the analysis of CNN and Fox News suggests. Both

channels mostly tend to personify countries and institutions by giving them human qualities and functions, such as reactions and emotions, the ability to make decisions, act on their own, and be influenced by others, either countries or political leaders. Military equipment, such as drones, missiles, vessels, aircrafts, *etc.*, are also personified and given human qualities, such as the ability to act autonomously despite being controlled by the military personnel. The conceptualisation of countries, institutions, and machines as animate beings by CNN and Fox News is similar in terms of numbers and mostly usage. However, some differences in the discourse of CNN and Fox News can be observed. For example, the analysis of metaphorical expressions assigned to the STATE IS A PERSON structure indicates that Fox News is more likely to refer to Iran and its regime negatively: Iran is evil, incompetent, abusive and controlling, it carries out brazen attacks, and needs to become a more normal country. CNN, on the other hand, uses fewer metaphorical expressions that conceptualise Iran negatively. For example, Iran is sloppy, aggressive, fearless, and the Iranian regime can potentially make bad decisions. However, such conceptualisation in both CNN and Fox News highlights the imbalance of power between the US and Iran, which plays into the Us-Them dichotomy pointed out by Sandikcioglu (2000): Iran is represented as emotional, immature, and barbarous, whereas the US is the opposite.

A similar category to personification is that which characterises target domain of people and the Iranian regime as source domain represented by animals. Both PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS and STATE IS AN ANIMAL conceptual structures are used throughout CNN and Fox News and metaphorical expressions falling under these structures have somewhat of a negative connotative meaning: the Iranian regime or an Iranian military officer are conceptualised as octopuses who have *networks and tentacles*, in the context of politics meaning “an insidious spread of influence and control” (Lexico 2021), though primarily referring to the long and stretching arm of an octopus. The regime is also referred to as a *snake*, with Qasem Soleimani, who was an Iranian military officer, being *the head of the snake*. In nature, snakes are known for being dangerous for their poisonous bites, and stealthy, often hiding in the long grass. In the Christian tradition a snake is also a symbol for evil, danger, and deceit. Therefore, calling someone a snake implies them being “a treacherous or deceitful person” (Lexico 2021). This kind of negative conceptualisation of the political system or political figures only appears in the discourse disapproving of the Iranian government. Several members of the Republican party are also described as *hawkish*, referring to a bird known for being a violent predator that preys on other birds and animals for food, though in political discourse rather referring to “a politician advocating an aggressive or warlike policy, especially in foreign affairs” (Lexico 2021). In particular John Bolton, a Republican consultant, who received backlash from the supporters of the Republican party over his anti-Trump book, and eventually being referred to as a worm by Fox News:

- (7) *John Bolton is a kind of **bureaucratic tapeworm**. Try as you might, you can't **expel** him. He seems to live forever in the bowels of the federal agencies periodically re-emerging to cause pain and suffering, but critically somehow never suffering himself... That's the John Bolton life cycle.*
(Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)

The highlighted metaphorical expressions provided in the example above clearly demonstrate the negative connotation behind the use of the word *tapeworm*. Tapeworm is a parasitic worm that can infect the intestines of humans and animals, – they feed on their hosts without giving anything back, and if left untreated, invade other parts of the body causing *pain and suffering* and eventually life-threatening problems. Moreover, the life cycle of an intestinal parasite involves growth, reproduction, and transmission (Rogers 2020), which coincides with the intended meaning behind the use of tapeworm in the context of example (3). Therefore, comparison of a person with a parasitic tapeworm yields an understanding that John Bolton makes a living at the expense of Trump and his actions are dangerous and damaging to the Trump administration. Though not politicians, but anchors from *The View* show, who are seemingly anti-Trump, are also called *squawking idiots* by Fox News: squawking refers to a bird that “makes a loud unpleasant noise in its throat” (Macmillan Dictionary 2021), so saying that people squawk means they talk in a loud, unpleasant, or annoying manner. Therefore, the use of ANIMAL metaphors to describe people functions as a dehumanising and an insulting mechanism, which highlights dangerous and deceitful animal-like natures in politicians, that of a snake, a parasite, a hawk; it also has a function of putting politicians below mankind by equating them to animals, which also functions as a tool of dehumanisation. The PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS structure appears throughout both channels, with four metaphorical expressions in CNN and seven in Fox News. Regarding the ideological usage of such metaphors, CNN tends to negatively refer to members of the Republican party, Tom Cotton and Mike Pompeo in particular, as *hawkish*, – resembling a hawk and aggressive in manner. Also, Soleimani’s influence and control is referred to as *tentacles*, though such conceptualisation does not seem ideologically loaded but rather neutral. Fox News, on the other hand, tends to conceptualise people in a negative manner. For example, powerful figures and politicians are conceptualised as dangerous animals that can harm others, e.g., Soleimani is referred to as *a snake*, and John Bolton as *a tapeworm*, and people critical of Trump are *squawking idiots*.

Another set of metaphors that relates to states and countries produces the conceptual structure A NATION or A STATE IS A HOME, and include the act of bringing *troops* or *aircraft vessels home*, promoting *prosperity at home*, etc., for example:

- (8) *So with that said, he's caught, you know, right now between having promised to **bring troops home from the Middle East**, and having drawn a red line when it comes to Iran.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)

- (9) *We want you to have a future, and a great future, one that you deserve. **One of prosperity at home and harmony with the nations of the world.*** (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)

The idea of home includes a number of concepts and values, such as family, culture, traditions, ethnicity, *etc.*, which are subjective and personal. At the same time, the idea of home is a shared experience. Therefore, conceptualisation of a country as a home acts as a unifying act bringing the individual and the collective together, making the US a safe space with no conflicts involved. However, the home metaphor can also promote the Us vs Them dichotomy. As illustrated in example (6), Trump's words suggest that his goal is to make Iran a more democratic country while also implying that without change in the government, there will be no future for the country and its people. Therefore, the opposition of two nations is involved: the US is the more powerful state leading Iran to a great future with *prosperity at home*, suggesting that Iran is a broken and failed home.

Several conceptual structures were identified for conflict metaphors. One of such is CONFLICT IS HEAT. Conflicts and relationships between countries are described as *spark-igniting tinder-dry, hot, simmering, boiling* that can *fuel more tensions, raise the temperature, and heat things up*. The logic behind the use of such conceptualisation is straightforward: when heating liquids, the temperature must be raised, which after some time brings liquids to the state of simmering, and eventually boiling. However, if the heat is left for too long, liquids can burst out. Therefore, conflicts are like substances under heat that happen gradually over a period of time and if left unresolved, eventually develop into full-scale wars. Conflicts are also conceptualised as PHYSICAL FORCE, for examples increased *tensions* between the US and Iran. The word 'tension' refers to "the state of being stretched out" (Lexico 2021), especially when talking about muscles. So conflicting relationships between countries can be interpreted as muscles that are tense due to stress, which in situations of conflict are instability, disorder, and uncertainty. One instance also suggests that situations of conflict can be described in medical terms, with perpetrators being *extremely surgical*. Surgeons operate with great precision and even minor mistakes can lead to complications or loss of human lives: military operations are serious and hence must be precise and careful. Several instances also seem to suggest the use of medical terms to refer to conflicts, such as *military operations* or *operating in theatres*. However, the word 'operation' does not refer to an act of surgery, but the two dictionaries rather suggest that it is "a planned activity involving a lot of people, especially soldiers or police officers" (Macmillan Dictionary 2021). Furthermore, the term 'operating theatre' is a medical term historically referring to surgical procedures being performed in theatres in front of medical students. However, in the context of warfare, 'theatre' refers to an area where military action takes place, which is rather conceptualised as a theatre play. Therefore, metaphorical expressions containing the word 'operate' were not considered as referring to the medical field. The result of conflicts or decisions is seen as a radioactive substance, as *fallout*. The word *fallout* refers to "radioactive particles

that are carried into the atmosphere after a nuclear explosion and gradually fall back as dust or in precipitation” (Lexico 2021). Even after some time, nuclear fallout causes serious harm to the environment, including animals and humans. Therefore, the reason why the aftermath of an incident is referred to as *fallout* is because for it to happen, something must trigger such a reaction. Conflicts are also perceived as people that *tick off*, *create military incidents*, and eventually must be *calmed down*, indicating that they are autonomous beings, which turns away the attention from the politicians responsible for the issues and conflicts. Conflicts are also described as plants, particularly those with thorns that can cut and damage the skin, which results in conflicts being *thorny*. Conflict escalation is also understood in terms of a ladder with levels, – if one *walks up all the way up the escalation ladder*, the conflict gets more serious with the possibility of escalating into a full-scale war when reaching the highest point. Finally, natural disasters play a minor role in describing conflicts, as the result of a conflicts becomes *a perfect storm* with cities *erupting* in protests, and countries *standing on the brink of cataclysm*. Though not numerous in the corpora of the present study, CONFLICT IS A NATURAL DISASTER metaphor portrays conflicts as inevitable, unstoppable, and natural. A similar structure, though with a more specific source domain, is WAR IS A STORM pointed out by Pancake (1993), which refers to the natural, inevitable, and unstoppable nature of wars. However, the present study on the Gulf crisis did not show high numbers of conceptualisation of the crisis or conflict as a storm, but rather in more general terms, as a natural disaster. Therefore, the CONFLICT IS A NATURAL DISASTER metaphor produces the understanding of the dangerous and destructive nature of conflicts. Similarly, war and its aftereffects are likened to taking drugs:

(10) *Ill-advised wars are like doing cocaine, the initial rush rises your poll numbers, but the crash is inevitable. And in this case, it would be horrible. The hangover from an Iraq war would last years.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)

As shown in the example, the speaker uses words associated with drugs and their side effects, such as *cocaine*, *rush*, *crash*, and *hangover*. The words on their own are not necessarily related to drugs: for example, the noun *rush*, which is defined as “a sudden movement forwards, especially by a crowd of people” (Macmillan Dictionary 2021), or *crash*, which refers to “a loud noise like the sound of two hard things hitting each other and breaking” (Macmillan Dictionary 2021), *etc.* However, because the speaker consciously compares ill-advised wars to doing cocaine, the meanings of the metaphorically used words are narrowed down to fit the context of the comparison. In other words, *rush* gains a certain meaning in the context of drugs, which is “a sudden thrill or feeling of euphoria such as experienced after taking certain drugs” (Lexico 2021); *crash* refers to one of the stages of the drug withdrawal process involving “the intense exhaustion” (Hartney, 2020); and *hangover* refers to “the feeling of being tired and sick because you have drunk too much alcohol or taken too many drugs” (Macmillan Dictionary 2021).

Therefore, just like drug withdrawal stages, ill-advised wars in example (7) also consist of three stages: first, the involvement into armed conflicts rises presidents' likeability and popularity, thus resulting in high poll numbers; eventually, though, armed conflicts become the point of exhaustion with countless losses and large-scale destruction; finally, the outcome of conflicts includes long-lasting consequences and damages socially and economically to human lives and experiences, cities, and countries overall.

The analysis of CONFLICT metaphors identified in the two sub-corpora points to differences in conceptualisation of the Gulf crisis between CNN and Fox News. For instance, the total number of metaphorical expressions that contribute to the CONFLICT structures is 44 for CNN and 23 for Fox News. Furthermore, several patterns are also evident: CNN is more likely to conceptualise conflicts as a slow and gradual process, hence the use of such structures as CONFLICT IS HEAT and ESCALATION HAS LEVELS. CNN also uses the structure CONFLICT IS A PHYSICAL FORCE more frequently than Fox News, which might indicate their concern about the conflict and its aftermath. On the other hand, Fox News is more likely than CNN to represent conflict as an autonomous process, which absolves the parties involved in the conflict of all responsibility and blame, which in turn produces such structures as CONFLICTS ARE PEOPLE and CONFLICT IS A NATURAL DISASTER.

It should be noted, however, that because the studies on the Gulf and Iraq Wars analyse the metaphorical language of armed conflicts that escalated into wars, the vocabulary used to describe the two wars was inevitably different as compared to the Persian Gulf crisis of 19-21, including metaphorical expressions. Therefore, the lack of certain conceptualisations can be explained due to the fact that the Gulf crisis did not escalate into a full-scale war between the US and Iran, making the use of certain conceptual structures unnecessary and unimportant in the discourse and context of the crisis. Although considerable numbers of metaphors identified in the two sub-corpora were not thoroughly analysed in the previous conflicts in the Persian Gulf and do not seem novel or characteristic only of the Persian Gulf crisis, they nevertheless constitute a significant part of political discourse.

The conceptualisation of people is one of such categories that involves several metaphorical structures with a small number of identified metaphorical expressions. First, perception of people as commodities is typical to political discourse, especially in cases of war or armed conflicts, which makes it a perfect tool of dehumanisation. For example, troops are seen as objects that can be *sent*, *deployed*, *put*, *kept*, and *brought* somewhere, but also *lost*, *repositioned*, *withdrawn*, or *pulled out* from somewhere. The verb *deploy*, for example, means to “move (troops or equipment) into position for military action” (Lexico 2021), and “if a government or army deploys soldiers or weapons, it uses them” (Macmillan Dictionary 2021). Therefore, both definitions equate soldiers to military equipment, which are then visualised as commodities that relate to each other and can be used and exploited. People, too, are *fractured*, *thrown out* to other places or *wiped off the planet*. Similarly, knowledgeable and important for the government

people are called *human libraries of historical information*. Finally, only one metaphorical expression was identified throughout the two corpora which relates people to waves:

(11) *Iran has turned a wave of popular supporting to a tide of anti-government fury*. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)

Generally, the conceptualisation of people as objects, commodities, or waves, (what is also called ‘thingification’ of people), acts as a means of dehumanisation and devaluation of human lives, especially in political discourse. One of the reasons for such conceptualisation is related to power. Similar to the human-animal relationship, objects are not seen as valuable or priceless, but rather as fragile and replaceable, which results in devaluation of their worth, deeming them useless. Another reason, however, is that objectifying people minimises the seriousness, or even numbers, of human losses that conflicts and wars cause. Therefore, perceiving people as objects and commodities works in similar ways: if human lives are seen as mere objects, then they also are replaceable, making the value of political leaders’ lives higher than those that serve them, *e.g.*, troops. As indicated in Table 2, CNN uses more metaphorical expressions than Fox News, though none of the identified metaphors were ideologically motivated, as conceptualisation of people as objects is common in political discourse in general.

Since fluctuations in the energy market play a big role in the Persian Gulf crisis, metaphors relating to the field of economics were also identified with several conceptual structures. First, the energy market is portrayed as a person that can *make some corrections* and *head back up a little bit*, denoting the self-governing nature of the market. At the same time, political leaders are *trying to guide the market*, which depicts the market as being shown which direction to take, making it highly reliable on people. When dealing with Iran, the international banking system is said to be *crippled*, which is “an offensive word for someone who is physically disabled, especially someone who is unable to walk” (Macmillan Dictionary 2021), and stands for the international banking being unable to deal with or help Iran. The energy market is also characterised as an *earthquake* whose *epicentre is Saudi Arabia*: world oil markets can be *rocked*, and bigger attacks could create larger *shocks*. Earthquakes are known to be sudden and sometimes violent, “typically causing great destruction, as a result of movements within the earth’s crust or volcanic action” (Lexico 2021), and the epicentre refers to “the point on the earth’s surface vertically above the focus of an earthquake” (Lexico 2021). Therefore, calling the energy market an earthquake denotes it as unstable and fluctuating, disruption to which comes from Saudi Arabia. Finally, ECONOMIC INSTABILITY IS PHYSICAL FORCE is another structure that conceptualises the energy market being affected by economic problems and other external factors. For example, the aftereffect of fluctuations in the oil market is said to have *grave impacts*, which means “the action of one object coming forcibly into contact with another” (Lexico 2021), or put simply, “forceful impression” in a figurative sense (Online

Etymology Dictionary 2021). Therefore, if the market is being hit by something with force, then it most likely changes its direction downward resulting in economic consequences, which involve the Saudi Arabian oil output that is *slashed* or *knocked out*. This conceptualisation, however, implies that the energy market is easily influenced by external factors, such as attacks, and manipulated by other parties involved in the conflict. In most cases, however, both CNN and Fox News conceptualise the economy and the energy market during the Gulf crisis as highly unstable, easily affected by external factors, and apt to changes.

Numerous conceptual structures were also identified with the target domain of POLITICS. The highest number of metaphorical expressions analysed belong to the POLITICS IS A JOURNEY category. Such conceptualisation was highly expected in the discourse of both CNN and Fox News since it constitutes a considerable part of metaphors found in the political discourse. However, the majority of metaphorical expressions identified in the two sub-corpora are based on movement, with either the US or Iran being depicted as moving towards a certain direction or goal. Therefore, such metaphorical expressions include verbs or verb phrases such as *move toward*, *head*, *take a path*, *get back on track*, *go*, *walk a fine line*, *map a route*, *take a different tack*, *fumble one's way through*, *drive someone away*, etc., and nouns such as *on-ramp*, *off-ramp*, *steps*, *tough road*, *way*, *march to war*, *pathway*, etc. The movement itself can be described as changing or taking different directions, either forward or backwards, as seen in the examples below:

- (12) *So if they vowed to ignore this step, where does it move forward?* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
(13) *And today, it does seem that the Iranians, Becky, are taking a different tack, pro-regime elements having a prayer vigil at the same site as the protests.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)

The two examples clearly illustrate the function of movement metaphors. First, metaphors of movement tend to be used when looking forward into the future, as is shown in example (9). In such instances plans and strategies are conceptually situated on a *path* that countries or political leaders must take to achieve a goal or fulfil plans. In other words, political leaders must *take steps* to move forward in terms of political decisions, or *step away* from the involvement, thus resulting in the movement forward and backwards. Similarly, changes of plans or strategies are also conceptualised in terms of change of direction, as is illustrated in example (10): *taking a different tack* is a sailing term, which refers to “an act of changing course by turning a boat’s head into and through the wind” (Lexico 2021). Therefore, employing different strategies or changing plans are conceptualised as taking a different direction or a path. However, several instances of metaphorical expressions that portray Iran having the need to be guided to democracy were identified in Fox News, which produce the understanding of the right and proper political pathway that is American, as the two examples below illustrate:

- (14) *We want to sit down and discuss without precondition a new way forward, a series of steps by which Iran becomes a more normal country.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (15) *Well, I think the path that the Trump administration really wants is for Iran to come to the table and talk about amendments to the nuclear deal – no nuclear weapons, control the missiles and put an end to the terrorism.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)

As already mentioned, the US and Iran are represented in terms of the Self vs the Other dichotomy, where the undemocratic Other, or Iran, must be normalised, and the Self, or the US, has a role of controlling and maintaining world order by guiding Iran along a democratic path, thus highlighting the asymmetry of power between the two countries. Such narrative eventually depicts Iran as immoral, pointing out its inability to rule and govern its country and people, resulting in demonisation of the Iranian government. Demonisation of the opposite power, in turn, functions as a tool for justification of involvement into foreign affairs, while at the same time making the US a prominent figure serving to restore and maintain peace in the world order. Therefore, the analysis of the identified metaphorical expressions in the discourse of both channels seems to suggest that Fox News tends to refer to Iran as needing guidance from the US in becoming normal and democratic. CNN, on the other hand, is critical of the Trump administration's decisions and rather prefers the normalisation of the US-Iranian relationship with the goal of establishing peace.

Another conceptual structure referring to the domain of politics is POLITICS IS BUSINESS. Just like the conceptualisation of politics in terms of a journey, business metaphors are also common in political discourse. As indicated in Table 2, Fox News uses business metaphors almost three times more than CNN, making the rate of 0.8 words per 1000 words in the Fox News sub-corpora, and 0.3 words per 1000 in CNN. However, the identified metaphorical expressions relate to areas of business or management, where meetings can be *bought*, the regime can be *bargained for*, the damage of war with Iran is considered in terms of its *cost*, and agreements or decisions are referred to as *buy-ins* that are made at a *negotiating table*:

- (16) *And you know, the President did a very good thing in brokering the UAE-Israel deal, because that puts added pressure on Iran to come to the table.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)

First, the term *broker* tends to be used in the language of commerce and business, referring to “someone whose job is to organize business deals for other people” (Macmillan Dictionary 2021). *Brokering*, then, in the context of example (13), is an act of organising business deals, or the UAE-Israel deal in particular. Similarly used is the term (*negotiating*) *table*, which refers to “a table around which negotiations take place”, where the verb *negotiate* itself historically denoted something that is “done in the course of business” (Lexico 2021). Therefore, the conceptualisation of politics in business terms portrays certain

political events and matters, be it conflicts, deals, meetings, *etc.*, as those whose course of action can be changed over agreements and which can be negotiated between political leaders as businessmen. At the same time, however, the negative side effect of such conceptualisation remains in the background. For example, in cases of wars and conflicts, the understanding of agreements between political leaders as negotiations between businessmen is regarded as an act to restore peace, thus alleviating the consequences and realities of conflicts, such as widespread death and destruction of cities. War damages are, therefore, not important before an agreement can be reached, or a deal negotiated.

With fewer examples but nonetheless referring to the domain of politics is the conceptualisation of the Iran nuclear deal as a person:

- (17) *While addressing some of the deal's weaknesses he says, you know, that he wants to go back to that policy that was set in place by his former administration.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (18) *We've got EU foreign minister and the NATO Secretary General met Friday to try to resuscitate the deal.* (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)

As illustrated in the examples, the two sentences use words that relate to human qualities and activities: *weakness* refers to being weak, while *resuscitate* is “to make an unconscious person start to breathe again” (Macmillan Dictionary 2021). What is also evident is the ideological use of language: Fox News aligns with Trump’s views on the nuclear deal that were highly critical, hence referring to its features or drawbacks as *weaknesses*. On the other hand, CNN, which is representative of Democrats, is in favour of the nuclear deal, so *resuscitating* it is a positive term for its renewal. The opposition of views is also noticeable in one instance identified in CNN: the nuclear deal is seen as *a great accomplishment* that Trump *threw out*, which also portrays the deal as an object that can easily be discarded. Therefore, such choice of words shows CNN’s disapproval of Trump’s actions with the two channels, CNN and Fox News, sharing opposite views on the US involvement in the Iran nuclear deal.

The remaining conceptual structures were combined into the Other category in Table 2 because the number of metaphorical expressions identified in the two sub-corpora is low. However, despite low number, these instances are worth mentioning since they are concerned with the Persian Gulf crisis. One of such structures is conceptualisation of ideas as objects, *e.g.*, *selling him [Trump] that Iran is not Iraq*, or *handing out great ideas like gift baskets*. Responsibility in terms of blame is also seen as an object that can be *shared* or *spread*, assuming that not only one party is responsible, and others should be held accountable as well. Three conceptual structures were assigned only one metaphorical expression each: STRATEGY IS A SUBSTANCE metaphor denotes the US having *a solid strategy concerning Iran*, meaning “firm and stable in shape; not liquid or fluid” (Lexico 2021) or that the strategy must be effective and

successful. Typical for political discourse is the conceptualisation of arguments as a physical force or war, though only one instance was identified in Fox News:

(19) *Watch CNN's 36-year-old national security analyst attack the President for not killing enough people yesterday.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)

The metaphorical use of *attack* points out the violent nature of arguing and solving conflicts, thus resulting in the negative portrayal of one party, – in this case the CNN reporter functions as an aggressor towards Trump. One instance from Fox News also describes Khomeini as a *monster*, which functions as a tool for dehumanisation and demonisation. Finally, diplomacy during the Gulf crisis is represented as a person as either *dead* or *dormant* in both Fox News and CNN, which implies that the US-Iranian relationship during the crisis greatly deteriorated, and decisions cannot be reached or agreed upon anymore. However, such instances of conceptual structures with a low number of identified metaphorical expressions are not numerous since the vast majority of metaphorical expressions are repeatedly used throughout the two sub-corpora.

The overall analysis of the conceptualisation of the Persian Gulf crisis in the discourse of CNN and Fox News channels indicates several differences between the discourse of the two channels. The ideological leaning of the two channels is clearly noticeable throughout the two sub-corpora. The use of metaphorical expressions suggests that CNN is highly critical of Trump, his administration, and members of the Republican party in general, which rather corresponds with liberal values and beliefs. CNN is also more inclined to criticise the US involvement in the Iranian politics and for the increased tensions in the US-Iranian relationship. Fox News, on the other hand, is highly supportive of Trump and his administration, though at the same time highly critical of anti-Trump stances. Fox News is also more likely than CNN to justify the US involvement in Iranian politics by using the narrative of normalisation and democratisation of Iran. At the same time, metaphorical expressions identified in the discourse of Fox News seem to suggest that Iran is blamed for the Gulf crisis, while the role of the US is left unacknowledged.

4.2. Ideological conceptualisation of the Persian Gulf crisis

Regarding the overall analysis of the content as well as metaphorical expressions identified in the two sub-corpora, several ideological patterns or themes can be highlighted. First, the analysis of both CNN and Fox News strongly suggest the presence of such ideas as manifest destiny, American exceptionalism, and moral absolutism. For instance, both channels tend to portray the US in positive light and Iran in negative, where the role of the former in metaphoric terms is that of a mentor, teacher, or even parent to Iran, and the latter is that of a student or child, who must follow the mentor. However, if Iran does not

comply with the rules, especially with the nuclear deal, then the US and its allies are capable of limiting Iran its freedom by imposing heavy sanctions. This mentor-student relationship can mostly be characterised as an act of normalisation and democratisation of Iran, which especially plays into the idea of the American manifest destiny and enforces ideological hegemony: the Iranian regime is rather abusive and oppressive to the Iranian people and, therefore, acts as a menace to its people and the world in general, and thus needs to be eradicated. The democratisation of Iran also plays an important role for the cultural aspect, as the context of the Gulf crisis indicates. For example, Iranians are said to be sophisticated and sometimes more educated than Americans, making them natural allies of the American people. However, Iranians lack freedom, voice, and hope for the future that Americans have because the regime and the Supreme Leader are said to be indifferent to their people. Therefore, this opposition of values and ideologies between the US and Iran further promotes American hegemony and democracy by enforcing the idea of the abuses of the oppressive and tyrannical dictatorship, thus justifying the United States' role in the Iranian regime change. Furthermore, the justification of involvement is also perpetuated by the Rescue Scenario identified by Lakoff (1991, 2003) in both Gulf and Iraq Wars. In the Rescue Scenario of the Persian Gulf crisis, the Iranians and several neighbouring countries are victims of the Iranian regime, which is the villain. Hence, clear distinction is observed between the innocent Iranian people and the abuses of the regime. In addition, the Self-Defence scenario is also present in the discourse on the Gulf crisis, where Iran is perceived as a threat to the United States, other neighbouring countries, and to economy in general. As a result, such relationship often produces dehumanisation of the East, which results in the civilised vs savage dichotomy: the US and its allies are portrayed as civilised nations being in control of other nations that are savage, such as Iran and other Eastern countries. However, such conceptualisation puts the East on a lower level politically and intellectually than the West, which in turn acts as a tool for justification of losses of lives and other damages involved in conflicts.

Furthermore, the Eastern countries, especially Iran, are criticised and condemned by the US media for being the instigators of conflicts in the Gulf crisis. Several occasions suggest that despite being mutually involved in conflicts, the blame rather falls on Iran and other Eastern countries. For example, the killing of Soleimani is likened to the killing of Franz Ferdinand, and the consequences of Soleimani's death that could have potentially resulted in another world war, possibly World War III, are compared to those of World War I. The context of such instance, however, suggests that the role of the US in the assassination is perceived as minor and distant, making Soleimani's death inevitable and impending. Therefore, such evidence suggests that the West, the US in particular, is used as a symbol for the restoration of world order politically and culturally, and whose goal is to spread civilisation, or

democracy, to those that threaten Western values and ideologies, which leaves the United States' intervention unquestionable and reasonable.

The analysis of ideological implications also suggests that there is high occurrence of conceptualisation of the Gulf crisis as a natural and autonomous development, which absolves all parties involved in the conflict from responsibility and blame. Therefore, in cases of numerous human casualties and overall destruction, the parties involved in and responsible for such incidents are mostly put in the background, making the conflict independent and uncontrolled. The responsibility of participating in the crisis also tends to be placed on warfare machines and equipment, such as missiles, aircrafts, and vessels, leaving commanders and controllers innocent and blameless. In instances of personification of machines and equipment, human losses are rarely mentioned. Also, despite not being named or re-named exclusively for the Persian Gulf crisis, the names of the machinery used in the conflict invoke a patriotic sentiment, pertaining to the American culture and history.

The differing views on the involvement in the Persian Gulf crisis are also important to mention. As already noted, CNN and Fox News channels are on the opposing sides of the political spectrum, with CNN being left leaning representing liberal values and mostly serving as the main political source for Democrats, and Fox News being right leaning with conservative values and serving for Republicans. Therefore, the analysis of CNN's and Fox News's discourse on the Gulf crisis as well as the analysis of metaphorical expressions suggest that CNN is rather critical, first, of Trump and his administration's actions towards Iran, and second, of the United States' involvement in the conflict. Instead, the relationship between the US and Iran should be stabilised and maintained peaceful. However, CNN recognises the role of both parties in the conflict by placing responsibility on the US, or more specifically on Trump, and Iran. Fox News, on the other hand, is fully supportive of Trump and are more likely to blame Iran for the conflict rather than acknowledge the United States' involvement.

However, despite CNN and Fox News having opposing ideological views, values, and evaluation of the conflict, both channels nonetheless help perpetuate such themes and push American hegemonic ideas further through the discourse on the Persian Gulf crisis.

5. Conclusions

The analysis of the Persian Gulf crisis of 19-21 in the discourse of CNN and Fox News in terms of metaphorical representation and underlying ideological implications behind the use of metaphors suggests several conclusions according to the set objectives:

By employing the Metaphor Identification Procedure to the two sub-corpora, the close reading suggests that a total number of 976 metaphorical expressions were identified: 548 metaphorical expressions were identified in the corpus of CNN and 428 expressions in the corpus of Fox News. However, despite having more metaphorical expressions, the normalisation of numbers reveals that CNN uses approximately 22 metaphorical expressions per 1,000 words, and Fox News uses 24 per 1,000 words.

The total number of identified conceptual structures is 37 throughout the two sub-corpora. However, only a small number of the identified conceptual structures were used extensively throughout the two sub-corpora, where target domain of politics is conceptualised as a journey, business, game, or play; power as physical force; states, governments, and military equipment are personified; conflicts are mostly conceptualised as physical force or heat; and finally, people are perceived as objects.

The overall analysis of the identified conceptual structures suggests that there are similarities and differences in the use of structures and metaphorical expressions between the left-wing and right-wing US media, CNN and Fox News respectively. First, both channels are similar in terms of the use of conceptual structures. For example, the POLITICS/WAR IS A GAME and POLITICS IS A PLAY structures are used similarly by CNN and Fox News, where the former criticises and blames Iran for instigating conflicts by calling Iran a *bad actor*, and the latter refers to a funeral of Iranian Supreme Leader as a *theatre* and a *show* revealing an entertaining factor of these events. Also, both CNN and Fox News conceptualise the economy and the energy market during the Gulf crisis as highly unstable, easily affected by external factors, and apt to changes. However, Fox News is more likely than CNN to refer to Iran and its regime negatively by using the structure STATE IS A PERSON, which also highlights the imbalance of power between the US and Iran. Similarly, Fox News also tends to conceptualise politicians as dangerous animals that can harm others, *e.g.*, *snake*, *tapeworm*. CNN, on the other hand, tends to negatively refer to members of the Republican party as hawkish, resembling a hawk and aggressive in manner. Furthermore, the conflicts are conceptualised as a slow and gradual process by CNN, hence the use of such structures as CONFLICT IS HEAT and ESCALATION HAS LEVELS. The frequent use of the structure CONFLICT IS A PHYSICAL FORCE by CNN might indicate their concern about the conflict and its aftermath. Fox News, however, is more likely to represent conflict as an autonomous process, which absolves the parties involved in the conflict of all responsibility and blame, yielding such structures as CONFLICTS ARE PEOPLE and CONFLICT IS A NATURAL DISASTER. With the POLITICS IS A JOURNEY structure,

political decisions and goals are conceptualised as movement. However, Fox News tends to refer to Iran as needing guidance from the US in becoming normal and democratic, whereas CNN rather prefers the path of normalisation of the US-Iranian relationship with the goal of establishing peace. CNN and Fox News also share opposite views on the US involvement in the Iran nuclear deal, where CNN is in favour of the nuclear deal, whereas Fox News, in alignment with Trump's views, is highly critical of the deal.

The findings of the present thesis on the 19-21 Persian Gulf crisis suggest a high correspondence with the previous studies on conflicts in the Persian Gulf, or the Gulf and Iraq wars in particular. Several conceptual structures and patterns were identified that were also characteristic of the Gulf War and Iraq War, such as THE STATE IS A PERSON metaphor, and the Self-Defence and Rescue scenarios, identified by Lakoff (1991, 2003) which play into the *Us-Them* dichotomy by demonising and dehumanising Iran and making the US a hero. Several metaphor structures also coincided with the ones identified by Pancake (1993) in the Gulf War narrative, such as MACHINES ARE ANIMATE BEINGS; CONFLICT IS A GAME, which is similar to Pancake's (1993) metaphor WAR IS A GAME OR ENTERTAINMENT, though altered to fit the context of the Gulf crisis; THE WAR ZONE IS THE WILD WEST, though only one metaphorical expression was assigned to this structure; and finally, WAR IS A STORM pointed out by Pancake (1993) was rather replaced by a metaphor with a more abstract source domain, yielding the structure CONFLICT IS A NATURAL DISASTER. Furthermore, the emphasis of Sandikcioglu's (2000) and Bates's (2004) study was on the *Us-Them* dichotomy and the imbalance of power between the West and the East, where the former is represented as civilised, powerful, mature, stable, rational, *etc.*, and the latter is depicted metaphorically as barbarous, weak, immature, instable, emotional, *etc.* Similarly, the narrative of the Persian Gulf crisis employs such representations of the US-Iranian relationship as a mean of justifying the US involvement in the politics of the East and the conflict in the Gulf in general.

Finally, the analysis of the underlying ideological implications behind the use of metaphors reveals several themes. First, the analysis of the content as well as metaphorical expressions in CNN and Fox News strongly suggest the presence of such ideas as manifest destiny, American exceptionalism, and moral absolutism. The US is rather represented positively and as a mentor to Iran, whereas Iran is represented negatively and acts as a student who must follow the rules. This student-mentor relationship highlights the imbalance of power between the two and acts as a tool for normalisation and democratisation of Iran, by enforcing the idea of American hegemony at the same time. What is more, the Iranian regime is represented as evil, abusive, and oppressive, whose leaders are indifferent to its people, thus justifying the United States' involvement in the Iranian regime change. Such narrative also includes the Rescue and Self-Defence Scenarios identified by Lakoff (1991, 2003). The Rescue Scenario suggests that the Iranians and its neighbouring countries are victims of the Iranian regime, whereas the role of the US is to rescue them from the tyrannical Iranian dictatorship. At the same time, the Self-

Defence Scenario portrays Iran as a major threat to the United States, other countries, and economy in general. As a result, such conceptualisation results in dehumanisation and demonisation of the Other, while ignoring the United States' wrongdoings. The analysis also suggests that the Eastern countries, Iran in particular, are more likely to be blamed for the involvement in the Gulf crisis by the media. The role of the US in the crisis is rather perceived as minor and distant, thus leaving the US involvement unquestionable and reasonable. Instead, the role of the US is to civilise and normalise the East and Iran politically, culturally, and economically. Similarly, the conceptualisation of conflict itself implies that it is a natural and autonomous development, which absolves all parties involved in the conflict from responsibility and blame. Rather, the conflict has a mind of its own, or the blame is put on the military machines and equipment, where human losses are rarely mentioned. Finally, the differing views on the involvement in the Persian Gulf crisis are also evident between CNN and Fox News. CNN is critical of Trump and his administration's decisions towards Iran, and of the United States' involvement in the conflict in general. Despite recognising the role of both the US and Iran in escalation of the conflict, more value is placed on peaceful US-Iranian relationship. Fox News, on the other hand, are highly supportive of Trump and his administration, and rather hold Iran accountable for the conflict by placing the US involvement in the background.

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8. Summary in Lithuanian

Šiame magistro darbe analizuojamas Persijos įlankos krizės konceptualizavimas JAV kairiųjų ir dešiniųjų politinių pažiūrų medijose, siekiant nustatyti pamatinės ideologinės motyvacias, atsiskleidžiančias konceptualiųjų metaforų vartosenoje. Tyrimo tikslui pasiekti buvo išskelti šie uždaviniai: remiantis metaforos identifikavimo metodu MIP atidžiojo skaitymo būdu nustatyti metaforinius pasakymus surinktuose CNN ir Fox News kaip dešiniųjų ir kairiųjų pažiūras atstovaujančių medijų straipsniuose apie Persijos įlankos krizę; pagal nustatytas kalbines metaforas rekonstruoti konceptualiąsias metaforas ir metaforinius pasakymus sugrupuoti pagal jų konceptualią struktūrą, t.y. TIKSLO SRITIS (angl. *target domain*) YRA ŠALTINIO SRITIS (angl. *source domain*); nustatyti metaforų vartojimo panašumus ir skirtumus politiniame diskurse pasirinktose kairiųjų ir dešiniųjų pažiūrų medijose; tyrimo rezultatus apžvelgti platesniame esamų tyrimų kontekste, lyginant 2019-2021 m. Persijos įlankos krizės metaforinį vaizdavimą su ankstesniais metaforų tyrimais Persijos įlankos konfliktų tema; nustatyti pamatinę medijų ideologinę motyvaciją, atsiskleidžiančią per metaforines išraiškas, apibūdinančias 19-21 m. Persijos įlankos krizę. Šiuo tyrimu siekiama prisidėti prie augančio mokslinių tyrimų skaičiaus politiniame diskurse, ypač Persijos įlankos konfliktų tema.

Metaforų klasifikavimui ir ideologinės prasmės ir pamatinių motyvacijų interpretavimui taikoma kritinė metaforų analizė (CMA) (angl. *Critical Metaphor Analysis*). Tyrime taip pat remtasi konceptualiosios metaforos teorija ir aktualiais ankstesniais tyrimais, pabrėžiančiais metaforų vaidmenį politiniame diskurse, analizavusiais metaforas būdingas ankstesniems Persijos įlankos konfliktams bei kairiųjų ir dešiniųjų ideologijos JAV medijose. Tekstynų medžiagą sudaro tekstai, rinkti iš dviejų populiariausių JAV naujienų kanalų, atstovaujančių skairiųjų ir dešiniųjų ideologijas: CNN, kuris atstovauja liberalioms vertybėms, ir Fox News, – konservatyvioms.

Tyrimo rezultatai rodo, kad, atsižvelgiant į metaforines konceptualiąsias struktūras ir jų paplitimą, tiek kairiųjų, tiek dešiniųjų pažiūrų JAV medijos konceptualizuoja Persijos įlankos krizę panašiai: tikslo sritis apibūdinanti politiką konceptualizuojama kaip kelionė, verslas, žaidimas ir teatras; politinę galią kaip fizinę jėgą; valstybė, vyriausybė ir karinė technika personifikuojamos; konfliktai dažniausiai suvokiami kaip fizinė jėga ar karštis; galiausiai, žmonės suvokiami kaip daiktai. Tyrimas atskleidė, kad iš esmės 2019-2021 m. Persijos įlankos krizės konceptualizavimas pasirinktose JAV medijose atitinka ankstesnių konfliktų Persijos įlankoje tyrimus, kurie taip sutampa su metaforų struktūromis, vyraujančiomis politiniame diskurse. Nors tiek kairiųjų, tiek dešiniųjų medijos apibūdina Iraną kaip agresorių, CNN vis dėlto pripažįsta negatyvų JAV, ypač D. Trumpo, vaidmenį eskaluojant konfliktą, o Fox News veikiau palaiko Trumpą ir neigia JAV vaidmenį. Toks metaforiškas krizės vaizdavimas abiejose medijose atspindi JAV vaidmenį demokratizuojant ir normalizuojant Irano režimą, tačiau tuo pačiu metu toks konceptualizavimas dehumanizuoja ir demonizuoja Iraną.

Appendix 1. Video titles, dates of upload, transcripts, links

1. From CNN

Iran shoots down US drone aircraft

Jun 20, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7MD3Y-vIFjw&t=1s&ab_channel=CNN

A: Iran shot down an unmanned US military drone like this one that is not in question. What is clear, where the two sides disagree is where the drone was flying at the time. US officials tells CNN the aircraft was operating over the Strait of Hormuz in international airspace. Tehran counters that the drone was destroyed after it violated Iranian airspace. It comes after the US Navy said that a mine allegedly used to attack oil tankers last week bears a striking resemblance to others displayed at Iranian military parades and Tehran denies it was involved in any attacks on tankers and we will have a live report from Tehran in a moment. But first, Sam Kiley joins us from Khor Fakkan, it's a town on the Gulf of Oman, in the UAE and close to where those tanker attacks took place. And Sam, first, let's talk about what happened with this drone and exactly what was shot down and where.

B: Well, finally there is an agreement between Iran and the United States. Firstly, that a drone was shot down and secondly, over what kind of a drone. They now both agree that it was a Global Hawk, effectively an unmanned spy plane. Now the dispute is whether it was shot down as the Iranians say over Iranian territory in Iranian airspace, which would "make it a legitimate target", or whether it was in international airspace, which makes it an act of aggression as far as the United States and indeed international law would have it. That dispute will be resolved when the location of that drone's position when it was shot down is identified. But that is the argument that's going on in terms of what has been happening in the skies above this region. On the water, though there's no doubt at all about the location of two vessels that were hit a week ago by what the United States is insisting was Iranian-made mines and they demonstrated some of the evidence behind this claim during a visit which I paid to them just yesterday. This is my report: An American naval craft fast approaches a Japanese ship allegedly attacked with an Iranian mine. Gunboat diplomacy. The US taking the media to see the damage done to the Kokuka Courageous. This hole just over my shoulder, the Americans say it was caused with an Iranian-built limpet mine. They can't say, however, with any total certainty that it was put there by the Iranians. Nonetheless, it flew through both the outer hull and the inner hull of the ship, penetrating the fuel tank area. Some experts have said that that is deliberate. It was a sign that whoever planted this mine knew what they were doing, that they wanted to send a signal, but not cause a disaster. The signal is hands-off Iran, the disaster would be all-out war. US Naval experts strongly believe that the mine here and one removed by Iranian commandos from this same ship were Iranian. The US Navy recovered a magnet from one limpet mine and fragments of another which has led them to this:

C: What I can tell you is that the limpet mine that was used in the attack is distinguishable. And it is also strikingly bearing a resemblance to Iranian mines that have already been publicly displayed in Iranian military parades.

B: Since the US withdrew from the deal intended to reduce sanctions against Iran in return for it suspending its nuclear program, and, in fact, imposed even heavier sanctions, tensions have steadily increased, especially at sea. The US sent a carrier group to the region to signal power and discourage Iranian retaliation. In May, though, four ships were mysteriously damaged in Emirati waters by explosions. Then the Kokuka Courageous and the Front Altair, a Norwegian-owned tanker, were both attacked last week. There have been more mysterious attacks on land, most recently in Basra, where a building housing foreign oil companies, including Exxon Mobil, was hit by a rocket. The US has blamed Iran for many similar attacks. Iran denies all allegations of using violence to signal its anger over the US sanctions, but it backs many militias capable of launching such assaults. The commander of its

Revolutionary Guard Corps has warned that Iran has missiles that could destroy an aircraft carrier, the US Secretary of State insisting that the US can't pursue diplomacy.

D: We can't do that without making sure that we have the capability to respond if Iran makes a bad decision, if it makes a decision to go after an American or an American interest, or to continue to proliferate its nuclear weapons program.

B: So far Iran has done neither. But it does want US sanctions lifted. America is saying 'no', leaving the gunboats to circle amid spiraling tensions. Now, Kristie, I think what we can probably deduce from all of this is certainly a degree of signaling of capability from the Iranians. But there's been no parallel response from the United States in terms of any signal that they're prepared to dial down on those very heavy sanctions being posed on the Iranian economy. Kristie?

A: Yeah, the sanctions, the accusations of tanker attacks at sea, this US drone being shot down, tensions in the region are indeed, as you put it, spiraling. Sam Kiley reporting live, thank you. And let's go straight to Tehran, Frederik Pleitgen joins us from the Iranian capital. And, Fred, we have these conflicting accounts from the US and Iran, about this unmanned drone, where it was when it was shot down.

E: Yeah, you're absolutely right. There certainly are very conflicting reports, it was quite interesting to see it because the Iranians came out for their status really, really quickly after all of this happened. The Iranians are saying it happened in the early morning hours. Now, they say that this drone took off some time, actually, shortly past midnight, local time, was then circling around the area that Iranian say that it's turned off, or as they put it, mast, some of their identification equipment on board, obviously, not wanting to be seen, the Iranian say, by Iranian detection equipment. And then they say that it violated Iranian airspace sometime this morning and was shot down south of the Strait of Hormuz. Now, I think Sam was already talking about, the US, of course, has a very different take on things. They say that the drone was shot down over international waters in the Strait of Hormuz. And that's why the US says that this was an unprovoked attack. Now the Iranians, nevertheless, of course, very angry, they say about what happened. The unit that shot this drone down is Iran's most elite military unit, the Revolutionary Guard Corps, and the head of the Revolutionary Guard Corps said that the shooting down of this drone is a very clear message to the United States that Iran is drawing a red line, let's listen to what he had to say.

F: We have no intention to fight with any countries. But we are completely ready for war. What happened today was an obvious sign of this accurate message.

E: So, the Iranians saying that they would be ready. If something happens, they would be ready for a war. But it's certainly not something that they want. That really, Kristie, also echoes a lot of the things that we've heard from other Iranian officials as well. And also really quick, one thing that I wanted to add is that the Iranians have over the past couple of weeks showcased what they say are increased and more capable air defense systems that they've developed. In fact, just about, let's say a little over a week, maybe close to two weeks ago, they did showcase a new air defense system that they have developed. Not clear whether or not this was involved in this but it's certainly something that also sends a message to the US and other countries as well, Kristie.

A: Absolutely. There's been a flexing of military muscle on both sides, Iranian and American. Fred Pleitgen reporting live in Tehran. Thank you.

Rep. Schiff on CNN: Trump Must De-Escalate Tensions with Iran

Jun 21, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7daa4yyFGMw&ab_channel=Rep.AdamSchiff

A: Chairman, it's great to have you on Prime Time tonight with such pressing news matters before us all. You had an important briefing today. Coming out of it, do you have any question as to whether or not Iran intentionally shot down a US drone?

B: Well, Iran certainly shot the drone. Whether this was an intentional act by the top leadership or not is not something that I can really comment on, but I can say that we need to be working with our allies; there's been attack now on American aircraft, there's been attack on international shipping; there had been multiple provocative and dangerous acts by Iran, so we should be working with our allies to de-escalate the situation, to deter this conduct – yes, but also to make sure that this doesn't end up in unintentional conflict and escalation, so we need to figure out a strategy to de-escalate, to deter this kind of conduct, to protect shipping, to protect our aircraft, and I think most significant, as this is an attack on many nations, it ought to be an international response; we shouldn't allow Iran to drive us away from our allies.

A: Do you think that Iran knew what it was shooting at? The reason I ask is there were a couple of different messages from the Iranian authorities; one of them said, basically, "we did it. They came into our space, so we did it. We're going to go to the UN and prove that the US is lying about where it was". Alright, so that's an admission so far as I'm concerned, and it wasn't a mistake, it was intentional; and then you have another Iranian official who's saying, you know, "we communicated with the aircraft, we told it where it was"; it almost suggests as if they thought there might be somebody in this, that it wasn't a drone, and that would be a very different proposition.

B: Yeah, I don't know whether we have great clarity on whether Iran knew what it was shooting at in terms of whether it was manned or unmanned aircraft. I don't know the answer to that question, but, you know, certainly this is a provocation by Iran, an attack on our aircraft, an attack on shipping belonging to other nations, and I think there is no question that Iran has chosen these acts of belligerence partly to divide us from our allies, partly to get out of economic pressure and lash out at the United States in particular, but also to drive up oil prices and it does call for us to think strategically about this, not to take actions that play into Iranian hands, but at the same time that we protect the right of navigation.

A: So, what do you make of the president's response saying that, well, maybe it was a mistake, and indicating that he was in no rush to return fire in this situation. Do you think that's the right call? What do you think the way is forward?

B: Well, look, we don't want war here, I don't think Iran wants war here, and the big risk is that neither nation wanting war nonetheless ends up in a war because of miscalculations. So, it's very important that the international response be a cohesive one and we take whatever steps have the least risk of escalating the situation. So I hope that's the approach that the White House takes; there have been indications that the White House has been at odds with itself, that the president, for example, is reported to have tried to do a diplomatic approach through the Japanese Prime Minister to re-enter negotiations, but precisely that moment it appears that Bolton was announcing new sanctions on Iran; now that's a conflicting message, I think that would leave anyone confused, what are you really trying, are you making diplomatic overture, are you just trying to turn the screws to us. So I think we need a more coherent policy out of the administration, but first and foremost we need one that de-escalates the situation.

A: Of course, pulling out of the Iran deal blew up their coalition that you did have and lost some currency with Iran.

B: Chris, that's exactly right. We can't ignore the fact that the situation we're in now was so eminently predictable, that if we backed out of the Iran nuclear deal, if we cause other nations to, once again, impose sanctions on Iran, then we shouldn't be all that surprised that Iran is going to lead the deal and go back to enriching or that we're going to get these increased tensions and likelihood of conflict, that step plus, you know, the designation of the RGC is a terrorist group, I think, is predictable right that Iran would lash out through the IRGC in terms of that decision as well.

A: So under the guise of ratcheting up conflicts and tension, we get to what happened yesterday, which I've been calling a fiasco, not because it was wrong for you guys to bring in whole picks, but because it seems to be a pretty clear indication of where this is headed in this particular procedural method that you got a hundred and fifty five times the lawyer said she couldn't answer, you had a smattering of I-don't-recalls that were keenly germane in terms of revealing anything that might have been damaging. Did it change what you heard about in that hearing yesterday? Your reckoning of what the best way is forward?

B: Well, you know Chris, Hope Hicks before the Intel committee about a year or so ago, she came before the Judiciary Committee, so I wasn't there for the hearing today, for the interview, I guess, yesterday. I'm not surprised, I don't think anyone is surprised that the White House is stonewalling in such a comprehensive fashion; they're going to lose in court, they have no leg to stand upon and the cases that have gone to courts so far, they've been losing, but clearly, they're trying to draw this out as long as possible. I think, frankly, Hope Hicks gives us a really good test case because their stonewalling has been so dramatic and so unsupported by law. So, you know, we have to take this first step to see if we can get answers under subpoena and if we can't then we go forward we prosecute the case in court. So I think it's necessary, and yes, it's, I think, frustrating, and it is also dangerous in terms of system of checks and balances that the administration would take us down this path, but Congress has really left with no choice except to litigate to make sure we get answers.

A: Right, or to start an impeachment inquiry and maximize your powers and see where it goes from there.

B: Yeah, we could start an impeachment inquiry. That doesn't get us to court quicker. It does improve our argument, I think, respecting grand jury material to some degree; I don't know that that's all that much of an issue in terms of Hope Hicks testimony, but again whether it's an impeachment proceeding or it's part of our oversight that we're doing now. Either way we end up in court and either way they're going to try to run the clock and we're going to try to press this as fast as we possibly can.

A: So, chairman, you have already proposed bill that is really straightforward, that the campaign committees and different agents withing the different campaigns need to sign on that they understand that, and as broad a definitional understanding as possible, you can't let foreign powers interfere in the election and in your campaign. It's pretty straightforward, it's something that you would think everybody agrees with. You change one definition to just include parenthetically that it's anything that could be used for political advantage in terms of what defines value. What do you think the chance is that you get any buy-in from Republicans on this bill as simple as it is?

B: You know, I think the reality is with many bills like this. We're already looking at our post-Watergate reforms. We're putting forward bills, I introduced one earlier to try to curb the abuse of the pardon power and this bill would curb the abuse of getting foreign assistance. There aren't going to be many Republicans that are willing to put their name out there to risk an angry tweet or being criticized by Fox Prime Time, but they will support these probably once Donald Trump is out of the Oval Office because I think they understand as we do that what the president did in the last election, what he threatens to do in the next one is so destructive of our democracy to be inviting foreign intervention this way, so I don't know how much bipartisan support will get today, but I think we will see these kind of bills pass when it no longer is a risk to members to support them that President Trump is going to come down on them.

A: It is amazing how the fear of consequence is overwhelming good conscience in Congress right now. Chairman, it is so important to have you on the show during these important moments. Thank you for taking the opportunity.

Video shows Iran shooting down US drone

Jun 21, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqze_TVtQbA&t=2s&ab_channel=CNN

A: President Trump saying today that the American people will soon find out if the United States is going to war with Iran, saying the regime made a very big mistake shooting down a US military surveillance drone, like the one you see on your screen, at 4:05am Iranian time over the Strait of Hormuz. Take a look at this map. Iran says the US drone violated its airspace and they claim they shot down the drone right off its coast. US officials counter that claim, they call it categorically false. They say the drone was shot down in international airspace south and to the west. Right now, top congressional leaders are in the Situation Room at the White House being briefed. It's all coming as the Pentagon is deploying an additional thousand troops to the region as a deterrent against what the Trump administration calls increased Iranian aggression. We have this story covered from the White House to the Capitol to the streets of Tehran. We're going to begin with Barbara Starr at the Pentagon. Barbara, what type of military options is the Pentagon considering?

B: Well, right now the Pentagon has been focused on defense and deterrence against Iran. But at this hour, all of that could change. Murky new video released by the Pentagon of a US Navy drone being shot down by an Iranian surface to air missile may be the moment that changes everything. It's hard to make out, but the smoke plume is visible as the drone falls into the waters of the Strait of Hormuz. This map showing the missile launched from the Iranian coastline more than 20 miles away from the drone, according to the Pentagon. Iran's Revolutionary Guard releasing its own video, showing what it says is the moment of the shoot down. When asked about a US military response, President Trump playing his cards close to the vest in the initial hours.

Trump: Iran made a big mistake.

B: Military commanders behind the scenes are not looking for a march to war, but they are not excusing the attack, highlighting the international nature of the Iranian threat.

C: This was an unprovoked attack on the US surveillance asset that had not violated Iranian airspace at any time during its mission.

B: But Iran claims the American drone was in Iranian airspace and had its own dire warning.

D: We have no intention to fight with any countries. But we are completely ready for war. What happened today was an obvious sign of this accurate message.

B: Tensions have been rising for weeks. In early May the Pentagon sent an aircraft carrier Strike Group, Patriot missile defenses, and fighter jets. In the wake of intelligence, the US said, showed Iran was planning an attack. Then Iran is believed to have attacked commercial tankers last month and again last week, using mines to leave gaping holes leading to another 1000 troops being sent for further deterrence of Iran. Now, there's a determination that this deterrence strategy just is not working. What is the next step? The question is, is there a limited type of military strike you could take against Iran without it leading to all-out war? Jake.

A: All right, Barbara Starr at the Pentagon. Let's go now to Tehran, CNN Senior International Correspondent, Fred Pleitgen is on the ground in the Iranian capital. Fred, how are the Iranians responding to this threat from President Trump?

E: Well, the Iranians are certainly saying that they're not going to back down. And I think the Iranians also very clearly heard some of the words that President Trump was saying, essentially indicating that he thinks that it might have been a mistake on the part of the Iranians that this drone was shot down. But the Iranians are very clearly saying no, this was not a mistake. If you hear some of the voices that are on that video that was just in Barbara's report, those are not the kind of guys who think they've just made a mistake. And the Iranians essentially are saying, they believe that this drone was in their own territorial airspace, and that's why they shot it down. If you look at Iran's foreign minister, for instance, Jake, he's now getting involved in this. He even put out coordinates of where he said that this drone was shot down,

that puts about nine miles off Iran's coast. And so, the Iranians are saying that they had every right to shoot this drone down. At the same time, a dire warning coming from the Iranians to the US, the Iranians saying, 'this is what Iran does with its enemies', and essentially saying, 'yes, this was a clear message to the United States, that if it gets too close, this is what the Iranians are going to do'. And of course, Jake, all of this comes as the tensions here have been boiling over and continue to boil over. And one of the things that the Iranians have been telling us again, and again and again, is that if this escalates, Jake, they say that the Americans are not only going to be facing Iran's regular military, but all of its proxy forces in the region as well, Jake.

A: Alright, Fred Pleitgen in Tehran, Iran. Thank you so much. Joining me now to discuss this is democratic senator Ben Cardin of Maryland, he serves on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Senator, have you been briefed on the latest Intel, on the shoot down of the drone? Is there definitive proof that it was shot down where the Pentagon says it was shot down, as opposed to where the Iranian say it was shot down?

F: Well, Jake, it's good to be with you. We were briefed this week before the drone was shot down in the situation with Iran. There's no question that Iran is the bad actor. They're the ones doing these things that are against international norms, violating international agreements. But the tensions couldn't be higher. And the chances of a miscalculation are very, very high. It's our responsibility to try to calm things down. The Trump policies have sort of heated things up. And now that the danger point is even greater than it was before. But clearly Iran's the bad actor, we've got to try to re-engage the international community to isolate Iran, rather than isolate America.

A: So, you think the US should respond diplomatically and not militarily is that what I'm hearing you saying, – further isolation, diplomatically and economically?

F: I think militarily would be a mistake. There is no such thing as a limited military response right now, that could not be used as justification to escalate a military conflict in the region. That's not in the United States' interest.

A: Senator, the Iranians have made it very clear that this was not a mistake, that they shot down this drone on purpose. But take a listen to President Trump earlier today suggesting that maybe this was all just a mistake.

Trump: I have a feeling that it was a mistake made by somebody that shouldn't have been doing what they did. I find it hard to believe it was intentional. If you want to know the truth. I think that it could have been somebody who was loose and stupid.

A: What's going on there? Is there any evidence you've seen this was a mistake? Do you think the President is trying to provide the Iranians and perhaps himself with an out? Why say that this was a mistake when it clearly wasn't?

F: That may be the case. I think the concern here is that there will be a miscalculation, and a miscalculation can lead us into an unnecessary military conflict. So, I hope what the President was saying, 'Let's find a way that we can calm things down. No, we're not going to back away from Iran's... actions have to be changed. They cannot continue to support terrorism. They can't develop their nuclear programs; we need to get back to diplomacy and we need to have the support of our traditional allies'.

A: Is there a way to retaliate against Iran, militarily, not economically, or diplomatically, but militarily without the risk that it devolves into a full-scale war, resulting in attacks against the US forces stationed throughout the region, and thousands of innocent people killed?

F: Jake, please understand that the sanctions that we've imposed against Iran are powerful, it's affecting their daily lives, it's much more effective than using our military, which only leads to additional military actions. So, to me, the proper response is to isolate Iran, sanctions help us do that, getting on the same page as our traditional allies, getting the international community to recognize that Iran's activities, and

now threats in regard to nuclear programs, are against international norms. Let's try to get back to the type of coalition we had before in isolating Iran.

A: The White House said there was recent intelligence showing the possibility of Iran using proxy forces to attack US interests in the Middle East. What can you tell us about that? Is that Iran planning to use proxies to kill American soldiers in Iraq? What would that intelligence suggest?

F: Well, traditionally, it's been Iran, a supporting proxy forces that they help groups in different parts of the world, including in Iraq, including in Syria, including certainly in Yemen, which are against our interests, it'd be rare to see those assets being used against America other than in the theatres in which they're operating currently. So, I think it's more the fact that Iran supports these groups than these groups are supporting Iran.

A: Senator Ben Cardin of Maryland. Thank you so much. Appreciate your time, sir.

US officials say Iran seized a British oil tanker

Jul 19, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=402Erp8isEg&ab_channel=CNN

A: You're following breaking news in the escalating tensions with Iran. We've just learned that a British tanker has been seized, and this is an image of this vessel, it's called the Stena Impero. Our senior international correspondent Fred Pleitgen has done extensive reporting in Tehran, he's with us. I also have CNN military analyst general Mark Hertling, but let's get right to CNN Pentagon reporter Ryan Brown to get more details on what we know at this time. Ryan?

Ryan: Well, the US Officials are saying that Iran seized this vessel diverting it into Iranian waters, and we've also heard from the vessel's owner, Stena Bulk and Northern Marine Management, who has said that the vessel was approached by unidentified small craft and a helicopter and that they'd lost contact with the vessel while it was operating in the Strait of Hormuz, that narrow stretch of waterway that has been the focal point between these tensions, between the US and Iran, and just yesterday the US said it had downed an Iranian drone and also where Iran had shut down a US drone just a few weeks ago. So again, this very tense area, at least one British vessel has been seized according to US officials and according to Iran's, there's a lot of Revolutionary Guard Corps, which say it seized the vessel. Now again, Iran has been threatening to do this for some time after it had one of its vessels seized by Royal Marine commandos in Gibraltar, some of the UK government did over sanctions violations issue. Iran has threatened retaliation, they had approached the British vessel earlier, British warship had intervened that time, it looks like this time, Iranian forces were able to seize the British vessel in this very critical waterway, the Strait of Hormuz.

A: And according to the company, they believe there are 23 people on board that haven't been able to get in contact. Fred, what would be Iran's motivation for this, for escalating tensions?

Fred: Well, I think, there are several motivations that they could have for this. On the one hand, it does appear that there still might be a tit for tat response to the Brits, taking that Iranian tanker off the coast of Gibraltar, that Ryan was just talking about, and in fact, in Iranian parliament there had been senior military commanders, but also parliamentarians who had called for Iran to also try and take a British tanker as well. One of the interesting little nuggets that we've learned is that just today the government of Gibraltar extended the detention of that Iranian tanker by another 30 days. So hard to see that it would be a coincidence that the Iranians would take a British-flagged tanker on exactly the day that that happened. But of course, generally also, this has to do with the general tensions between the US and Iran in that waterway, Ryan was just saying it. There had been a flurry of incidents in that waterway: attacks on tankers that the US has attributed to Iran, the Iranians saying they weren't behind it; the shooting

down of that US drone, which the US says was an international airspace, the Iranians are saying that it went into their airspace. And then of course all the incidents surrounding the transit of the USS Boxer into that area not too long ago. Iranians, whether or not that drone was being shot down, were definitely buzzing that ship, they had a helicopter around that ship as well; they've released surveillance video of them tracking the USS Boxer and I can tell you I've gone through this Strait of Hormuz on a USS Nimitz class carrier – it is extremely narrow and it's a time when a big ship like that is very vulnerable. So certainly, that is a very dangerous time, but you can tell that the Iranians are showing that they are bold, that they are extremely confident, despite the fact that a lot of the gear they use is, of course, no match with what the US says, they're clearly sending the message that they are the ones who are in control of that area, they're not gonna back down from that area, obviously all this coming amid the tensions between the Trump administration and the Iranian government over the nuclear agreement, over Iran's nuclear program, Ana.

A: Right, let's get to General Hertling because, as Fred just mentioned, General Hertling, there's been a lot going now between this, back and forth, between Iran and the US. Now they have this UK tanker. How would you expect the US or the UK to respond?

Hertling: It is going to be increasingly tense, the tanker today is one incident, the shoot-down yesterday of the Iranian drone, which could not be compared to the kind of drone that they shot down of ours a few weeks ago; there was another ship earlier in the week that disappeared off the radar, a UAE-flagged tanker called the MT Riah, I believe, and it just popped up today, that was allegedly smuggling Iranian oil out of the straits. So, all of these things show the complexity of the scenarios inside of the straits foremost. And as Fred just said, that's a very tight waterway, ships are very well-controlled in that area, you know exactly where you are, according to either [...] or to satellite feeds, and folks know whether you're in international waters or in territorial waters. It's confusing, it's tough, it's tight, so it will be tense. Let's add one more thing to this issue though, is right now, whenever there are tensions like this between any two countries, diplomatic agencies can talk to each other, the ambassadors can talk to each other, we have really, the US has really no way to communicate with the Iranian government other than open communication, and what I mean by that is either news releases or, in some cases, twitter feeds. So that increases the danger and the complexity of the situation, where you can't call up the government of Iran and say, "what's going on, let's solve this without any kinetic action, let's try do something before somebody gets hurt". It's a very bad situation unlike anywhere else in the world.

A: Quickly, I just want to follow on something you said at, kind of, the top of your remarks, you discussed the tit for tat on the different drones that were brought down: first Iran brought down the US drone, then it was back 24 hours ago on this program when we brought the breaking news, since we learned that the US had now brought down an Iranian drone. You said you can't really compare those two drones. What do you mean by that?

Hertling: Yeah. Well, not all drones are created equal. The US drone that was shot down was the equivalent of a small Learjet, they're very technologically advanced, it cost a hundred and eighty plus million dollars, it was flying at thirty thousand feet, taking big pictures, strategic intelligence from the area. The Iranian drone that was shot down was invading the defensive space of the Boxer yesterday. You might even want to put that in the category of perhaps a better-than-average RadioShack drone that was about a thousand feet above the ship. You can't compare those two things, they're just very different. One is a strategic asset, the other one's a tactical asset.

Anderson Cooper shows how Trump contradicts himself on Iran

Sep 17, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZEEed5CZYQ_o&ab_channel=CNN

A: There's breaking news tonight on the attacks on the oil fields in Saudi Arabia, the President today saying it appears that Iran is behind them. He also didn't rule out the possibility of retaliatory strike by the US. Well, it appears that some of the Administration are trying to walk back from the President's own language. Take, for instance, whether we will attack Iran. The President sounded very war-like in his tweet last night, quote:

Saudi Arabia oil supply was attacked. There is reason to believe that we know the culprit, are locked and loaded depending on verification, but are waiting to hear from the Kingdom as to who they believe was the cause of this attack, and under what terms we would proceed!

Now, obviously, 'locked and loaded', which is what the president said, is a term we are all familiar with: it references military posture, it's a direct reference to weaponry, – it's pretty clear. But then this morning things got less clear. Vice-president Pence's Chief of Staff Marc Short was asked about the tweet and the term 'locked and loaded', here's what he said: "I think that 'locked and loaded' is a broad term that talks about the realities that we're all so far safe, we're more secure domestically from energy independence". 'Locked and loaded', he is saying, is a broad term about energy independence. Has anyone actually used the term 'locked and loaded' in that way? Are fossil fuels locked and loaded? That doesn't really make sense. We're locked and loaded with natural gas, another fossil fuels, not to mention wind and solar? Keeping them honest, we all know what the president meant by 'locked and loaded'. Clearly, the vice-president's office doesn't want to come out and say, "just disregard the tweets sent out by the president last night"; instead, they're pretending it means something else. It's not the only attempt in the midst of this crisis to walk back something the president has said. Now that the administration appears to be considering a strike against Iran, the president's claiming he never said he wanted to negotiate with the Iranian president without any preconditions. On Sunday, he tweeted: "The Fake News is saying that I am willing to meet with Iran, 'No Conditions.' That is an incorrect statement (as usual!)." Now, the problem with that, we should point out, is that this president's tweet is just not true. In fact, not only has the president spoken about meeting with no preconditions, so have other members of the administration, – and it's on tape, let's play it:

Trump: You want to talk good, otherwise you can have a bad economy for the next three years.

B: No preconditions?

T: Not as far as I'm concerned, no preconditions.

Pence: Now, I think the president's made it very clear that he's more than prepared.

C: With no preconditions?

P: The discussion's with no preconditions with the Iranians.

D: Now, the president has made clear, he is happy to take meeting with no preconditions.

Pompeo: The president's made it very clear – he is prepared to meet with no preconditions.

Trump: So, I believe in meeting, I would certainly meet with Iran if they wanted to meet.

E: Do you have preconditions for that meeting?

T: No precondition, no. They want to meet only. Any time they want. Any time they want. It's good for the country. Good for them, good for us, and good for the world. No preconditions.

Alright, well, that seemed pretty clear, and that last statement, by the way, that was from July of last year, so this has been a talking point for well over a year now. Suddenly, though, the president wants to pretend otherwise and is just making stuff up. Today he continued doing just that:

T: Well, you know, there were always conditions because the conditions, if you look at it, the sanctions are not going to be taken off. So, if the sanctions, that's the condition, you know. So that's why the press misreported it.

A: Okay, I'm not exactly sure what he's trying to say here, but I think it's that, even though he said he would meet with no preconditions and many people in his administration have verified that's what he believed, he's saying there are tough sanctions in place and the president is now calling those conditions and because those sanction conditions wouldn't be lifted to talk, any talk that took place wouldn't be a talk without preconditions. Does that make sense? It doesn't. For the latest, we are now going to see the White House correspondent Boris Sanchez. Boris, so the president's saying it's, "looking like Iran was behind this attack", he still is not definitively saying they did it, correct?

F: Right, Anderson. We pretty much know who it is, that's the closest that President Trump came to actually blaming Iran for short of when he went on Twitter in terms of a response over the weekend. We should know the Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, not apprehensive at all, is squarely placing the blame on Iran, and the discrepancy is so glaring that today reporters asked Trump if Pompeo perhaps had information that the president had yet to see. Trump assured reporters that they were both on the same page, but that would lead you to ask, why President Trump is suddenly playing coy, giving all the bluster and all the rhetoric that he's spewed in the past about Iran, specifically that 'locked and loaded' tweet. Again, you played that sound from Marc Short trying to walk that back. We should point out, the President has used very similar language in the past specifically speaking about military action in Iran after they downed the US drone this summer in June, the president tweeted that the military was 'cocked and loaded', ready to strike on Iran, but that ultimately, he called that off. So again, we don't know exactly why President Trump is walking this fine line. Perhaps, it's because he feels that playing coy could buy him, a sort of, meeting with the Iranian leadership, which we know he wants, Anderson.

A: But with no preconditions or with conditions. I know the president talked about next steps in the investigation. What did he say?

F: Right, so he mentioned that secretary of state Pompeo along with other senior administration officials would be traveling to Saudi Arabia, apparently to assist in the investigation, and potentially some kind of a response. I want to be really specific here about what the president said because he was not. He said that the US had all the materials that it needs to prove that Iran was behind this. He says he wants to look at final numbers and I quote, "You look at a vector and you look at... there are lots of different things we can look at". Unclear what the president means because as you know, Anderson, CNN had previously reported that the US officials had told CNN that American intelligence showed that this attack originated in Iran and that it was communicating that to our allies in the region.

Attack causes biggest oil supply disruption in history

Sep 17, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtfd4_qWdsA&ab_channel=QuestMeansBusiness

A: Alright, grave impacts of all of this: the Saudi Arabian oil output now slashed by 5.7 million barrels a day after that coordinated attack on its facilities. Now that's the largest supply disruption in history. Analysts are warning that it won't be easy to make up for that gap. Now, sanctions in Iran and Venezuela will prevent those countries from increasing supply. Shell producers, in the meantime the U.S., won't be able to ramp up fast enough to make a difference. Left among the big producers is OPEC and most of the group's excess capacity comes, of course, from Saudi Arabia. Our John Defterios is in Abu Dhabi for us. Now, I mean, can we overstate really, John, how much of a game changer this attack has been when it comes to the energy market?

B: Well, when speaking about the global energy market, I would describe it as an earthquake, Paula, because the epicenter is Saudi Arabia and it is the number one exporter, and we go on to say that there's probably going to be tremors for at least four weeks going forward. I mean, the narrative has changed dramatically in the last week, upside down, in fact. I met the Minister of Energy here in Abu Dhabi, the new one, and we were talking about an oversupplied market and why they had to continue with the OPEC Plus agreement. Now we're looking at a shortage, as you suggested, 5.7 million barrels a day is a record knocked out over a weekend by any stretch of the imagination; go back to the 1990s the invasion of Kuwait, the ouster of Muammar Gaddafi. It is unprecedented, and that's the description I got from Saudi Arabia today. They suggest they have about 200 million barrels of spare capacity, – it sounds like a lot, Paula, that storage is in Asia, and Europe, and in Saudi Arabia, I'm told down, but that only covers them for 35 to 40 days and the sources I'm speaking to are suggesting they have to manage expectations because they've never seen anything like it before. So, this is a tough road ahead. We're not at the levels that we were even in October of 2018, when we peaked at 86 dollars a barrel from the pressure from Donald Trump on to Iran, but something like this and having a removal of so much oil and, as you suggested Paula, there is no magic spigot in the United States. The shell producers cannot fill that void. It took them six years that six million barrels, and that was a record in the United States.

A: Yeah and reminding that that whole equation has to do with refining capacity and what kind of oil are you pumping, where is it being refined. John, I know that your sources have been telling you some very interesting things about how long it's going to take for these facilities to get back on stream.

B: Yes, they said it's not days but actually weeks.

A: Weeks?

B: And I think they are trying to guide the market. Yeah, weeks to restore it to the levels they were before and, Paula, I've been to these Aramco facilities – they are the best at what they do. So they say it's going to take weeks, that's a pretty good reality check. The other thing I thought was interesting today, though Paula, is that we spiked up at 20% in Asia, right, and then we came back down with like a 7-8% gain. And the last three hours were surging back up to a 14% gain because this is the real deal, I think the trading community is starting to realize that there's problem on the horizon. We're waiting to see if Donald Trump will deliver on the promise to release oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, 645 million barrels, but we have to know when, at what level and how long will it take to get to the market here. The final thing I would add, whoever is doing this, the perpetrators have been extremely surgical, if we can bring up the graphic here. They started by hitting a pumping station for Saudi Aramco in the east-west Pipeline above Riyadh, pumping station 8. They went to the Shaybah field, the gas field, a month ago many were hitting tankers in the Gulf in July and then, you know, the dagger to the heart was to go to the processing station there and the second largest field in Saudi Arabia. This is no simple game and it certainly makes it very challenging for the crown prince to push forward his vision, 2030 plan, I would say, Paula.

A: Yeah, not to mention an IPO and we have to say, look, what does this mean in terms of vulnerabilities throughout the world on a lot of the oil facilities, which is going to be something a lot of people are going to be looking at in the coming weeks. John, thanks so much for [...]

US strikes 5 facilities in Iraq and Syria linked to Iranian-backed militia

Dec 29, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Imxc0D8ZnDM&t=6s&ab_channel=CNN

A: Officials say, US forces conducted strikes in Iraq and Syria against five facilities that were tied to an Iran-backed militia. The targets were blamed or at least connected to a series of attacks on joint US-Iraq military facilities housing American forces. CNN's Pentagon correspondent Barbara Starr joins me now

from Washington with.... These strikes are the first significant military response retaliation with these attacks, which targeted American personnel on the ground, correct?

B: That's right, Martin. This has all been going on for several weeks, the US says that an Iranian-backed militia group that's been operating in Iraq and Syria is responsible for a number of [...] and border attacks against locations where US troops are in Iraq, and, actually, on Friday, one of these attacks [...] in a death of a US civilian contractor. So, the US has been looking for some time now what its response should be and what they want to do. And this morning, Washington time 7 o'clock in the evening, on the ground in Iraq, US F-15 conducted strikes against spy facilities in Iraq and Syria, operated by this militia group that the US says are responsible for these attacks. The targets were commanding control and weapon storage [...]. So, what they were going after really was the capability for any additional strikes by this militia group to happen. They did report there were a number of secondary explosions at these [...], so they do believe, for the moment at least, they got to this, you know, if one is practically minded it doesn't ever really go away, but they're hoping they've at least pushed back the capability of this group. And to answer the obvious question, will the US conduct more strikes? Officials tell it's hard to say, they want to see what the Iranian response is to all of this and whether this group really pulls back or not. But President Trump has made clear that he will not tolerate attacks against US forces, so the US swinging into action with these strikes in the last several hours.

A: Alright, stay with us Barbara. Let me bring in Jeremy Diamond. Jeremy, Russian President Vladimir Putin, I'm told, spoke on the phone to the President "to discuss matters of neutral interest and counter-terrorism". Do we know more about this conversation?

C: Well, we don't know whether the President actually discussed this particular set of strikes with the Russian president. We do know that, according to the Russian read-out of that call, that it was, at least in part, about US intelligence that helped foil a terrorist plot in Saint-Petersburg in Russia. But what we do know about these strikes today, Martin, is that it took place at 11:00 am Eastern Time while the president was actually at his golf courts, we actually spotted him a couple hours later actually on the golf courts golfing; we don't know whether at that time while the strikes were taking place, whether the President was perhaps in a secure facility at the golf club, or if he was indeed on the golf courts while those strikes were indeed taking place. But we are also now expecting the President to meet later today with his top Foreign Policy in Defense officials. Now, the Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Defense Secretary Mike Esper, as well as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Marc Milley, – they are all en route, we are told, and expected to arrive at Mar-a-Lago today to brief the President and to further discuss these strikes that took place in Iraq and Syria, that is according to a source familiar and an administration official who spoke with me and our colleague Barbara Starr. So again, this is clearly something that the President is still monitoring, something that is still very much a developing situation, and it does appear that a tipping point for these strikes was indeed this attack that took place on Friday, where you saw one US defense contractor who has killed four US troops, who were wounded in attacks carried out by Iranian proxies in Iraq; following that you saw statements from some Republicans, including Republican Senator Tom Cotton, a hawkish ally of the President in the senate, who called for retaliation from the United States against Iran. It is interesting, of course, that the president's course of retaliation here was focused on attacking those Iranian proxies and not Iran itself. Of course, those Iranian proxies are the ones that the US says is responsible for many of those attacks on Iraqi bases where the US troops are housed. But of course, we know that in the past the President has considered retaliation directly against Iran; and again, as he sits down today with his top military and foreign policy officials, that is certainly something that we expect the President will be discussing, Martin.

A: Barbara, officials say that the Pentagon had a plan and brought it to the President Saturday for approval, so this was not just a spur of a moment, talking about opportunity kind of thing.

B: Yeah, certainly, Martin, it wasn't because over the last several weeks there had been repeated attacks against these sites in Iraq where US troops are located, and intelligence officials, when they looked at the kind of ordnance that was being fired, the kind of weapons being used, they say they had every

reason to believe it was this Iranian-affiliated group operating inside Iraq, that they warned them, you know, don't do this, that the message had been very clear. So, you know, the military doesn't wait to be asked, they always have a plan for everything, right. So clearly, they had a plan, they knew where these sites were, and they were ready to go when it became a decision that the President made. I think Jeremy is right, it was the death of the US contractor on Friday and the multiple US military wounded, – up until that point, we don't have any information that there had been any significant increase in the previous attacks, but now with someone being killed and multiple wounded it seems to have all changed and it became necessary to take it to the President, say, this is what we want to do, get his OK, and then move very quickly today on these strikes.

Iran condemns US airstrike that killed top commander as 'foolish'

Jan 3, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3N1Tkcb96Ms&ab_channel=CNN

A: David, let me start with you. And this tweet from Iran's Foreign Minister Javad Zarif. He just tweeted this, let's put it up. "The US' act of international terrorism, targeting & assassinating General Soleimani - THE most effective force fighting Dyess (ISIS), Al Nusrah, and Al Qaeda is extremely dangerous and a foolish escalation. The US bears responsibility for all consequences of its rogue adventurism." David, what's your reaction?

B: Well, not a particularly surprised. The last time that Minister Zarif was in New York a few months ago, he actually talked with us at some length about his relationship with General Soleimani and maintained that the foreign policy he was developing for Iran worked hand in glove with Soleimani's acts. And that's what worries American officials because there is no question that General Soleimani was responsible for the deaths of hundreds, if not thousands of Americans; was the man who propped up Bashar Assad; and who was trying to foment a lot of the uprisings in Iraq, and they're going to be many in Iraq, who are going to probably celebrate his death. But for the administration, this was a pretty risky escalation. And I think the big question is, since the United States certainly had plenty of opportunities to kill him in the past, why did they choose to do this now if in fact, they chose to do it that in other words, if they knew that he was going to be in that motorcade that was out near the Baghdad airport, and we don't know for sure whether or not they knew that Soleimani would be in that?

A: The statement from the Pentagon tonight. General Hertling says that General Soleimani was actively developing plans to attack American diplomats and servicemembers in Iraq and throughout the region. Does the Pentagon, does the President have a responsibility now to kind of flesh that out some, to offer more details potential?

C: Well, not really, Viktor, if we're talking about intelligence information that's going to provide the requirement for a pre-emptive strike the Pentagon, the Department of Defense had been watching the actions of the Iranian Quds Force over the last year plus, but specifically over the last couple of months, because there have been indicators that they were conducting the various attacks throughout Iraq against American forces, and the Iraqi security forces. So, if there was an indicator that there were going to be some type of attack, again, a massive attack after the Baghdad riots that occurred against our embassy the other day, a pre-emptive strike is appropriate. Now, having said that, Soleimani is a ruthless killer. He's a horrible human being and at the same time, he is a very charismatic soldier to his forces. This is a guy that when I was in Iraq, my last tour there in 2007-8 because of the kinds of things that were going on against the Iranian-Iraqi border, I had a chance to look at his biographical profile that one of my intelligence guys presented to me. He's a fascinating character, he commanded a division in the Iran-Iraq war in the late 80s. He's been in combat his entire life; his soldiers love him. He's a quiet, charismatic guy, a strategic genius, and a tactical operator. So, these are all the kinds of things looking at him from the enemy perspective, it's going to create a great deal of angst in this part of the world. David was

absolutely right, there are going to be some in Baghdad that are very happy, even Shia that are going to be very happy that Soleimani is dead, but there's going to be just as many, perhaps even more, they're going to be very upset about it. It's 7am. in Baghdad right now, in a few hours, most of the people in the city are going to be going to the mosque, and they're going to be hearing one way or another from their imams about what to do next. We'll see on the streets today the kind of anger that's going to be generated by many of the pro-Iranian Shia that are inside of the capital city of Baghdad.

A: I feel that that's an important point. We heard from this statement. Again, that's all we have from the Pentagon. Only thing we have from the White House is a tweet of an American flag from the President. The Pentagon says this attack was to prevent or deter future attacks. We'll see what Iran's response is, but what do you think that the US should prepare for as a form of retaliation by Iran?

D: I think if you're thinking about whether this would deter an attack by Iran, I think the prospect of that is zero. Look, we have a simmering, or we had until a few hours ago, a simmering conflict with Iran that included things like attacks in Iraq, but also remember Iran was picking up ships in the Persian Gulf. Going back a few months, we've decided to take a simmering relationship into a boiling relationship. The Iranians, – and I follow them, when I was at the CIA, one of my responsibilities was, was looking at the Iranian special services, their intelligence and Quds force, this sort of external military force they have, – they are very aggressive, and they're fearless. One thing I want to tell you Victor is this is not just a general. This is somebody who's been with Iran since the revolution 41 years ago, this guy has been with the people who were the sponsors of the revolution in Iran, he is somebody who's a brother to the leadership of Iran. So, they're looking at this not just as the elimination of a general, but as an opportunity to respond to America that just decided they wanted to go from a simmer to a boil. My point is, whether you're at a diplomatic facility, a military facility, or some other entity, like a company affiliated with the United States in the Middle East, the Iranians are going to bring it hard and heavy, I'm going to tell you, it's going to happen sometime within the next day or two weeks, they're not going to wait that long, it is going to be ugly. Among all the things I've seen in six or seven years, talking about national security on CNN, I know this one is hard to understand for people who don't do this for a living. This has to be one of the top things I have ever seen when I've been with this organization, CNN, this is profoundly significant for the Middle East profoundly.

A: So General, what's happening at the Pentagon right now? General Hertling, what should we expect from the US moving forward?

C: Well, what I would be doing if I were back at the Pentagon, wish I was when the 911 attack happened, is you would not just be looking at this location, but you'd be looking at other parts of the world. Who else is going to take advantage of this? Is Kim now going to launch something and give us two parts of the world to look at? Is Russia going to broaden their adventurism and go into some nation state or go further into Ukraine? Is China going to attack our ships in the South China Sea? All of those things from a strategic perspective, the war planners are taking a look at and saying, 'Where are we vulnerable? What might happen?' At the same time, from a tactical perspective, some things have got to be gearing up in terms of messages to embassies, where all our marine guards are saying, 'be ready for the kinds of attacks that we've seen in the past', when something like this goes down, where a lot of organizations are leaning forward and saying, 'Where might I go next? What kind of things are going to occur in the Middle East, whether it's a soldier, a sailor, and airman or marine? What kind of homeland security measures do we have to take? Our coast guard, some of the DHS elements that are going to be put on high alert.' I agree with Phil completely, you know, that this is one of those kind of things, we're not sure what's going to happen exactly. But we've got to prepare for a lot of different things. The other thing I'd say Iran is based on asymmetric warfare, much like the Russians are. The US is based more on conventional, and recently counterinsurgency. So we're going to be facing some asymmetric attacks wherever there are pro-Iranian forces throughout the Middle East. And those could be very small, supported groups by Iran, or they could be the kinds of Iraqi groups that are supported by local politicians, within Baghdad, that leaned toward Iran, that have Shia as their background and look at the Republican Guard, you're also going to see some attacks against some of our allies. Interesting to note, Victor, the conference, the Council of

Foreign Relations, put out a top 13 list for 2020, where we should expect the tax. And this, the kind of proxy war that we're looking at right now that we just turned up the heat on, was one of the top five, either Iran against the United States, or Iran against the ally of the United States. I think we're going to see a little bit of both truthfully.

A: Well, we've already seen now the rhetorical response from Iran. We'll see as the day develops there in Iran, what we'll see from both Iraq and Iran after this, this killing of this general. General Hertling, Phil Mudd, David Sanger, thank you all.

Christiane Amanpour on Iran: They're talking about revenge now

Jan 3, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cY42JfaVtz8&ab_channel=CNN

A: By breaking news, these are live pictures of 10s of 1000s of Iranians on the streets of Tehran. This is after the United States killed Iran's most powerful military and intelligence leader in an airstrike near the airport in Baghdad in Iraq. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who was on with us just moments ago, said the attack was carried out to thwart some kind of an imminent attack by Iran against the United States. Joining us now is seen as chief international anchor Christiane Amanpour. Christiane, the Secretary would not go into details and obviously those details matter here. The American people, typically after the Iraq War in 2003, do not trust the idea that there was an imminent threat unless we see exactly what it was. He won't tell us what it was, he said that might be coming. What do you see going on here?

B: Well, I think it's going to be very hard to expect the administration to suddenly deliver all this information. I think what was more interesting was what he said to you. And it was quite, in my view, somewhat conflicting. It was: was it this just about security? Or was it about trying to have a regime change in Iran, get the Iraqis to throw the Iranians out there? and all the rest of it? Was it both? And that also leads to the next question, what is the strategy? And I think that that's the most important question that we have going forward, it is absolutely clear that it costs Qasem Soleimani, the head of the Quds force of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps was, as we've all been saying all morning since this happened, the second if not the most important person in Iran, who was the major arm of Iran's foreign policy abroad, and who has networks and tentacles and huge influence across that region: Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, you name it. Qasem Soleimani, his footprint, his handprints are all over that place. He was so well known, and in some quarters, beloved, in that region, that they are going to have to take some kind of action, as one expert said to me, maybe draw some blood in response, how – we don't know, we've been watching and listening to those massive live demonstrations and tape demonstrations inside Tehran, we have to wait to see what happens around places like Iraq, Lebanon, and etc. But what they're already saying, because I'm trying to listen to the words of the speakers underneath this, this was the pride of Islam, and we have to avenge his death. And they've used the word Jihad and other such things. So, the question is really, honestly and truthfully, what is the strategy? Is this going to be an accidental slouch into a war in the Middle East? Or are all parties not just the United States, which is say that they want to de-escalate, but all the leaders of the Shiite Islamic factions, which are backed by Iran in that region, not to mention Iran itself? Are they going to try to de-escalate this? And yes, Qasem Soleimani is and does have the blood of many Americans on his hands from what happened in Iraq in the early days of the Iraq-US war there. But also remember that Qasem Soleimani, was the only person with his militias, who stood between ISIS and Baghdad when ISIS took over a lot of Iraq back in 2014. So, it's a very, very mixed bag and a mixed picture. And it's really hard to see which way this is going right now.

C: Christiane, give us the global perspective on where this leaves America this morning and our allies because Benjamin Netanyahu fully supportive Israel fully behind the US on this. But France, the French government this morning says the world is now a more dangerous place.

B: Well, you know, you heard Secretary Pompeo say to John that the French are wrong. I mean, he categorically said that. Remember that some, you know, on the eve of the Iraq War, the US invasion of Iraq in March of 2003, then-president Chirac said the United States was going to open a can of worms, and France did not go along with this action, and wanted more time to figure out what exactly was the intelligence with the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. And President Chirac was proved right. I think the French have a huge history in that region, so do the British, so do many other people who not only have a history and a diplomatic history, but also have people in personnel in the region. So that is going to be, again, something to watch because as everybody has said, it's unlikely that Iran would take on the United States in any effort at symmetrical warfare, it's very, very unlikely, it hasn't happened in the past, it's unlikely to happen now. But the asymmetrical, the ability to lash out in many parts of that region is clear and present. And it is the reason, or at least one of the main reasons, why successive US presidents from George W. Bush to Barack Obama, and up until now, President Trump, have not taken this massive escalatory step. And remember, Qasem Soleimani was at the height of his power when he was taken out. Unlike Osama bin Laden who was forgotten, you know, nothing [...] sort of hiding in a, you know, villa in Pakistan. But it's not the person you take out, it's what they leave behind, and the tentacles and who comes next. Al Qaeda terrorism did not end with the side-lining of Osama bin Laden. ISIS has not ended with the killing of Al Baghdadi. So, if you're trying to end whatever is happening, this is a major escalation. And we need to see what the plan is.

A: Also, another note, obviously Soleimani, for better or for worse, and this is not a value judgment, he was a government official. That's what differentiates him from Bin Laden as well. So, you are killing a government official with this and that has different implications. Christiane, we have to let you go in about 20 seconds. The US relationship with Iraq, the Iraqi Prime Minister Abdul Mahdi condemned these actions, it's a violation of the US agreement to stationed troops in Iraq. What will this do to the US presence there?

B: Well, overnight, the US missile attacks on the Al-Khateeb, the Hezbollah Al-Khateeb base, changed the US-Iraq relationship. Iraq suddenly went, and this is what experts are telling me, from, you know, demonstrating against Iranian presidents and others to demonstrating against United States. Did the United States expect its embassy in Iraq, one of the most guarded embassies in the world, to be breached by pro-Iranian militias in Baghdad, did the United States expect that when it retaliated for the killing of that American contractor, and now the Government of Iraq is under massive pressure? We'll see how it plays out, and whether these Shiite militias, whether it's Muqtada al-Sadr in Iraq, whether it's Hassan Nasrallah, the head of Hezbollah in Lebanon, you know, what is the pressure from the streets? And of course, what will Iran do? I mean, the idea of Iran wanting now to do that famous photo-op that President Trump wanted back in September at the UN, – it's over, they're talking about revenge now. And so, we just simply don't know what's going to happen. And remember, the French is saying it's more dangerous, because Emmanuel Macron was the mediator between President Trump and Hassan Rouhani trying to get that relationship back on track, but the US have gone from maximum economic pressure to now military action.

A: Christiane on the floor. Great to have you with us this morning. Thank you very much.

C: Such an important voice, Christiane. Thank you.

CNN analyst: All American citizens are now prime walking targets

Jan 3, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K2jDu2s99dw&ab_channel=CNN

A: Breaking News: The State Department this morning urging all Americans to get out of Iraq immediately. This is after the US killed Iran's most powerful military commander overnight. What will Iran's response be? Back with us from [...] Sam Vinograd. Kaitlan Collins, our White House

correspondent joins us now as well. Caitlin, what can you tell us about how long this was being planned? Because we saw John Bolton tweet this morning, formerly National Security Adviser, that this was long in the making. What do we know about what led to what happened last night?

B: Well, a lot of this is starting with that death of the American contractor several weeks ago, that's what led to those other strikes by the United States, then leading a course to those protests, those attacks on the US Embassy in Baghdad. And now we've seen this, the most significant military action from President Trump since he's been in office. And that's why there are going to be a lot of questions behind this decision that the President has made. Why now? What exactly this intelligence was that they hinted at in that statement from the Pentagon, essentially accusing this figure, this commander of masterminding further activities that could harm the United States or its citizens, accusing him of the deaths of hundreds of American soldiers. So those are going to be the questions facing the White House now and we're still waiting to hear more on exactly on how all of this went down when the President made this decision. Because of course, we know that we were keeping a close eye on him yesterday. He spent roughly five hours at his golf course here. He left about 10am, came back around 3pm and then was at his Mar-a-Lago club, where he was seeing having dinner, seemed to be in good spirits, according to people who saw the President. But we do know that of course, behind the scenes this was going on. He was seen with multiple Secret Service Officers after a briefing on this. His National Security Adviser Robert O'Brien was on property at the time. So those are the things we're still waiting to hear from the President himself, the justification for this. Because, of course, he's getting praise for Republicans, but also a lot of criticism from Democrats and his critics.

C: Sam, I had a former State Department official text me a few hours ago saying I would not want to be in the Secretary of State's motorcade in any country going forward. In other words, that US officials now need to be concerned that they could be targeted. I've heard you mentioned that we now need to assume that US service members stationed in many countries overseas might be considered fair game by Iran. What does this mean for the security of US personnel stationed around the world?

D: Well, John is not just service members, all American citizens are now walking prime targets for Iranian retaliation. The Department of Defense put out an important statement last night after this operation indicating, what appears to be declassified intelligence, that Qasem Soleimani was responsible for planning additional attacks against Americans, but also that he approved the attack against the US Embassy in Baghdad. So, it looks like they were declassifying intelligence on that front and going forward, we should really expect more of the same. The IRGC Quds force has demonstrated its willingness and intent to strike American citizens, to strike American diplomats for foreign protections under international law. So, in addition to the force protection measures needed for American service members, I am equally as focused on the American diplomatic corps, as well as all of the contractors that work for the US government and other American citizens, not just in the Middle East, but around the world. Let's not forget that the IRGC Quds force has tried to implement terrorist plots in Europe. They tried to assassinate the Saudi ambassador just a few miles from where I'm sitting here. So, they clearly have global reach. And all Americans are a prime target.

A: And she's right. It was Soleimani that tried, you know, to pull off that assassination in 2011, Jim, where are you in Washington, DC. But outside of, you know, physical threatened and potential military action by Iran. You wrote a whole book about this. What about cyber retaliation? You have DHS warning about that this morning as well.

E: Ron is expert and has enormous capabilities in these shadow war or hybrid war tactics across the Quds force, the IRGC, – it is global, right. And that encompasses terror attacks on soft or hard targets, military targets, US diplomats, civilian targets, frankly, I mean, this is cafe Milano, a restaurant in DC which was the assassination plot there. Economic targets, think oil facilities, they've already attacked tankers in the Persian Gulf, they attack the Saudi oil refinery, their key, think economic targets. Think also cyber, because Iran is one of the most capable along with Russia and China, in terms of carrying out cyber-attacks, they do it. They've even done things that are election-related attacks. So, you have to

think in terms of not just uniformed attacks, you know, soldiers shooting its soldiers, you have to think of a whole host of things that happen in the shadows here. And that's what Soleimani, the Quds force, the IRGC is expert with. And just one more thing. They have enormous resources. The IRGC has its own Navy, of small fast attack boats in the Gulf that could attack US Naval warships and tankers. That's the kind of capabilities you have to think.

C: It may be an all of the above response from Iran. He is that major of a figure. Now look, Kaitlin, value judgment aside here, there's no questioning that Soleimani was a government official. Yes, he was involved with terrorism, but he was a government official. So that's what makes this different than the actions against bin Laden or al Baghdadi or [...]. And there isn't a vision within Congress about whether or not this is even legal. You have Republicans saying that they're behind this action 100%. But there been Democrats, including Senator Chris Murphy, and others overnight who have noted, 'Hey, wait a second here. Where's the authorization for this type of action? Hey, wait a second. Is the United States now involved with the assassination of government officials?' So, there is that political divide?

E: Yeah, and those are going to be the questions. Why wasn't there a congressional authorization for something like this, because you're hearing from several members of Congress that they were not notified about this beforehand. Now expect the White House response to that to be that the President has pretty broad powers here. That's what we've heard from them in the past, when it's come to situations like this. They've argued that he has a lot of leeway in making a decision like this. And that's where it's going to become a pretty big focal point, I think, it's this intelligence that they say they had that essentially, he was masterminding these future potential attacks? The question is going to be how imminent those threats were, how big they were, what the scale of that was. And so that is something that the White House could potentially use for justification. And that's where it'll be interesting where the White House attorneys came down on this. We know that the White House Counsel Pat Cipollone, has been back in Washington, DC, working out of his office this week preparing for that pending impeachment trial. So, there will be questions about the figures who played a role in this and whether or not the President did have that authority. But you already see some criticisms from mostly Democratic lawmakers. I think maybe only Democratic lawmakers about this so far.

Iran designates all US forces 'terrorists'

Jan 7, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-aJJoDYRw8&ab_channel=CNN

A: And we have this just in to CNN. Iran's parliament has passed a bill designating all US forces terrorist after Soleimani's killing by the US on Friday. Let's get more on all of this from CNN's Nic Robertson, who joined us from Riyadh. So, let's look at that information just in, this designation from Iran's parliament, but also what the Foreign Minister there is saying about the fact that these US troops are not even wanted in the region, they're not necessarily going to force them out, but they're not wanted.

B: Revenge, that the Iranians have been talking about after the death of Qasem Soleimani, at the moment is translating itself into the isolation of the United States in the region with the focus of getting as many US troops out of the region, specifically Iraq, but they would more broadly like to see them leave other countries as well. So this is the revenge at the moment that the killing of Qasem Soleimani has allowed the Iranians to, sort of, focus on the [...] direction of travel, proxies have made it clear that any attacks will be on US military forces. That doesn't give a huge amount of relief for the United States allies in the region, because of the concerns that there could still be the potential for a trigger for a broader conflict. But certainly, the United States allies in the region will be concerned if the United States draws down its forces significantly in the region, – that's something that they looked to as being a guarantor a part of the stability in security within the region, particularly within Iraq. So these words from the Iranian

Foreign Minister, although not surprising, are obviously going to now help shape the understanding for the United States and its allies the direction of travel for Iran at the moment, Rosemary.

A: And talk to us about this designation in this bill in Iran, calling US forces terrorist. What are the consequences of that label?

B: Sure, I mean the Iranians would love for that to gain broad attraction, and that flees into the isolation and demonization of US forces, which has been a theme of the Iranians for a long time. But it has a feel at the moment as well, something of a tit for tat with the United States because the United States has designated so many people and groups in Iran as terrorist organizations that the Iranians have bridled against, you know, the whole time that President Trump has been, sort of, escalating up his maximum sanctions and isolation of Iran. So, this does have a feel for tit for tat, the practical reality is that in a way, you know, it reinforces that the Iranians have been saying there would be a military to military response and, therefore, this would give them, you know, what they might consider or what their proxies might consider political cover for killing US soldiers anywhere in the region at any point in time by designating them as terrorists. But it has a rhetoric feel that has a sort of, a tit for tat sense to it as well. Again, this is in part in keeping with isolating and demonizing the United States. This is a moment in the region where Iran can capitalize on Quasem Soleimani's death, can capitalize on the fact that large numbers of people come out on the streets in Iraq and in Iran, – that not only sends a big message to the peoples of those countries, that support for Soleimani was big and that anyone that actually oppose that support, oppose the government in Tehran, opposes the large number of people on the streets, it amplifies that kind of message and that's something that, you know, Iran will be very keen to exploit and is exploiting at this time.

A: Alright, Nic Robertson brings the very latest details on those new developments coming to us at CNN, joining us there from Riyadh in Saudi Arabia. Many thanks, Nic. Well, in Washington, the Trump administration is defending the strike, but officials are not speaking with one voice. The US Defense Secretary contradicted President Donald Trump's threat to target Iranian cultural sights if Tehran retaliates. Then, a letter from the top US journal leaked appearing to indicate the US troops would withdraw from Iraq. Barbara Starr has more on the Pentagon struggle to clarify what that letter actually means.

C: What it says is that US troops are repositioning in Iraq and that is true. But it also goes on to talk about future onward movement of US troops very strongly suggesting that US troops are leaving Iraq. And what Defense Secretary Mark Esper told reporters today is no, that is not policy right now and in fact the Iraqi government has not yet officially asked US troops to leave. So, a lot of confusion, a letter that was poorly worded and absolute insistence, this time at least, from the highest levels at the Pentagon that, at least for now, the US troops are not leaving.

A: And Jomana Karadsheh joins us now with the very latest from Baghdad. And Jomana, how would a letter like this mistakenly be leaked? Talk to us about how it ended up in the hands of Iraqis and then at that point, presumably, was leaked?

D: Well, Rosemarie, we simply don't know how that happened. We just know that it appeared and circulated amongst the Iraqi media here, it was being reported by Iraqi TV channels, it was breaking news here really late in the evening. And it was being phrased as the US military has begun withdrawing, which obviously led to the scramble by US officials to try and explain and clarify this letter. You heard there from Barbara, US officials here were saying 'listen, this is not a withdrawal, this is absolutely not happening, this is just repositioning of troops, moving them around, they're remaining in the region, what this is is just notifying the Iraqis of movements that are going to be happening, that this is standard, there was going to be a lot of chopper, helicopter movement in Baghdad and they did not want, considering the current tensions, people to think that there are any additional coming in, so this was just notifying them of that'. And then short time later we had top US officials in the Pentagon also coming out to try and explain what had happened, the Joint Chiefs of Staff saying that this was an honest mistake,

that this was a poorly worded letter, and it was not meant to be released. But no one has actually answered the question of why in the first place were there any indications in this letter that there would be some sort of a withdrawal, why mention that, why say it is on the table. What we know is, US officials here, US officials in Washington DC coming out and clearly saying that that is not happening, that US troops are not planning at this point to withdraw from the country, and that could also have some reaction here, some implications. Of course, when you have the Iraqis, who have over the past few days made it clear, the political leadership here, the Prime Minister, his office, have come out and said that they are going with what Parliament had asked them to do, they're starting to work with the coalition governments to ask them at some point to withdraw their forces from here. We know they have spoken to a number of coalition governments, the Prime Minister here met, according to his office, with the US ambassador in Baghdad. While they haven't notified the US officially of this request for withdrawal, they said that they need to work together, according to that read-out from the Prime Minister's office, on implementing this decision by the Iraqi Parliament. And of course, an issue of concern when you have US officials coming out and flat out denying that there's any possibility of withdrawal, that they are remaining here. The security implications here with the current threat level that we, you know, we've heard the threats coming from the Iranian-backed proxies on the ground in the past 48 hours or so, some of their top leadership of the most powerful Iranian-backed paramilitary groups coming out and saying that if the United States does not withdraw immediately as was decided by the Iraqi Parliament, that they are going to be considered occupying forces and that they will be dealt with as such. Indicating, hinting that they will go back to targeting these forces as they used to do back during the US military occupation, Rosemarie.

A: Alright, Jomana Karadsheh, bringing us that live report from Baghdad. Many thanks.

Satellite images appear to show damage from Iran missiles

Jan 8, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHTN4g_M5lg&t=28s&ab_channel=CNN

A: I want to take you live to Iraq. A quick update on our top story. Donald Trump says Iran appears to be standing down after firing missiles at those bases housing American troops in Iraq, and Iraq is the proxy battlefield, – it was at least in this case, the site of both the US strike that killed Qasem Soleimani and also the site of Iran's retaliatory missile attack. And we're getting new images from that country tonight. Take a look at these satellite images of the damage at Al Assad airbase. Sam Kylie is in Baghdad. What are we learning from this new satellite imagery, Sam.

B: Well, I think two things highlight both the power and the accuracy of these, what would appear to be highly capable Iranian missiles fired over considerable range with considerable accuracy, if we accept, and broadly is now accepted, that they were deliberately targeted, so as to avoid any casualties, and they were fired following tip offs to the Iraqi Government here in Baghdad that were passed on to the United States so that service personnel could get into hard cover and avoid being hit by these missiles. 17 fired into the allied site base, 15 detonated and no casualties, and 5 into US coalition targets in the northern Kurdish areas of Iraq. So what this does signal though, from the Iranian perspective, is capability. Now the reaction here in Baghdad has been one of official outrage from the President and the speaker in the parliament here rejection, in his words from the Prime Minister. But more importantly, I think, in many ways highlight the Iranian-backed Shia militias here, notably Kata'ib Hezbollah, have said that this is the first salvo in what they say is revenge for the killing of the leader of Kata'ib Hezbollah, who died alongside Qasem Soleimani in that USS strike last Friday. They have vowed to fight on in order to force the United States' withdrawal from Iraq. I think, from the American and Iraqi perspective, that is going to remain a very thorny issue in the coming days and weeks, Hannah.

A: Thank you, Sam Kiley in Baghdad. Well, senior Trump administration officials are briefing senate lawmakers about Iran right now all about the intelligence that was used to justify this strike against

Qasem Soleimani. The short time ago the entire house of representatives was briefed on the situation. Democrats in the House are also seeking to restrain the President's military actions with a vote on war powers. Phil Mattingly is in Washington on Capitol Hill. I spoke to one Congress person who told me earlier in the hour, he didn't hear anything that made him change his mind; a democrat from New Jersey saying we didn't really hear anything convincing that we felt justified this strike, that they thought the President was reckless, but the senators will be briefed behind closed doors, correct?

C: That's exactly right. It will essentially be the same briefing by the same administration officials. And a lot of the people you saw standing behind the president during his Iran remarks earlier at the White House will also be now briefing senators. And this is something that both Democrats and Republicans have been calling for in the wake of the strike that targeted and killed Qasem Soleimani. And I think the big question, and you kind of hit on this, with what you were talking about with the democrat you spoke to earlier is the idea of how imminent it was, right. The thing that nobody can really grasp yet to this point, and this includes house lawmakers, as you spoke to who had the briefing already, is what is the evidence based on the intelligence, particularly intelligence from the CIA director, Gina Haspel, who is briefing, will brief the house, will brief the Senate, that made clear that this was something that had to happen now, when you put it all in context based on the Bush administration and the Obama administration deciding to pass on the opportunity to strike Qasem Soleimani. What was different at this point in time. And you talk to Democrats who have the briefing in the house, they said they hadn't seen anything that made them believe that this was something that had to happen now. Now, you talk to Republicans who were in the House briefing, and they say the exact opposite. They say it was laid out in detail, a series of potential plans, potential attacks, all lining up with what has occurred over the course of the past couple of months that brought the Trump administration to this point. Look, I think the bottom line here, particularly given what we've seen in the wake of the Soleimani strike is kind of where things go from here. I think the briefings right now are supposed to be about the strike, are supposed to be about the intelligence that led to that strike. But there are also significant questions, particularly from Democrats about what is the next step from the administration? Obviously, if Democrats were happy with the President's remarks to the extent this morning, they didn't show any sign of new escalation. But what is the broader plan? What are the broader proposals? And frankly, how prepared is the United States for anything that may come next? Those are questions that lawmakers have, they don't necessarily know that they'll be answered during the senate briefing that's going on as we speak. But that's why you see the administration officials up here and that's why you see democrats still very wary about why this took place when this took place, and kind of what the rationale is going forward for the US' Iran strategy.

A: All right, Phil Mattingly, thanks very much. Well, as far as world leaders are concerned, they are calling and have been calling for restraint and de-escalation between the US and Iran. The Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan issued a joint statement saying their countries are deeply concerned. Mr. Erdogan said that Turkey will not allow the region "to be drowned in blood and tears". The British Prime Minister went before Parliament today and condemned the Iranian attack on US military bases in Iraq, or as Johnson defended, though, the US strike that killed Qasem Soleimani, saying Soleimani had the blood of British troops on his hands. William Patey joins me now. He's a former British ambassador to Iraq, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia. Sir William, thanks for being with us. First of all, your reaction to what Donald Trump said. The world was on tenterhooks waiting to see if he would announce a further escalation, or he would dial it back. He chose to dial it back.

D: Yes, I think the Iranians were very careful in their attack. It was measured, it was forewarned, and I think Trump very quickly set the tone in his tweet that all is well. So, I think both sides have been looked at the abyss and have drawn back from it. But the underlying problems remain, of course, the strategic position has not changed. Indeed, it's moved in Iran's favour, I think.

A: could this set the stage for some sort of negotiation?

D: Well, I don't think negotiation right away. I think there should be talks because the only alternative to this is war. So, there should be talks. I think before they say, I was at a conference in the Middle East and some Iranians suggested there might be a scope for reopening the nuclear deal, and talking about Iranian rule in Lebanon, and Syria, and Yemen. If that was on the table, you would have the basis for talks. But I don't think they represented the hardliners in Iran, and I think they're calling the shots now.

A: But so, what will it take to break this impasse?

D: I don't know. In the end, I mean, Iran certainly doesn't want to just sit there and wait for maximum pressure to play out there. The American strategy is to create maximum pressure on the Iranians to come back to the negotiating table. So that is their aim to get them back to the negotiating table. Their allies do not want to come to the negotiating table under pressure. And they weigh well through their proxies. And they've got, you know, Hezbollah in Lebanon and Syria and elsewhere, they've played a very destructive role in other parts of the Middle East, through their proxies to raise the temperature once again, without invoking a more substantial US strike.

A: Right. Qasem Soleimani, his death? Does it change anything? operationally, do you think?

D: I don't think so. I think the IRGC still has this network throughout the Middle East, particularly Lebanon through Hezbollah. They have a very strong network in Syria where they've wreaked havoc. They still have all those contacts. Soleimani himself was quite a master tactician, and he was personally responsible for quite a lot of the mayhem in the Middle East.

A: I mean, he was, in fact, a battlefield commander inside of Syria. I mean, this is someone who really took charge.

D: Yes, and he not only was a battlefield commander, he was also attacked as strategist, a politician. So he had good contacts with Assad, he was propping up the Assad regime. He has contacts with Hezbollah. So his loss will be a temporary setback, but the IRGC has tentacles everywhere and will replace him that will, have already placed him with his deputies, Mark Carney. So, he may not have his skill and charisma to begin with, but that can – Qasem Soleimani developed that over time.

A: But the tragedy here is that all of this is once again destroying the lives of civilians. In this case in Iraq, for instance, you have of course the disaster that is Syria, and all these people in that part of the world, do they have anything to be hopeful about?

D: The real victims, the Arab peoples of Syria, and Lebanon, and Iraq, and indeed they're aliens themselves who are suffering from sanctions. So, the real victims are the ordinary people of the Middle East. And what needs to happen is, I think, ultimately some form of regional security arrangement, where Iran accepts they can't be interfering in Arab countries, that it has a legitimate right to security, but it mustn't secure that security by basically ruining Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq.

A: Right, and using so much of that territory for its own proxy battles, and proxy militant groups like Hezbollah and Iran, and we did hear from Hassan Nasrallah, who basically is threatening retaliation.

D: And who would that be against? That would be against Israel. And we know what happens when Hezbollah clash with Israel, – the people who suffer are the Lebanese.

Fareed Zakaria: Trump put Iran in a box without any endgame

Jan 8, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4WCn3iqYzc&ab_channel=CNN

A: Our breaking news are in: Iran fires more than a dozen missiles to Iraqi bases housing US troops, – US forces, I should say. Iran says the attack was revenge for the American airstrike that killed top Iranian

general Qasem Soleimani last week. Joining me now Fareed Zakaria, the host of *Fareed Zakaria GPS*. Fareed, thank you so much for joining us. You know, this is all happening in a very short span of time. It's hard to believe that the President was impeached in the house less than three weeks ago. One week ago, tonight, he was in Mar-a-Lago for New Years. This, – I mean, this has all happened extremely fast.

B: Yeah, but you know, it's a predictable consequence of the President's Iran policy, or really the lack thereof. I mean, if you step back here, would you have as a fundamental breakdown in American foreign policy, which has caused this. The Iranians were abiding by the terms of a nuclear deal, which had essentially stopped them for at least 15 years on a pathway to a nuclear weapon. They were engaged in the region as they have been for 20 years. But they will no longer by the way engage actively in hostilities with the United States, people often talk about Qasem Soleimani's role in a way of having the blood of Americans on his head, absolutely true. And, you know, egregious and horrific, but that was all during the American occupation of Iraq. So, when Trump comes into office, Iran is abiding by the nuclear deal, it's engaging in some activities in the region. Trump decides to rather than deal with the issue of Iranian involvement in Syria or Yemen, to pull out of the Iran deal, squeeze Iran much more tightly. And the theory behind it was presumably, that this would get a better deal, except the Trump administration never asked for a better deal. So, all you got was maximum pressure, putting Iran in a box, without any endgame, without any objective other than seemingly regime change. And as a result of that, the Iranians start to lash out, we have no policy, we have no strategy toward it, allies in the region and in the world have not been alerted to it. So where are we now? Iran has pulled out of the nuclear deal completely. So we are now in a situation where it could be one year away, maybe even less for a nuclear weapon. Our allies in the region are stunned, because they're not sure where to go. Even the Saudis and the UAE that are anti-Iranian are stunned, the Europeans have not supported us. What have we achieved? In this process? We've escalated situation militarily; we have gained nothing politically.

A: Yeah, America first seems to be America alone. So, with that said, he's caught, you know, right now between having promised to bring troops home from the Middle East and having drawn a red line when it comes to Iran. So how does he navigate that?

A: Well, this is the fundamental contradiction in Donald Trump's approach to foreign policy. On the one hand, he's something of an isolationist, on the other hand, he loves the bravado and the machismo of wielding this enormous stick, which he keeps talking about, the greatest military in the world, which it is. And so, you know, it seems like sometimes he wants to get the hell out of the world but bomb it to smithereens on the way out. It's, you know, and it essentially is incoherent. And I can tell you, having been in the Middle East recently, even people who would support Donald Trump's policy, that is to say, even people who are very anti-Iran in the Gulf, are very disconcerted by the erraticism, the lack of clarity, the not-being-sure whether or not you know, there is a consistent policy here. And they are increasingly in countries like the UAE and Jordan wondering, do they just have to take matters in their own hands because they can't trust the Americans? They can't trust the Trump administration to follow through with what it says everything instead is erratic, emotional, and impulsive. You know, what is going to happen tomorrow? We don't know. Because it's all, you know, it all depends on the whims of one very impulsive man.

A: What about the Secretary of State Mike Pompeo? I mean, he is known for his anti-Iran stance, and he has the President's ear in this conflict. What impact do you think he's had on this conflict?

B: I think it's a very good question, because, as far as we can tell, Trump's basic instinct is more to pull back. He does, you know, he's criticized the endless wars. He doesn't want to keep troops in Syria, even in Afghanistan. And so, it's puzzling as to why he has ratcheted up the pressure on Iran so dramatically, at a time when things as I say were perfectly manageable with the Iran nuclear deal. And it does appear that first he wanted to undo something that Obama had done that there was just a kind of anti-Obama instinct. Secondly, the people he seems to trust, and that is Bibi Netanyahu in Israel and Mike Pompeo are very anti-Iran and very hawkish, and in the absence of any formed geopolitical views of his own, he

has essentially sort of adopted those. But at the end of the day, whatever the reason and whoever advised him, he's the president and he takes responsibility for this disarray of policy.

This is what a US-Iran war could look like

Jan 8, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1p18qdZG3QU&t=3s&ab_channel=CNN

A: [...] missile program, an experienced army. If the US engages in a military clash with Iran, it could be costly.

B: This will not be like our actions in Iraq and Afghanistan or in Syria. This is a conflict on an entirely different scale, with a highly sophisticated, well-trained and well-armed adversary.

A: an adversary that would almost certainly turn to guerrilla tactics early on. Military analysts say Iran could stage attacks such as those last year on tankers in the Strait of Hormuz and Saudi oil fields. US blamed Iran for those hits, Iran denied it. But world oil markets were briefly rocked nonetheless, and bigger attacks could undeniably create larger shocks. Or Iran could call on its many allies in the region to carry its fight against America. Shia militias, Hezbollah, Hamas, the Houthis groups that could use Iranian intelligence, logistics, weapons and more to launch terror strikes on US allies, embassies, military bases, American officials, or even private citizens abroad or at home.

C: There is a network of Iranian elements within the United States that the FBI is watching.

A: In terms of sheer firepower, Iran is no match for the US which has more warships, planes, helicopters, tanks and active troops.

D: They know that if we go all the way up the escalation ladder, you know, our capabilities, our Air Force, our naval capabilities will destroy theirs. They're much happier playing at a lower level, sort of the asymmetric level.

A: But when and how and aimed at which targets. All we know for sure is that the Iranians are promising a response to the killing of that top level military leader, "definitely there will be a revenge, there will be a harsh revenge. Iran will act based on its own choosing"

A: and the white house, "We will respond with great force and great vigor if the Iranian leadership makes a bad decision".

Aviation expert outraged at Iran in wake of airline tragedy

Jan 10, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPCI XkT2B8&ab_channel=CNN

A: Alright, first the plane. Soon after Iran fired missiles on US forces in Iraq, a passenger plane lit up in Iran's sky and went down in a ball of flames. Why? New evidence indicates Iran shot down Ukrainian flight 752 with two surface-to-air missiles made by Russia. The US apparently saw Iranians' radar signals or radar signatures logging on to the jetliner before it was shot down along with satellite and other data. Canada also says it has Intel that the plane was shot down but may have been unintentional. Can something like this happen by accident? The families of the 176 victims, they deserve answers. Iran has gone back and forth with defenses whether they did it, they're not going to talk about it, their desire to share data. Now we have more evidence ourselves. We have new video obtained by CNN, joining us now to help us walk through it, what does it mean going forward? CNN military analysts Major General James "Spider" Marks. Spider, thank you. And CNN safety analyst David Soucie, a former FAA safety

inspector. Thank you, David, you walked us through it. We knew at the time last night, you said we needed more. Now we have it specifically this, okay? This is the video of what we have. You guys ready? I'm going to play it full. I also have it in slow. Alright, quick. Again. Let's try it again. Ready? Here it is again. If you're watching at home, watch for this little blip, which is believed to be something obviously approaching the plane, then you'll see impact. Ready? And again. All right. Now, here it is, we took the time to slow it down for you. And listen, I'm not trying to show you this in some type of theatrical way. This isn't to be provocative. It is to get to the truth of those 176 deaths, the families that deserve to know and the political ramifications of the same. Here it is slowed down. This is believed to be some type of incendiary device or missile. And you'll watch as it hits, that's the explosion, the explosion, this explosion is believed to be the airplane now you'll remember from the other night, okay? You remember this, that we showed you the video that someone took this was believed to be the airplane, okay? Now, do we still believe it was the airplane? I believe, yes. We'll talk to David about it. And then eventually we saw this descend. Alright, so, this is the after-impact of it being struck. This is the moment of impact they believe. David, first of all, this video, does this, I know you've reviewed it already, does this look like what it appears to be that something approached this aircraft and struck it?

B: It most definitely does. There's little question about what that is in my mind if it's actually a valid video, which we have validated it at CNN. So, it does.

A: So that's what it is. Now we get into what was it and how did this happen? Um, General Marks, the idea of Iranian capabilities. Spider, could they have done this?

C: Oh, absolutely. They had the SA-15, which is a Russian-made surface to air missile, made in the early 80s, not particularly overly sophisticated, but it has some capabilities to go after particularly, you know, – cruise missiles is why it was developed, which means it has some incredible maneuverability. Bear in mind by comparison, this is a slow moving ascending commercial aircraft with passengers.

A: So that takes us to the next question. And David, weigh in once I get to take from Spider here. How do you make this mistake? Do you not know what the plane is? And does the thing launch itself? I mean, what are the variabilities here that make it something other than 'let's shoot down this plane'?

C: Yeah, from the outside working in: first of all, you got the context of missiles being fired by the Iranians into Iraq almost simultaneously. So, you have a very hot, contested, busy airspace over Iran. That's number one. Everybody is on a heightened level of alert, concern, there's a lot of chaos. And they have commercial flights still leaving the Tehran airport which I think is just amazingly irresponsible on the part of the Iranians.

A: Good point, Spider. Let's hold on that point for a second. David, the idea that Iran would not clear the airspace during this, does this show how sloppy they are, how they don't really know what they're doing, or is there another explanation?

B: I can't think of another explanation, Chris. I'm really outraged about this because of the fact that US has restrictions over this, but the passengers who were on that airplane had no idea that they were flying into this area. They weren't informed. They didn't know they went through security. They were on the safest airplanes in the world. And then we fly it right into a war zone. It's just totally, as Spider said, is just completely irresponsible.

A: So the lack of coordination that we would assume between air traffic and military and government just doesn't seem to happen. Now, spider, your earlier point about when this was happening. Do we know that this plane was taking off during the time of active missile bombardment by Iran?

C: I don't know. I've not seen any of the timelines in the sequencing of all that.

A: So does it change, Spider, if it was after: the bombs had landed, it had been there, and while we were processing, this plane takes off and gets hit.

C: No, it does not matter at all. Look, we've got the context of all of this confusion, heightened levels of alert, people are concerned. This type of capability can be in an automatic mode, or it can be in a manual mode. So, there's a man either in the loop or there's a man on the loop and defers to the machine. I don't know which one of those was triggered at that time. But when this thing was launched, clearly, it was probably done in an automatic mode, and the delegated authority to have the launch take place had gone from some higher command control authority down to the firing battery around the airfield. In other words, why would you delegate that authority, that's an incredibly aggressive step.

A: Little bit of context, Spider. Back in June, when they shot down that US drone, they offered up an excuse of 'look, this wasn't a big part of a plan, there was some underling general, that, you know, made a bad call, where this wasn't supposed to happen'. Could that be the case here that some dope decided to fire missile in clear error of something that looks nothing like something coming to hit you, right? They're firing up at something that is clearly trying to move away from them, as you see the video, you know. If we can get the video to play full again, you know, they're obviously aiming at something going up and away, not coming down and at them. Is that something that you could just write off to being a dope and doing your job poorly?

C: Doing your job, extremely poorly poor, horrible training, irresponsible command of control type of apparatus, this is a dangerous, dangerous situation that we're talking about very crowded airspace with a lot of, as I've indicated, a lot of animosity and a lot of kinetic.

A: Does that sound like the Iranians to you?

C: Absolutely. And it also tells you about, you know, having very tight command and control structures is not necessarily what you see, we see the militias that are associated with the IRGC as a matter of routine, doing their own thing over time, local commanders making the decision to go execute some particular task. Well, where's the control mechanism that says, 'yeah, we want to do that', where's the grander strategic view? Look, you might have local perceptions, but what is the overall strategy that we're trying to achieve here? And what's the mechanism in place to ensure that you can control that and moderate that behavior?

A: David, the ability to escape responsibility for this, there's this suggestion, oh, they'll probably blame the United States. Well, how? Forensically are you going to be able to determine where these missiles came from, if they let the NTSB in on the investigation, as has been ping ponged, back and forth? The latest word is that Iran would let Boeing the manufacturer have a representative there, which may well be an NTSB rep to go, would you be able to rule out that this was anybody but them? And then how do you escape responsibility?

B: Well, you would be able to rule out who it wasn't? I don't know if you can say who it was or why they did what they did. But it's definitely we can do rebuilds, if you'd remember the MH-17 accident that was a different missile, it was the, I believe, is the MR-56 Buk missile. But that was a different set, it was much more sophisticated. But at the same time, we were able to reconstruct it, show exactly where those penetrations went in, where they came from, and in fact, we know that it was three meters from the cockpit when that explosion happened and sending shrapnel into the airplane. So, from this we can take that shrapnel, take that aircraft and those pieces and do a reconstruction find out nearly exactly where it exploded and the direction and which way it came from.

A: So, the facts will show who has to own this, whether it will be owned and what it means going forward we're going to take up later in the show. But for this fact analysis and taking us through the video, Major General "Spider" Marks, thank you very much. David Soucie, again, two nights in row, appreciate it.

CNN reports exclusively from air base attacked by Iran

Jan 11, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oN_M1UXMwvs&ab_channel=CNN

A: The future of US troops in Iraq, meanwhile, is in question this morning. The Iraqi Prime Minister has asked Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to start the process of withdrawal now

B: Now, the State Department dismissed the request saying troops are crucial for the fight against ISIS. US troops are stationed at the Al Assad airbase and that was hit with more than a dozen ballistic missiles. The missiles hit areas of the base that were not occupied by troops.

A: CNN's senior international correspondent Arwa Damon is the first journalist to gain access to that airbase. She's here now with her exclusive reporting.

C: These used to be living quarters, this is where the troops would sleep, at least one of the areas. There is almost nothing left, nothing that was salvageable, we were told. The crater itself impacted over here and it was one of 10 impacts that happened. Being here, it's truly extraordinary how anyone managed to survive, that there were no casualties when you look at the destruction, and then hearing all of the stories of the close calls, of the heroics, what we are now learning is that there was advanced warning to a certain degree, they knew something was going to happen. They just didn't know what. And about 11pm at night, those that were able to go to the bunkers, went to the bunkers. But there were still troops that were outmanning posts that, because of the security situation, they had to stay at. So, people were beginning to take shelter at around 11pm. And then at 1:34, that's when the first impact happened. A lot of those who we are talking to are saying that it was unlike anything they had ever imagined. Of course, on the one hand, the training does kick in. But at the end of the day, this is a terrifying experience. A terrifying situation.

B: Thanks to Arwa Damon there. Joining us now is Richard Johnson. He's the former deputy lead coordinator for the Iran nuclear deal implementation at the State Department. Richard, good morning to you.

D: Good morning. Thank you.

B: So, let's start here. We've got EU foreign minister and the NATO Secretary General met Friday to try to resuscitate the deal. We know that the French Foreign Minister Le Drian said that the deal, "is not dead", is it?

D: I would agree with the French Foreign Minister, the statement that Foreign Minister Javad Zarif of Iran put out the day that they announced that they were going to take another step away from the nuclear deal was very clear that they were staying in the deal. And the key point here is that Iran is continuing to allow the IAEA, the International inspectors to remain on site to monitor and verify Iran's nuclear program. This is key because that will allow the international community to still know what Iran is up to. There's been headlines, some very misleading headlines, I would say in newspapers saying that Iran is now racing to a nuclear weapon. But we know because of the International inspections, which were a key part of that Iran nuclear deal, that that is not the case, at least not yet.

B: Well, a part of the deal was the easing of sanctions. We saw what came from the White House yesterday from Secretary Mnuchin and Pompeo. What's the virtue of a deal if the sanctions are back?

D: That's exactly the question that the Iranian government is asking. They stayed in the deal and didn't make any changes for one year, even though all of the sanctions that were lifted under the Obama administration, were re-imposed by President Trump. And that's why they've started to step away, starting about in May of 2019. The Europeans are in a really tough spot here, they want to implement this deal. They see it as a huge victory for European diplomacy. But because the Trump administration has essentially said, 'make a choice, either do business with Iran or do business with the United States', they've had to stick with the United States, which means that Iran is not getting the economic benefits it expected to get as a trade-off for restricting its nuclear program in the deal.

B: Richard, let's talk about strategy. And the way forward, as I mentioned, announcement of new sanctions against Iran came from the White House yesterday, I want you here to listen to now former Secretary of State John Kerry, this is back in 2015. He's talking here about the virtue of sanctions and their role in reaching the JCPOA. Let's watch.

E: You're not going to sanction them into oblivion. They've proven that, we've seen that in the last years. Sanctions brought them to the table to negotiate. They did the very thing everybody put the sanctions in place to get them to do, which is negotiate. So, they negotiated.

B: 'Sanctions brought them to the table to negotiate'. President Trump seems to think that it can happen again, can it?

D: the difference between what President Obama did and what President Trump did is that President Obama built an international coalition to implement those sanctions, and they were UN multilateral sanctions. And there were also sanctions from the European Union. Allies are key here to get any progress on restricting Iran's nuclear program. Unfortunately, by leaving the Iran nuclear deal, the president basically very much frustrated the Europeans by throwing out what had been a great accomplishment. So, I don't know how you can get back to the deal just with this so-called maximum pressure. The Iranians have said that they will have maximum resistance. And that's basically what we're seeing here. Again, the good news here is that Iran has not actually moved forward very far in moving back towards the huge, much larger stockpile of uranium that it had prior to the deal. So, it's a bit of a zombie deal at this point. It's not dead yet, but I don't think that imposing additional sanctions is going to make that much of an impact at this point.

B: Listen to President Trump, this is on Thursday.

T: Then Iran went on a terrorist spree, funded by the money from the deal, and created hell in Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The missiles fired last night at us and our allies were paid for. With the funds made available by the last administration.

B: The administration hasn't put anything forward to prove that... they haven't even tried to justify that statement that's been made. But let me ask you this. In 2015, Senate Democrats proposed a bill that would, among other things, attract the money, the resources returned to Iran and determine if they were used to fund the Quds force, Hamas, Hezbollah, Assad in Syria, it went nowhere. Was that a mistake not to put more emphasis or to support some type of check-by annually to determine where the money went?

D: Well, I think congressional oversight is always a good thing. So, if that could be put back into place, I think that will be welcomed. But the reality is this, the US intelligence community monitors this very closely. And even after the nuclear deal came into effect, the Obama administration was very clear, the vast majority of those funds, and by the way, it was a lot less than what President Trump says, went to domestic infrastructure projects and paying off debt in Iran. Of course, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps has its own set aside funds. They're going to draw on those. So, we don't know exactly where all the funds went. But I would suspect that most of the funds did not go as was described by the President.

B: Richard Johnson. Good to have your insight, sir.

D: Thank you so much for having me. Certainly.

Iran plane crash leads to anti-government protests

Jan 12, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XfC0NqUeY2Y&ab_channel=CNN

A: Iran's government trying to contain the fallout over the downing of a passenger plane over Tehran. It is not only facing the scrutiny of the world, but its own people, too – with one tragic blunder, Iran has

turned a wave of popular supporting to a tide of anti-government fury. [...] deals with what comes next with the United States. Let's walk you through the very latest in Tehran: anti-government protest by Iranians angry at the regime for shooting down that Ukrainian passenger jet. These crowds demanding Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei step down, this coming at a critical time for the regime, it tries to map a route out of the crisis with the U.S. Meanwhile, the White House, apparently, seizing this moment, President Trump tweeting out this message in Farsi: "To the brave, long-suffering people of Iran: I've stood with you since the beginning of my Presidency, and my Administration will continue to stand with you. We are following your protests closely and are inspired by your courage." We are across the developments in this story, CNN International Diplomatic Editor Nic Robertson is here with me tonight in Abu Dhabi, Senior International correspondent Arwa Damon is live for you in Baghdad. Now Kristen Holmes standing at the White House. Let me start with you, Nic. An admission of guilt by the Islamic Republic of Iran is almost unheard of, it has to be said. And we were trying to think back to the last time that, you know, we could remember such, and it was, I think, back in 1998. This might have been no different had it not been for evidence that became abundantly clear to the International Community.

N: Iran has zero credibility on the international stage and for several days they said that they didn't shoot down the airliner, international countries were putting forward evidence that that wasn't the case, they had no way to turn. Their biggest existential threat is, they believe, US troops in the region and they're going to need all this international good will that they think maybe out there for them in sort of pushing off the United States. So, calculation: you have to come clean on the airline being forced down but of course that is having a huge backlash not only internationally – a pressure on them, – but domestically as well. People feel, "you could have grounded these air crafters, you didn't; therefore, you didn't care about us", – and that's why these protests are happening.

B: Chants of death to the Supreme Leader, angry blowback for the downing of the Ukrainian passenger jet gathering momentum in Tehran. Thousands protesting just hours after Iranian officials finally admitted mistaken in shooting it down. "I will kill who killed my brother", someone shouts. The vast majority aboard flight PS752 were Iranian, the best and the brightest. Their death – a spark igniting tinder-dry middle-class frustrations. Police toss tear gas, scatter the crowds. The anger – quite simply: Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei doesn't care about his people; he didn't pause civilian flights while attacking US bases in Iraq. The crowd telling him he no longer has a mandate to lead, anger to the powerful IRGC. Another big slap down for Iran's leadership – protestors avoid walking on American and Israeli flags, painted on the ground some years ago by the regime, out of disrespect. "Iran's leadership, now facing great external as well as internal pressure." "Iran's admission that its own armed forces unintentionally shot down flight 752 is an important step towards providing answers for families, but I noted that many more steps must be taken." Demands the airplane investigation be international, open, and transparent. President Trump, heaping on his pressure, too, tweeting: "[t]he world is watching" the protests, "[t]here can not be another massacre of peaceful protesters", as happened last year. And, in the midst of it all, the British ambassador arrested at the protest, held for several hours, – the British Foreign Secretary calling it "a flagrant violation of international law." Fallout over the downed plane now becoming a perfect storm for Iran in the global spotlight with international investigators poking around as domestic protests grow and sanctions increase, and Iran's recourse to violence, muted by fear of escalation. And still, no real diplomatic off-ramp in sight. And today, it does seem that the Iranians, Becky, are taking a different tack, pro-regime elements having a prayer vigil at the same site as the protests. So, the message from the Iranian leadership, they're, – this is what they want the International Community to see.

A: Fascinating. Let's get to Kristen who is at the White House, because the U.S. President has been pretty active on Twitter, he has issued another warning to Iran, telling its leaders in a tweet: "DO NOT KILL YOUR PROTESTORS. Thousands have already been killed or imprisoned by you, and the World is watching. More importantly, the USA is watching". Kristen, it would be easy to accuse the U.S. President of seizing the moment here, in fact, many people are accusing him of exactly that. You could

also argue that the US President sitting back, watching what is going on, this is a country, which didn't accept what happened, lied its way through the first 48 hours of the downing of this jet, has people out protesting against it once again, and the US President simply sitting back and saying, "we are watching you". Many might agree with some of what the US President's narrative is today.

C: Well, absolutely, Becky, but do you think you need to look at this at both a macro and a micro level. Just moments ago, we heard from the Defense Secretary Mark Esper, we also heard from the National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien, as they're trying to fumble their way through the intelligence that led to the US airstrikes on Soleimani. This has been an ongoing theme that we've seen for the last week. Focusing on the protests for the President is a way to shift that focus away from this justification. We are still having multiple lawmakers, Democrats and Republicans, who are asking what exactly happened, when are we going to see this intelligence that led to this strike, why was it necessary at this time, and we heard from all of these officials, some saying they believe the embassies were under attack, as the President has said, others saying that they weren't sure if that was exactly it. They're using words like 'believe', 'think', not word like 'this is what we saw' when it comes to intelligence. So, while it might be that that's what the President is doing – sitting back and just saying that we are watching, – and also, he is very clearly shifting the narrative here, he has stopped focusing on Soleimani, and clearly, is focusing on Iran. And the other thing here is just to remember the narrative that we've seen over the last week. President Trump issuing this attack, we still, again, do not know what led to the imminency of this attack, why it had to be done then; and then we see Iranians, essentially, united in the street against America, we hear them chanting death to America, weeping, wailing about their military leader who was killed, and now a complete 180, and for obvious reasons. Becky, this is a better narrative for President Trump, he gets to now not have death to America but instead, essentially, undermining of the Iranian regime. But it is really important here to note the broader context when it comes to President Trump, when it comes to the President and the Middle East. President Trump is sitting here, saying, do not kill your protestors, the Iranian people are great people, essentially praising them, but this is the same President who just earlier in the week was threatening to bomb cultural sights, – cultural sites that are likely not just important to the Iranian government, but to the people of Iran. This is also a president who within his first month of taking office banned Iranians from coming into the U.S. He ran on a platform of this so-called Muslim ban. So, if you do want to take a step back and say that this is him just saying the U.S. is watching you, that could very well be it, but you have to look at the larger context here. President Trump, essentially, picking and choosing when he wants to support Iranians, when he wants to support the people, the protestors, and when he just simply doesn't.

US confirms fighter jet flew close to Iranian passenger plane for inspection

Jul 24, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e9mJRMsvUj0&t=35s&ab_channel=CNN

A: While this was a close encounter of the kind that passengers on one airliner were not happy with. The US Defense Department is now confirming that one of its fighter jets flew as close as 1000 meters from an Iranian passenger plane and Central Command spokesman says, "it was a standard visual inspection". Iranian state media is reporting several passengers on board the Mahajan Air Flight were injured when its pilot abruptly lowered altitude in the incident and you see some of the aftermath there: there's a man with a bloody nose and the oxygen masks came down. You heard screams and some of that amateur video footage that was posted online. Terrifying minutes. CNN Senior international correspondent Sam Kiley has reported on Iran extensively. So, what's going on? The US is saying this was a standard visual, kind of, reconnaissance flight. But clearly the pilot of that Iranian commercial airliner was worried enough that he just kind of, you know, tried to get out of the way as quickly as possible by lowering his altitude pretty quickly.

B: Yeah, and we can understand why, perhaps, in that region flying over Syrian airspace, not many months after the Iranians shot down a Ukrainian airliner coming out of Tehran with two rockets, the black box for that being delivered, as you know, Hala, a few days ago to Paris for a further examination, highly intense war zone. And that perhaps might explain why the Americans put up to F-15 jets or had F-15 jets in the air above Syrian airspace in that area, because they said that they were very close to the Al-Tanf base and that is a Special Forces Base. Basically, these Special Forces base for Britain, the United States, Jordan and others operating highly sensitive operations inside Syria close to the Iraqi border. That is an area where certainly the Americans would not like any kind of reconnaissance or surveillance to be conducted. And they have accused Iran in the past of using civilian aircraft to deliver men and materiel, money, weapons and other supplies and indeed carrying out surveillance operations in that war zone. So that might explain why the Americans put an aircraft up. And it might explain why the pilot of this civilian aircraft from Omahan Airways, flying out of Damascus to Beirut, it would appear into some kind of dive. I must say also that the Lebanese authorities, Hala, have said that they don't believe anybody was injured on that aircraft. But the one person was hospitalized, suffering from very high blood pressure, and they believe that may be the man who was shown in that amateur video on the floor, perhaps the others were simply glad to be alive and glad to be on the ground and didn't report for medical assistance. But this is an extremely dense, highly problematic airspace. It's the same airspace for example that Israeli aircraft regularly penetrate to carry out attacks, particularly on Hezbollah, and other Iranian-backed targets, Hala.

‘We’re here because of Trump’s failed policy’: Analyst on killing of Iran's top scientist

Nov 29, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ujo1k0exO0E&ab_channel=CNN

A: Sam, the killing of Iran's top nuclear scientists could fuel more tensions between Tehran and Washington. We're watching it unfold on the streets of Iran's capital. That relationship has deteriorated rapidly since Trump took office by design mostly. Give us a sense of how significant this is and the impact that it has on national security.

B: Well, Boris, we're here because of Trump's failed Iran policy, Trump withdrew from the nuclear deal, and Iran resumed banned activities. Because diplomacy has been dead, there has been an increased reliance on covert operations. That's the backstory here. And when we look at the impact in Iran, let's remember, in addition to his current role, the target of this attack also was a human library of historical information with respect to Iran's nuclear program. So, his death is a loss in that regard. And as Alex just mentioned, the string of sabotage operations and assassinations that Iran has suffered of the past several months, are a black eye to the regime security-wise. That's why it is likely that Iran will not take this line down. But I anticipate that Iran may have more of a calibrated response. President Rouhani said earlier that Iran won't be trapped into creating chaos. I think that's because President Rouhani has his eye on the prize, which is sanctions relief. Sanctions relief is only possible via negotiations with the United States. And I don't think that Rouhani wants to do anything to undermine the prospects for negotiations under Biden administration.

A: Now, turning to the Biden transition on Monday, it's going to be the first day that President Elect Joe Biden and vice president elect Kamala Harris, are going to get their first presidential daily briefing. From your perspective, how significant is that?

A: Well, the PDB refers both to a written document and an oral briefing. The written document is provided by the director of national intelligence to the president every day. It's often accompanied by an oral briefing in which the President and anyone else in the room can ask questions and dig deeper. Now remember, when it comes to Vice President Biden, he's not going to have a steep learning curve when it

comes to intelligence. He received the PDB when he was vice president and participated in that oral briefing. And unlike President Trump, the PDB is not going to be an if-I-feel-like-it kind of activity. In my experience with then Vice President Biden, the PDB was a must-do. Now based on the fact that the President Elect will be receiving the PDB several weeks before inauguration, he'll have an opportunity to get more fully informed on classified threats and opportunities, as well as potentially covert capabilities. So, for all those reasons for us, we will have a president that's operating with more intelligence after January 20.

A: And Biden is also soon going to have to decide whether to share transcripts of presidential calls with foreign leaders to a broad, security clearance holding audience or maintain a lockdown of those transcripts and other sensitive information. Basically, a policy that was imposed by the Trump administration. What do you think Biden is going to do?

B: Well, we're talking about information that's stored on a codeword server. Codeword is a term that's used to refer to a specific category of information that is classified at a certain level based on its sensitivity. The Trump team stored information on this codeword server that was not at a codeword classification level. They did that to restrict access, and arguably to avoid embarrassment to the President. The Biden team will probably operate based on the letter of the law. Accessing classified information is based on two things having an appropriate security clearance and having a need to know that information. I would expect the Biden administration to meet those two requirements when they think about sharing this information. The key factor here is the need to know what is in those transcripts and that will determine, I think, how widely this information is shared.

A: Alright. Samantha Vinograd, thank you so much. Hope you have a good weekend.

B: Thank you.

Footage shows chemical tanker seized by Iranian forces

Jan 5, 2021

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDNh8G1B_u4&ab_channel=CNN

A: Iran says it has completed its first batch of 20% enriched uranium that is far beyond the cap imposed in the 2015 nuclear deal. The ramp-up was widely expected. Iran's Parliament passed a law last month to boost enrichment after the country's top nuclear scientist was killed. The announcement also comes one year after Senior Iranian General Qasem Soleimani was killed by a US drone strike. Iran also seized a South Korean-flagged chemical tanker on Monday, and you can see on the right side of the screen an Iranian patrol boat approaching the tanker. In response, a South Korean destroyer arrived in the Strait of Hormuz just a few hours ago, in fact. And for more on this, Sam Kylie is following developments from Jerusalem. But first let's start with Paula Hancock. She joins us live from Seoul. So, Paula, what is the latest on this seized South Korean-flagged tank or now, of course, the arrival of the destroyer?

B: Oh, Rosemary. The latest we've heard from the foreign ministry here in South Korea is that they believe that the tanker has been taken to the Banda Arbus port in Iran. The Iranian ambassador to Korea was summoned this afternoon to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and spoke to an official, saying that they could confirm that the sailors were all safe. Now we know there were 20 sailors on board, five of them were South Korean nationals. And also, the South Korean ambassador in Tehran said he's speaking to authorities there. And he also has been given the all-clear that the sailors are safe. But clearly the foreign ministry is calling for the early release of the sailors and of the tanker itself. Now the Iranian side of it is that there was environmental pollution taking place because of this tanker from the South Korean side. They say they're looking into this, but clearly, analysts say that there could well be a lot

more. There have been tensions between Iran and South Korea, we know that there is an estimated \$7 billion in Iranian funds that have been frozen in South Korean banks since 2019. This is because the US at that point increased the sanctions against Iran, South Korea had been importing a fair bit of Iranian oil, but from September 2019, that simply wasn't possible in, those funds had been frozen. Now we know that the deputy foreign minister is heading to Tehran, and from Sunday, we'll have a few days of meetings. We are being told that that was planned already before this had happened whether or not that is the case, they will clearly have a lot more to talk about now. But from some points of view, South Korea really does find itself between a rock and a hard place, South Korea trying to toe the line with its main ally, the US. But of course, it does have commercial interests with Iran in its balance that it's been trying to control for a number of months now. But clearly whether or not this is the chemical pollution Iran causes or not, the South Korea is in a tricky position. And there will be interesting discussions when the deputy foreign minister heads to Tehran, Rosemary.

A: no doubt. Thanks for that, Paula. Sam, to you. Now this all comes of course, as Iran ramps up uranium enrichment in its biggest breach yet of the nuclear deal. So, what's the latest on that?

C: Well, the Israelis have repeated their commitment. This is the words of the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu saying that they will never allow Iran to develop a nuclear weapons capability. There is analysis around that said they could have already or be close to producing in Iran enough material to make two small nuclear weapons perhaps, that's called the sort of breakout moment. This is, in a sense, the moment in which the international community might be expected to be galvanized into a unified response to the uranium decision to start refining uranium to such a high level. But what's interesting, and I think it's very strongly reflected by what Paula was just saying there, is that the US administration under Trump has been out of whack very seriously with the international community resulting, for example, in the sanctions that have been unilaterally imposed by the United States on Iran, means that the international banking system when it tries to deal with Iran is crippled, since most of these debts and trades are managed in US dollars. That is the reason ultimately, the Koreans are not making good on a debt that they admit that they have with the Iranians. It's Iranian money that they are fearful of handing over. The Europeans have been in very similar situation trying to make the nuclear deal stick together to some extent, since the United States walked away from it while simultaneously trying to contain Iranian destabilization efforts that they have stepped up in response to this, these sanctions. So what we've seen recently is a ramping up of the Iranian nuclear program. We've seen large scale exercises by the Iranian Navy in the Persian Gulf, Arabian Gulf, as many in the Arabian Gulf would rather call it. And there's also, Paula, as signs of more unity now emerging among Gulf nations with a very important breakthrough in which Qatar and the Saudis have agreed to open their border after three years of, in a sense, mutual blockade, very bitter relations with the Qatari, and they're heading to the Gulf Cooperation Council meeting in Saudi Arabia today. That puts up more of a united front, if you like, in response to Iran, although of course, Qataris have been a lot more sympathetic to the Iranian position and certainly the Saudis or the rulers in the United Arab Emirates.

2. From Fox News

Trump briefed on tanker attacks in the Gulf of Oman

Jun 13, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hY5D0fvGcgM&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: The attacks come amidst the increased tensions between the US and Iran. Today, Japan's Prime Minister is in Tehran to try to calm down the escalating rhetoric. Both tankers were carrying Japanese petroleum products when they were attacked. Security of State Mike Pompeo, National Security Advisor John Bolton are here at the Pentagon this morning for a pre-scheduled meeting with the Acting Defense

Secretary and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs in the secured planning room known as ‘the tank’. The two oil tankers were damaged outside the [...] port in Strait of Hormuz in the Gulf of Oman. Both underway, outside, near the Strait when explosion occurred. One was led to blaze, 44 sailors had to be rescued at sea. The tankers had just left ports in Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates, which were en route to Asia. The distress calls came eight minutes apart according to the US Navy’s fifth fleet, quote: “We are aware of the reported attack on shipping vessel in the Gulf of Oman. U.S. Naval Forces in the region received two separate distress calls at 6:12 a.m. local (Bahrain) time and a second one at 7:00 a.m. U.S. Navy ships are in the area and are rendering assistance.” Officials say USS Bainbridge, a guided missile destroyer part of the Lincoln strike group, is in the vicinity and rescued 21 of those sailors. USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier, sent to the region last month, had just completed a port visit to Oman and had just gone underway today when the incident occurred. The head of American forces in the region General Frank McKenzie was recently in the Middle East warning of an unspecified imminent threat from Iran and its proxies. Iranian state media claims they have rescued some sailors from at least one of the ships, and some of the sailors were taken to a port in Iran. And this comes just a month after four different oil tankers were attacked by mines, which the Pentagon blamed on Iran, Eric.

B: Alright, Lucas. In a few moments I’ll be talking to General Jack Keane about Iran’s suspected hand in all this. Thank you.

Tensions could prompt Iran to wage a cyber-attack against US

Jun 22, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcXtgAsCX1U&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: Meanwhile, current and former US officials are raising red flags about what is going on with Iran prompting this whole could prompt cyberattacks against our country. According to the Washington Journal, researchers say they have seen Iran-backed hacking attempts targeting the US government and private sector, that in recent days. David Weinstein joins us, Chief Security Officer for Claroty, Inc., former Chief of Technology for New Jersey, so you know the state government systems and you know how this works. We’ve heard all about Russia, but what about Iran?

B: Yeah, a lot of attention on Russia lately, but Iran is a serious cyber-actor. They certainly don’t have the capability that Russia has. But you have to remember for Iran, particularly given the region they’re in and the competitiveness they have with other Gulf states, as well as the US, this is an existential battle for them, right. And cyber-space, cyber-warfare capabilities, provides for them asymmetric warfare capability that they can use against threats in the region as well as the US.

A: What type of attacks do you think we’ve seen?

B: So, we’ve seen, kind of two types of attacks. The first, and probably the most prominent, as it’s been directed to the US and what the recent reporting has been about, is focused on gathering intelligence, right. So Iran is targeting military personnel through somewhat sophisticated techniques to try to gain access to their accounts and learn about the US activities, particularly in the region, so we’ve seen a lot of targeted attacks against navy personnel, because obviously we have a huge naval presence in the Gulf. The other side of the coin, and these tactics have been more targeted towards countries in the region, Gulf states, namely Saudi Arabia and Israel, are more destructive attacks, so they move from just gathering target information about networks and people, and actually manipulating and destroying data. So they have demonstrated the capability, they have not used destructive attacks against the US, but Iranian cyber-activities are usually a pretty good proxy for US-Iranian relations, which is to say, as relations deteriorate between the US and Iran, as they have over the last weeks significantly, we tend to see an uptick or escalation in Iranian cyber-operations, and that’s playing out right now.

A: That's exactly what the Wall Street Journal are reporting. Quickly, the navy personnel have anything to worry about personally if they're trying to target or find information about our men in service?

B: Not so much on a personal level, but they are exploiting navy personnel, so that the Iranians can understand more about what the military is doing in the region and potentially gain access to their accounts as a means of furthering access into military networks.

A: And this comes as a troubling situation of ransomware, if you ever heard about this, these are someone getting into systems of your local town and city government and holding it basically for ransom. Riviera Beach, Florida is the latest town-council, they voted to pay \$600,000 to whoever this is, however they get it. How does this work, because this has been happening for a couple of years now, where bad actors get into computer systems and say, "we're shutting it down," – what they do, "unless you pay us".

B: Huge, huge problem: I experienced this during my time in New Jersey as Chief Technology Officer. What you have is a clear business case for criminal hacker syndicates, who ultimately lock up your data and extort the victims of this ransomware for payment, which is usually tendered in bitcoin or some other crypto payment.

A: And that's why they can't find who they are?

B: Yeah, that makes tracing it back pretty hard. Not to mention the fact that most of these folks are operating from overseas in jurisdictions that the US does not have extradition treaties with. So even if we do track them down, it's hard to bring them to justice.

A: Who do you think it is?

B: Nameless, faceless hackers. These guys are everywhere and they're criminal syndicates.

A: I mean, Eastern Europe, Russia perhaps? Or is it North Korea? Or they just are non-political but criminal syndicates?

B: Yeah, these are non-state actors, right. So, there is a large concentration of hackers coming from Eastern Europe and that part of the world, but these are non-state actors; they have one motivation and one motivation only – which is profit. And when towns like Riviera Beach, and this is not an indictment of Riviere Beach, when they pay out, that validates the business model.

A: It encourages them. Look, Baltimore paid \$18 million. Atlanta paid \$17 million. Can this be stopped by the federal government?

B: It's not so much a problem that the government can solve. Of course, the government can help with investigating these and ultimately deterring future attacks by bringing these people to justice. But the end users, the organizations themselves have a responsibility to make sure that their systems are up-to-date, so that they're not being exploited by this malware that ultimately locks it up. The other piece is, and it's not a trivial matter, particularly for municipal governments, even state governments in some cases, to make sure that all their systems are running the latest version of every software. But the other mitigation is to make sure that your data is backed up elsewhere in a system that's isolated from your business network. So, if you do fall victim to this attack, you can just have your machines reimaged and back up or recover the system.

A: That is sophisticated corporate operations of computer systems that I guess all the cities, towns and counties, they've got to get on the page on this. But it is difficult, and this is a threat.

Tucker: US came within minutes of war with Iran

Jun 22, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-c0jMsspE7Y&t=20s&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: Just 24 hours ago, this country stood on the brink of cataclysm. After weeks of slow escalation and without a single vote from the Congress, the United States came within minutes of war with Iran. In response to the destruction of an unmanned drone American forces nearly launched an airstrike on Iranian targets. According to some reports, our planes were literally in the air. But in the end, it didn't happen. The President pulled back this morning, he explained why.

T: They came, and they said Sir, we're ready to go. We'd like a decision. I said, 'I want to know something before you go. How many people will be killed?' And this case Iranians, I said, 'how many people are going to be killed?' 'Sir, I'd like to get back to you on that. Great people. These generals,' they said, came back said 'Sir, approximately 150' and I thought about it for a second I said, 'you know what? They shut down an unmanned drone, plane, whatever you want to call it'. And here we are sitting with 150 dead people that would have taken place probably within a half an hour after I said, 'Go ahead.' And I didn't like it. I didn't think it was. I didn't think it was proportionate.

A: How many people will be killed? The most basic of all questions, but a question that's too rarely asked by leaders contemplating war. A 150 people wiped off the planet in retaliation for a broken drone. Every one of them, the President reminded his staff last night, someone with a family. The whole thing in the end offended his sense of decency. He said it seems disproportionate. And it was. Moreover, airstrikes would have led to a wider conflict with Iran. That, of course, was the entire point of it. Policymakers in Washington crave a war with Iran. Last night was supposed to be the first domino: at the last minute, the president thwarted their plans – for that he's being vilified. Watch CNN's 36-year-old national security analyst attack the President for not killing enough people yesterday.

B: This is kind of a worst-case scenario. The President is showing that he's since made a decision, had the National Security Council meeting and wasn't willing to follow through... All in all, this shows gross disorganization and a President who can't seem to make up his mind, even on something as important as a military strike on Iran.

A: Only in foreign policy circles do people say things that stupid. In fact, last night was a high point in the Trump presidency, bombing Iran would have ended his political career in a minute, there'd be no chance of re-election after that. Ill-advised wars are like doing cocaine, the initial rush rises your poll numbers, but the crash is inevitable. And in this case, it would be horrible. The hangover from an Iraq war would last years. Iran is not Syria or Iraq. It's a big, rich, sophisticated country with an ancient culture and a cohesive population. In some ways, it's an impressive place, not at all like the chintzy prefab capitals of the Arab world, like Riyadh and Dubai. We could beat Iran, but it would not be easy. It would cost trillions of dollars; many thousands of Americans likely would die. China would love it. They'd be the only winners in that conflict. Donald Trump was elected president precisely to keep us out of disasters like war with Iran. So how did we get so close to starting one? Simple. The neo-cons still wield enormous power in Washington. They don't care what the cost of war with Iran is. They certainly don't care what the effect on Trump's political fortunes might be. They despise Donald Trump. Now, one of their key allies is the National Security Adviser of the United States. John Bolton is an old friend of Bill Crystal's. Together they help plan the Iraq war. When Bolton made it to the White House, the neo-cons cheered. Left wing New York Times columnist Bret Stevens took a break from attacking Donald Trump to celebrate his hiring. Stephens assured MSNBC viewers that John Bolton was a great choice because he would push the President toward war.

C: He is not the sort of caricatureish Hawk that he's been made out to be in some in some corners of the press. I think someone like Bolton is going to restrain the isolationist impulses that have been really at the heart of Trump's foreign policy thinking.

A: Got that John Bolton is going to restrain Donald Trump from avoiding war. And of course, that's exactly what he's tried to do from the very first day. Shortly before Bolton took his new job, we invited him on this show and asked about some of his many, many previous foreign policy positions. Watch as Bolton denies ever being wrong, ever, about anything, not even a little bit.

A: So, you've called for regime change in Iraq, Libya, Iran and Syria in the first two countries, we've had regime change. And obviously it's been, I'd say disaster I think we'd agree.

D: No, I don't agree with that. No, I think you need to understand is that life is complicated, the Middle East? And when you say, well, the overthrow of Saddam Hussein was a mistake is simplistic.

A: I would argue that I'm the one who understands how complicated it is. But just my view.

D: it's your long experience in foreign policy.

A: Better record than yours, I would say.

Got that? Hillary Clinton's toppling of the Libyan government was not a disaster, says John Bolton. Keep in mind there are literally slave markets operating in the streets of Tripoli right now. No problem, though. Bolton's fine with that. He's fine with the outcome in Iraq too, that wasn't a disaster either. According to John Bolton, it was a raging success. We killed hundreds of thousands of people, lost thousands of our own troops, spent more than a trillion dollars all to eliminate a W M. D threat, that despite John Bolton's assurances never existed in the first place. Bolton is glad we did all that. Really happy about it. That's demented. Normal people don't talk like that. There's nothing normal about John Bolton. Check out this piece of tape recently uncovered in which Bolton promises that we're going to overthrow the government of Iran. Keep in mind that this was filmed long before the Iranians shut down a single drone.

D: I had said for over 10 years since coming to these events that the declared policy of the United States of America should be the overthrow of the Mullahs regime in Tehran... and that's why before 2019 we here will celebrate in Tehran. Thank you very much.

In other words, last night has been in the works for years. John Bolton is a kind of bureaucratic tapeworm. Try as you might, you can't expel him. He seems to live forever in the bowels of the federal agencies periodically re-emerging to cause pain and suffering, but critically somehow never suffering himself. His life really is Washington in a nutshell. Blunder into obvious catastrophes again and again, refuse to admit blame and then demand more of the same. That's the John Bolton life cycle. In between administration jobs are always cushy think tank posts, paid speaking gigs, cable news contracts. War may be disaster for America but for John Bolton and his fellow neo-cons it is always good business.

Iran intercepts another UK oil tanker in Strait of Hormuz

Jul 19, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nxot-dMX1-k&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: A Fox News alert: Iran seizing control of a British oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz. This is the latest in the series of incidents involving the revolutionary guard targeting tankers. Let's bring the anchor of *Special Report*, Bret Baier. Alright, Bret, so what are we hearing regarding this UK ship?

B: Julie, good afternoon. This UK oil tanker called the Stena Impero, the company put out a notice that it lost contact with the vessel sometime today. We are being told through the associative press and the Iran revolutionary guard that it seized this vessel with Iranian ships, small crafts, and a helicopter. There are 23 people on board. The reason this is significant is obviously because it's continued escalation, there you see the company's statement about this during the Strait of Hormuz transit. This is an escalation; you had a UAE vessel and oil tanker that was taken control of by the Iranian vessels in that area; you obviously had the – not shoot down – but bring down of an Iranian drone that the president announced yesterday, and this is high tension in that region.

A: It sure is. You just mentioned the statement from the UK company, and we have it, let's put it back on the screen so that we can read it because we literally just got this, we didn't read it, though. "U.K. registered vessel Sten Imper... was approached by unidentified small crafts and a helicopter during a

transit of the Strait of Hormuz while the vessel was in international waters. We are presently unable to contact the vessel which is now heading north towards Iran. There are 23 seafarers aboard. There have been no reported injuries and their safety is of primary concern to both owners and managers.” You just mentioned and you brought up the fact that the president yesterday discussed the fact that the United States basically had a drone that was shot down. Iran denied that claim and then today the deputy foreign minister of Iran said in fact that it’s possible that the United States shot down its own drone. This seems highly unlikely. What are you hearing about that?

B: No. The Pentagon is confirming that they brought down an Iranian drone and it wasn’t shot down, it was brought down, kind of, with this new device that jams the drone and kind of confuses it and brings it down. The Secretary of State, just moments ago, said, “it went down. Foreign minister Zarif doesn’t know about it or lied about it; I can’t account for his statements.” So, listen, you have this back and forth rhetorically, but more importantly you have a back and forth in the Strait of Hormuz. And now the US military through the Navy is going to be moving assets and has assets in the region, according to the head of Centcom, that essentially is going to be escorting various vessels, and there you have the possibility, at least, of something, you know, ticking off and creating a military incident. This is high tension, and this is, you know, for all the back and forth we hear about in Washington and “who said what?” This is the news that really matters day to day that potentially could lead to a big incident.

A: This is also frustrating for the United States because the president has said time and time again he needs European allies to jump in and actually assist in trying to secure this shipping channel where this is all taking place. We just in fact got some sound from the United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on all of this. Let’s play that and then we will react.

C: In the end, President Trump will make the decision about how to proceed. He has made clear we’re prepared to conduct negotiations with no preconditions, the Iranians continue to say, “well, we’ll talk, but if and only if the United States does something.” We need them to come to the table, it’s the right way to resolve these challenges.

A: So, who’s going to come to the table first. I mean, that’s a question.

B: It’s a great question. I think the Iranians don’t have a lot of options, Julie, they are in an economic pinch. And Iran wants the world to believe that it’s dangerous and possibly risky to go to the Strait of Hormuz, and thereby, oil goes up. If they go over the line and they push it too far, there will be a US military response directly – and that changes the dynamic 100%. So, it is a game of chicken that Iran is playing currently, and we will see how far it goes. The responsibility of the administration will be interesting, and the Brits will weigh in, obviously, because it’s a UK-flagged vessel that is now in Iranian control as of this afternoon.

A: I mean, let’s talk about how serious it would be for the failure to secure support for the maritime initiative because not only would that be a big blow to the efforts made by the United States, it would be a blow to its Sunni Muslim ally Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates to isolate Shia Muslim Iran and Iran-backed forces in the Middle East. This whole thing is escalating by the day and the question now is who is going to take the upper hand. Obviously, the United States wants to tamper things down, but without our allies, can we do it?

B: Yeah, and I think they are hoping that the allies will be on the US side, they are increasing sanctions. Just yesterday, more sanctions on two Iranians who directly have been helping Iranian militias inside Iraq. There’s a long history here and the Europeans have to make a decision whether they are going to stand with the US. It’s been tense, those relationships, obviously. But I think that this event today may change the dynamic a little bit in Europe.

A: Yeah. And now with that base that had just been reopened since 1990, right, in Saudi Arabia, it’s just showing the United States is certainly putting up a fight here. I’m hoping they get some help.

B: They may. And obviously they are saying that if you continue to test us, we will do something. The issue here is you don't want it to go out of control. So, they have been trying to tamper back with sanctions and small actions, but if these boats attack, something tells me, there will be a forceful response.

A: Alright, Bret Baier, thank you very much. We'll watch you on Special Report tonight, shall we?

B: Thanks, Julie.

Iran denies involvement in drone attacks on Saudi oil facilities

Sep 15, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1km72ALhoA4&t=1s&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: Back to our top story: Iran says that they are not responsible for this weekend's massive drone attacks on two Saudi Arabia oil facilities. This, after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo directly blamed Iran. For more on this, we're going to bring in Hudson Institute Senior Fellow and former intelligence officer, Michael Pregent. Michael, Secretary of State, some people have been very critical of him, coming out and saying this early on that Iran is responsible for this, but you believe he's spot on. Why?

B: I believe he's spot on because it is the Islamic Republic that provided the training, the lethal aid and the capability to not only Iraqi militias but also to Houthis. I believe Iran without a doubt is responsible for this attack through, again, providing lethal aid and training these proxies on how to do exactly this.

A: And so what are, what are you basing this off of? I know you can't give us too much information, but can you help us understand what kind of evidence the Secretary of State might be looking at when he makes this kind of determination?

B: Well, if we look at the last drone attack that happened on a Saudi pipeline, it turns out that it came from southern Iraq, it was a militia [...]. And Qasem Soleimani, the leader of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, was able to get the Houthis to take credit for, but it was launched from southern Iraq. And this capability, they have a drone that can go about 600 miles, that can drop munitions, and they've had several successful attacks. But Yemeni-Houthi controlled areas of Yemen are just outside of the range of this attack, so that puts it in southern Iraq just based off the range of this attack and their capability.

A: You think the drones had to launch, to originate from southern Iraq in order to get there?

B: Most likely, just based on the range. 600 miles is a long way to go, and further you have to go, the less accurate you will be, and these were very accurate strikes on this Aramco facility.

A: What do you make of the sophistication of this attack? Ten drones travelling this far, to be able to avoid detection and actually effectively hit its targets, what does this signal to you?

B: Well, they know how to get advantage of Saudi Arabia's air defense systems, they can fly under the radar, they can put a capability on that the patriots are not set up for.

A: And we knew that they had these drones, but this is the first time that they've actually deployed them at this kind of scale, right?

B: Well, the second time at this kind of scale. And now, the first one came from southern Iraq. They've been able to launch drone attacks, but they hadn't been successful on southern Arabia from Yemen. But the successful attacks against an oil pipeline, oil pipelines in this Aramco facility are from southern Iraq – it looks that way just based off the ranges. And it's definitely Iran that's responsible for this, not without a doubt, the Islamic Republic, the IRGC is responsible for this.

A: So, you know, a lot of people are wondering why now. We had this democratic congresswoman on, Katie Hill, earlier in the show and she said it just doesn't make sense because president Trump, and the Trump administration, is dangling the possibility of meeting with the Iranian president Rouhani at the UN general assembly later this week, so she's wondering why now?

B: Well, why now? Remember, prime minister Abe was sitting with the supreme leader when, or with Rouhani, when the IRGC attacked a Japanese oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz – that's why. It also will allow Rouhani not to have that handshake in New York. They want to embarrass the relationship. Remember, it was the IRGC that seized 12 US sailors on the eve of ratification of the Iran deal in January of 2016. And the same question was asked, why would they do that? Would they do it to derail – there's a hard-line group within the IRGC that does not want to see any rapprochement with the US, and they tend to do these things. And it's also embarrassing. Look at what Zarif did to Macron before lining at the G7. Macron tries to set up this back-channel meeting and before Zarif lands, he says ballistic missiles are off the table, we're not going to talk about regional behavior, we're not going to talk about ending sunset clauses. This is just what Iran does.

A: So how do you see this playing out? You have senator Lindsay Graham calling for possibly a retaliatory attack on Iranian oil refineries, the type of attack that would, "break the regime's back." You think that's possible? That's really potentially in the pipeline?

B: That's something President Reagan did back then. But I think as we look at the intelligence over the next week, it basically narrows where this attack came from, we're going to be able to put pressure on the government in Iraq, on Baghdad, on Tehran. And you have Kuwaiti media, eyewitnesses saying that the attack came from the north and flew over Kuwaiti air space into Saudi Arabia, and that's crucial because it's actually uniting – UAE's kind of stayed a little bit away from Saudi Arabia, and this is kind of bringing them down into the fold. This is a brazen attack on a US ally from a dedicated enemy. And I know everybody talks about Saudi Arabia and Iran, one's a necessary ally, one's a dedicated enemy. And this attack was meant to embarrass the Kingdom and also embarrass the US strategy in the region.

A: You say it's a brazen attack, but as somebody who has followed this part of the world for so long, were you surprised?

B: No, I'm not surprised, I want to be surprised. But if you hear from a lot of the – I call them cheerleaders on Iraq – they're surprised that Iraq has gotten this bad to the point where Israel is conducting airstrikes on Iraqi militias in Iraq, and Iraqi people aren't protesting. You know, analysts on Iraq and Iran are surprised by this, but they shouldn't be, this is exactly what the Islamic Republic does.

A: Alright, Michael Pregent, thanks so much for coming in and sharing your insights, we really appreciate it.

Secretary Perry on Saudi oil attacks: Iran will have to pay a price

Sep 24, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8MrVOCaEPo&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: all right, well, more fallout from the attacks on Saudi oil facilities as France and Germany and Great Britain now say that they believe Iran was behind those drone strikes. In the meantime, the Kingdom has now restored more than 75% of its overall crude output. Joining us now energy secretary and former Texas governor Rick Perry. Secretary, good morning to you and thank you very much for joining us live in studio this morning, great to have you here. Alright so I was pulling up the numbers. Oil did make a move on all this, you know, that production coming offline sends prices up, but not as it once did. It didn't have as much of an impact because we've become so energy independent. But still on the day it's up slightly on the month of 6% and our oil prices are up 29% so far this year.

B: yeah, a lot going on out there. You know, this attack is clearly caused some discombobulation in the market. Nobody knew exactly how much damage was done. I think that's what the market was responding to. What we're finding is it wasn't quite as dastardly as initially was concerned by the market. And so, you saw the market make some corrections, it's headed back up a little bit. But again, the key here from the United States, and I think our allies standpoint, is that Iran cannot be allowed to get by with this type of activity. You need a coalition effort. Now, you know, the UK and the French coming on with some of our other allies and they're going to be sending a clear message today, I know the president's going to be stronger than garlic when it comes to the message.

A: What can you tell us about what we're about to hear from the president.

B: I think he's going to speak very bluntly to the Iranian leadership that this is activities, this is the type of... if you're going to be a part of the community in this world, you cannot attack your neighbors. It's just unacceptable. And just because you have been sanctioned economically gives you no right to respond in this way. So, I think the message is going to be strong, it's going to be powerful, that Iran is going to have to pay a price and could pay a very dear price economically. I mean, look, president stated that he's not interested in going to war with these people. But there are plenty of folks in the region whose livelihood and whose futures are at stake here, whether it's Israel, whether it's Saudi Arabia, other of our allies in that region that have some options that could up to and include kinetic responses.

A: okay. so okay, first start with the response from the United States when it comes to Iran and how far this administration is willing to go. What were you referring to when you said kinetic responses? I thought at first you were talking about the economy specifically in the sanctions.

B: I was, and I think that is where we would like to have this address where the Iranian... the Iranian people are the ones that are being hurt here. These leaders over there, they're not suffering the way the Iranian people are, but these sanctions are clearly being put in place to send a message to the leadership of Iran, 'we will continue to squeeze you'.

A: Iran makes the case, Mr. secretary, that those sanctions primarily hurt the Iranian people and not the leadership.

B: they do and that is how change occurs. The Iranian people at some point in time they'll have enough of this and they will ask for and require regime change. I don't have a problem with that in the world. I don't think the administration does either.

A: Put this all in perspective and in context when it comes to the global energy community. Because obviously we did see this reaction play out in markets and then we saw the quick response to have so much of that oil production come back online when it came to Saudi Arabia. So, give us some context.

B: Part of that is because the world has changed over the last decade the United States has become the number one oil and gas producing country in the world. As we build out our infrastructure, we go forward with being able to even deliver more product to the market. These events will cause less and less disruption of the energy supply in the world. So, and we've got a Strategic Petroleum Reserve with almost 670 million barrels at hand. The Saudis 188 million barrels of reserve that they have. And in the International Energy Agency membership out there, we have somewhere 1.5 billion barrels of oil and reserves. So, these events where the Iranians think that, you know, 'we can go in and attack an old facility and Saudi and somehow know that that's going to cause great disruption'. Well, we've seen that that's not the case. It is cause for concern, no doubt about that. But this isn't 2007. This is 12 years later, and these types of attacks are going to have less and less impact on the global market.

A: Very interesting ahead of the president's speech this morning at the UN General Assembly. Secretary Perry, thank you for being here. Appreciate that. Thank you.

Pompeo signals American support of Iran protesters

Nov 27, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fBf6SNLvA4&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: Secretary Pompeo signing 20,000 pieces of digital evidence, he says, shows the Irani regime's abuses of street protesters and others, saying he and the President are following the deadly protests very closely. Let's bring in Fox News Senior Strategic Analyst General Jack Keane. Good to have you with us, sir.

B: Good to see you, Shannon.

A: What do you make of the situation that you and I have talked about, like this is so broad spread, so widespread, the economy is being hit. Their people are taking to the streets, I mean it's unlike anything we've seen before.

B: In 40 years there's never been anything like this. There have been demonstrations before 2009 over election fraud in the capital. Some demonstrations a couple of years ago to do the economic situation, but this is so widespread, as indicated in the introduction, 170 cities and towns. Virtually, the economy has tanked and it's squeezing the quality of life of everybody but the elites. Everyone is suffering because of it. You know, food prices, commodity prices are just off the charts, high unemployment. So that's why this is taking place. And it would be fine if the Iranians did more than just dominate and control. They do it at the expense of the people. They're not effective government, they're not providing effective services and they've squandered the money that the Obama administration gave, \$130 billion, and did it on foreign wars. So, the people are holding him accountable for this and also we're having similar demonstrations in the Iranian-backed regime in Lebanon and the Iraqi Shias in Iraq, which is stunning as hundreds of 1000s of people in Iraq demonstrates against Iran because of the influence in Iraq and the government is not effective and not helping the people. So, it's a common theme and I believe this regime is beginning to show signs of coming apart as a result of it. Now what will they do? They'll use force to clear the streets and then we've already seen evidence of that. This demonstration will not overthrow the regime, they will fight to the very end before that would happen. They're going to do one of two things: they're going to escalate and conduct another military operation, which I think is most likely to disrupt the flow of oil in the middle east and try to affect the world economy and maybe push it into a world recession is what they're thinking, or they'll come to the negotiating table, but I don't think they're ready for that. I think we're going to see their playbook and a little bit more violence. I don't believe they'll go after a US target yet; I think the additional troops that we put into the area have deterred them, but it doesn't mean they would not attack American troops at some point.

A: Given the option. Okay, so this is what one top Iranian commander says. Because the Iranians are saying the US and other western forces are backing and fomenting this whole thing, this is what the top Iranian commander says:

C: we will not leave any move unanswered. We will not remain indebted to any superpower and we'll settle scores with all of them. Just wait.

A: So, it's 'just wait'. They're going to sell the scores and destroy those who would, you know, cause or support these issues.

B: This is typical Iranian rhetoric. They bring out one of their top thug and killer, that's who this guy is along with Qasem Soleimani, and they blame Americans, they blame Zionists, and they blame the regional Arabs for all of these problems. That has been a parallel line ever since they took over in 1980. And I think it's somewhat hollow: they do not want to war with the United States – that is the end of their regime. The same problem, you know, the north Koreans have, but they truly want to put pressure on the Trump administration to slow down the sanctions and eventually to stop them – that is what creating their chaos is about, what disrupting the oil, that is what the military operations are about, that's what they're sabotaging about. But Shannon, none of that has worked. All of that has failed. So, we'll

see what they're going to do next. I think it's wonderful to see the administration stand up, call these thugs and killers out for who they really are and back the Iranian people.

A: quickly, do you think there's actually this moment in history we might witness where there is actually the chance for true regime change?

B: I don't think this could produce it because the Iranians have the guns and the people don't, and they'd kill as many of them as they could before they're going to give that regime up. I don't see that and it's not a goal of the administration's either. I think they're very realistic in looking at this regime. But it doesn't mean we can't change this regime's behavior, and that's what the sanctions is all about and I think there is a real opportunity out there to do that.

A: well, and the messaging directly to the Iranian people is so important in this, too. General, thank you for stopping and have a great Thanksgiving.

B: Yeah, happy Thanksgiving to you and all your great crew here.

Trump blames Iran for US Embassy attack in Iraq, vows to hold regime 'fully responsible'

Dec 31, 2019

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sf-DXKuJAig&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: Fox News Alert: now from Baghdad where Iran-backed militia supporters have attacked the US Embassy in the Iraqi capital. Protesters seen there smashing the main gate and storming inside with the sounds of gunfire and flame scene rising from inside the compound. President Trump now calling on Iraqi forces to protect the American Embassy. Good morning, everyone. I'm Sandra Smith.

B: Good morning, Sandra. Good morning, everyone. I'm Eric Shawn. In for Bill Hemmer this morning. That violence erupting in Baghdad two days after those US airstrikes against Iranian-backed militias in Iraq and Syria. That in retaliation for those rocket attacks that killed an American contractor and wounded four of our soldiers in northern Iraq.

A: Rich Edson live at the State Department with what we are learning now. Rich, good morning.

C: Good morning, Sandra. And officials at the US Embassy in Baghdad say there is no evacuation despite reported claims from Iraqi officials. But there are thousands of protesters there. They crowded, carrying flags, many from Iran-backed militias into Baghdad's heavily guarded green zone where the US has its largest diplomatic facility in the world. The Associated Press reports they smashed a main door and set fire to a reception area. The protests began after prayer services for the two dozen Iran-backed militia fighters killed in US airstrikes over the weekend. President Trump has tweeted,

T: Iran killed an American contractor wounding many. We strongly responded and always will. Now Iran is orchestrating an attack on the US Embassy in Iraq. They will be held fully responsible. In addition, we expect Iraq to use its forces to protect the Embassy, and so notified!

The American airstrikes in Syria and Iraq over the weekend struck Kata'ib Hezbollah, it's an Iranian-backed militia. The Trump administration says Kata'ib Hezbollah is responsible for a missile attack Friday on an Iraqi military base that killed an American contractor. Senior State Department officials say after so many attacks from Iran-backed fighters and their significant presence in Iraq, the United States had to respond in a way Iran understands that's with airstrikes. The Iraqi government caught here between American and Iranian influence protested the American airstrikes as a violation of Iraqi sovereignty and warned they would invite trouble just hours before these protests began. And members of Congress are beginning to react to all this Senator Marco Rubio says the Iraqi Government is the recipient of billions of dollars of US aid and American military assistance, and they should do their job which is to protect all diplomatic facilities. Sandra, Eric, back to you.

A: All right, a lot more information coming on in on that, we'll bring that to...

Report: Top Iranian general killed in US air strike on Baghdad

Jan 3, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sthVmGSFwhQ&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: We have an unexpected Fox News alert for you, something has just happened in Iraq. The situation there heating up very quickly without any debate here in Washington. Iraqi television has just confirmed that Qasem Soleimani, former general in Iran's Revolutionary Guard and a commander of the Quds force, has been killed in a rocket attack, apparently initiated by the United States, near the Baghdad airport along with the top official in the Iraqi Shiite militia. Now, what were they doing in Iraq? Unclear. But as death comes several days after tensions kind of came out into the open in that country last week, if you've been following this you know, an American civilian contractor was killed by militants in Iraq. The US government blamed that attack on Iran, and it retaliated with strikes. In response protesters blockaded the US embassy in Baghdad. It's basically where we were when the show started tonight. Defense Secretary Mark Esper warned that the United States is prepared to launch additional pre-emptive military strikes against Iranian interests in the region which apparently are what we are seeing right now. Now, again there's been virtually no debate or even discussion about this, but America appears to be lumbering toward a new Middle East war and we have to say it's one that official Washington has wanted for decades. For example, disgraced national security adviser John Bolton has made it his life's mission to start a war with Iran and tonight Bolton may be finally getting his wish. Should you be happy about that? That's the question. Well, the last time we took John Bolton's advice in the region Iran became far more powerful than it was before, – before we took John Bolton's advice. Why? Because things are never quite as simple as they claim they are in Washington. In this case the very people demanding action against Iran tonight, the ones telling you the Persian menace is the greatest threat we face are the very same ones demanding that you ignore the invasion of America now in progress from the south. The millions, the 10s of millions of foreign nationals living among us illegally, the torrent more significantly of Mexican narcotics that has killed and disabled entire generations of Americans. Nobody cares, in case you haven't noticed. Pay no attention to all of that. These very same people tell us the real threat is Iran. Well, they're liars and they don't care about you, they don't care about your kids. They're reckless and incompetent and you should keep all of that in mind as war with Iran looms closer tonight. Kurt Mills is the senior writer at the *American Conservative*. He joins us now. So, Kurt, this is unfolding even as we speak. Where could it go from here?

B: Well, like you said, if you liked the Iraq War, Tucker, we're back with the sequel – the Iran War. I would say the deep concern is, look, a general in the Iranian forces being assassinated is not necessarily something to mourn or begrudge the US getting involved in. The question is though is this a Franz Ferdinand moment? Is this a situation where a great power gets involved with the middle tier power and gets the world into a world war? Iran, I think, is a problem for the US and its allies in the region but it is not an existential threat like China or Russia. China or Russia, particularly China, would love to see another decade or two of Americans my age dying in the sand for no particular purpose.

A: Well, that's exactly it. It's not that anyone, I think, in the United States has particular affection for Iran or trusts its government, much less the Revolutionary Guard of the Quds forces, of course not. But it's the intemperance with which the foreign policy establishment in Washington describes the threat that I think makes sensible people nervous that 'Iran is the greatest threat we face', I mean it's so prima facia absurd that it makes you wonder what their actual agenda is.

B: It's a joke. It's a joke. I mean I think the real question is, why do we still have troops there? So, you see the Baghdad embassy protests, and to be clear, this is not just an embassy, this is a fortress. It's been a fortress since we took out Saddam in 2003 and American troops there, if we're not going to re-annex

the country, are effectively hostages. They're just sent there. So, the president, who I think rightfully ran in 2016 against the Bush legacy, the question is does he want to re-invade Iraq? I understand there are people in his cabinet that are selling him that Iran is not Iraq. But the fact of the matter is, Iran is quite similar to Iraq. We're talking about Iraq – 16 years later it's still Iraq. In order to counter Iran, I think the choice is clear, the President should contain Iranian influence in the region, which should avoid a hot war which we are barreling towards at all costs.

A: So, my sense of it is the president doesn't seek war and he's wary of it, particularly in an election year, but I think he was elected on the promise that he would avoid wars, except when absolutely necessary. But there are a lot of people around him, and certainly in the city of Washington, who've been preparing for this, agitating for Bolton's one of many for an awfully long time and you wonder if it's possible that he might be outmaneuvered by them and that we might find ourselves moving toward war despite what the president wants.

B: Right so I think the president of the United States, his convictions on this matter are sincere, but I think it's relevant, particularly extremely relevant, in matters of war and peace, of life and death, who he stabbed his administration with. I know Bolton is a bugbear for you, but in some ways Bolton, because he's so flamboyant and so infamous and notorious, he actually was a bit of a problem for the Iran Hawk crusade. More middleweight, more circumspect managers like Robert C. O'Brien, Bolton's successor, might actually be more effective at Trojan horsing, what I think would be a tragedy in the Middle East. Iran is not Iraq, it's twice as big, it'd be twice as bad were we weaker than we were 16 years ago. If president George W. Bush struggled to win re-election in 2004, if Trump does this – he's cooked.

A: I think that's right. Kurt Mills, great to see you tonight, thank you for that.

Trump offers peace to Iranian people hours after Iran strikes US military bases

Jan 10, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpxqkWjbQ8E&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: President Trump's speech today was not just a message to the leaders of Iran, but he also at times spoke directly to the people of Iran as well. Watch this.

T: To the people and leaders of Iran. We want you to have a future, and a great future, one that you deserve. One of prosperity at home and harmony with the nations of the world. The United States is ready to embrace peace with all who seek it.

A: Here now, Nazee Moinian, an Iranian scholar. She was born in Iran and moved to this country when she was 16, and she's a political consultant on Iran as well. Also, Lara Logan, host of *Lara Logan Has No Agenda* on Fox Nation. She has reported of course extensively on the wars in the Middle East. Great to have both of you with us tonight. It is so important that we talk, and I know this is very important to you Nazee as an Iranian American that we talk about the people of Iran separate from the leadership of Iran. How do the people of Iran received that message today from the President?

B: So that's to me the most paramount question right now. It's too bad that many in this country and abroad in the Western media think that this regime speaks for its people. In fact, it doesn't. And the case in point is that Soleimani was a very polarizing figure. Almost as many Iranians are celebrating his death, others mourning his death. And we should not be fooled by the throngs of people that you see in the streets of Iran, that we are told to get out and beat their chest, and cry, and show solidarity. That's not the true story.

A: You know, we were talking about how it's the sort of thing how you sometimes see in the streets of North Korea, dear leader, and everyone is sort of told to cry. You, I know, I see, that that what happened, the kids were told that they couldn't, you know, go to school, get out there and do your thing.

B: That's unfortunately the sad story by Iran. This regime tells the Iranian people how to dress, women have to cover up, men are not allowed to be outlandish in their dress, in their outfit; what to think, what to read. They're not allowed to celebrate, and many of their Persian New Year customs are banned or weren't banned before. So, this is a regime that wants to dictate. And we here in Western media do not give enough voice and face to the opposition. The true Iranians, what do they want, – they remember where they came from and they know what they are capable of doing and going, and this regime does not speaking for them.

A: You talked about and the President talked about the deep culture of the Persian culture in Iran. Lara, you spent a lot of time today speaking to people on the ground there. What are they telling you?

C: One of the things that Iranians have said to me over and over again is that the funeral of Ruhollah Khomeini was a theatre, a show, put out on the Western media and they're, sort of, disgusted at how the Western media has treated a man that they see as a monster, who was responsible, who was the main instrument, the IRGC was the main instrument of suppression and oppression on the streets of Iran. And so people there have lived with this for a long time, and if you remember, the Green Movement back in 2007 was brutally suppressed, right? There were hundreds of Iranians who were murdered then. Then again in 2017, that uprising was suppressed. And then in November, you know, a third uprising where Iranian people, they were shot in the streets, their bodies turned up in rivers, and on the streets many of them had their hands tied behind their backs, sacks over their heads, some had been tortured and what's most interesting to me, Martha, is that, I have known many of these opposition leaders and opposition figures for, like, 15-20 years now, right. I've known them through all of these protests, these are not short-term relationships, there's not like things that are inconsistent with this, and what they remind me of is the 1998 massacre in Iran, where Iran went after the MEK, the main opposition group. And they massacred 30 thousand political prisoners in Iran over the summer of 1998. Many of the protesters who are on the streets of Tehran and in 191 Iranian cities in November. Where the children of those people who were murdered back then; and the Justice Minister of Iran today is one of the people who was involved in that massacre. So, what one of the opposition leaders said to me is, this is the conscience of the nation coming back to haunt these murderers. And the message that they received from President Trump's statement today, according to them, is that this is a moment, this is what he said to the people of Iran, is that your oppressors will now be held accountable and that that for them is a moment for opportunity. Are they mobilizing? They say yes, they have resistance units across the country, it's impossible to verify that, but certainly they do see this as a moment for opportunity because, as Khomeini said, Soleimani was, what he called the soul of the regime, right, the de facto or number two.

A: So, Nazee, you and I were talking before for the podcast, and we talked about the sanctions and the President ramped up the sanctions today, and I ask you do the Iranian people, do they blame the United States for everything that they can't do, everything they don't have. I understand, you can't use a credit card, it's very stifling. Do they blame the US?

B: So in fact they're not. And that's the irony of all this, the blustery regime rhetoric deems America. The Iranians are natural allies of the Americans, this is a sophisticated, educated population, they look to the west, they see all the youth, the same education, even sometimes not as educated as the Iranian counterparts. And they have the lifestyle, they can afford an apartment, they can get married, they can move on. And the Iranian counterparts are basically repressed, they don't have an outlet for their dissenting voice, they don't have a hope for the future, and it stands in stark contrast to Obama where he waited 11 days, 11 crucial days, before he offered support in 2009 uprising to Tehranian people. And I was telling you before in the podcast beforehand that the chants on the streets of Iran, out of the 31 provinces, 29 of them erupted in protest. They're not "death to America". They're holding the regime accountable for their misery, they're saying they're not Syria, not Lebanon, "my life is only for Iran". So they know that the regime elite is cracking down on them, they know that this is not the regime that they bargained for, then the revolution, and they want, as Lara said very aptly, they want the regime to be held accountable.

A: We will see. Alright, that's the big question. You got to ask every taxicab, you know, is this it, is it possible that the regime could fall this time and, Lara, you called it a moment, and that's the hope here is that potentially some of this will crack and we will see. Lara, thank you very much, Lara Logan. Nazeer, so good to see you, Nazeer Moinian. Great to have you with us tonight.

Gutfeld on the media and Democratic response to Iran

Jan 10, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogzbR6hW-14&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: So, as the post-game analysis of Operation Desert Storm continues, we realize that for Trump's critics, peace means defeat. I mean, if you listen to the media right now, it's like we killed Lady Di, or Elvis.

B: When Princess Diana died, for example, there was a huge emotional outpouring, these kinds of, – Elvis Presley in our culture, – it turns out that this general killed was a beloved hero of the Iranian people to the point, – well look at the people we're getting pictures of now, these enormous crowds coming out. There's no American emotion in this case, but there's a hell of a lot of emotion on the other side.

A: I'm almost impressed by his stupidity. Chris, you've been around, Iran can form a crowd over a sneeze, and they'll shout 'death to America' over anything, including when HBO cancelled *Sex in the City*. And then the idea that killing bad guys makes them martyrs – I guess we better not kill any bad guys then, with that logic, we should have stayed out of WW2, left bin Laden and Al Baghdadi alone and free everyone from death row. But in the media's world Trump is Hitler, and a terrorist is Martin Luther King. Yeah, *New York Times* hack actually compared Soleimani to him.

C: What you're describing feels like the kind of unified national outpouring that is reserved for a small handful of figures in any country, right? I mean, a beloved president, a civil rights leader, like Martin Luther King

A: What an ass. But Trump once again has driven critics to defend the indefensible. Remember when they bashed Trump for being mean to MS-13? Now he's got *The View* applauding white racist because they agree with the view.

(What's some good news? This is a tiny thing that I noticed. I remember Richard Spencer, he's basically the organizer of Unite the Right, the white nationalist group that was marching in Charlottesville, it was all in for Trump. Not anymore. Here's his quote. He tweeted last night, "I deeply regret voting for and promoting Donald Trump in 2016". Oh, my gosh, wow. That's great. That's interesting."

A: She almost said that's good news and then she caught herself. But as the idiots squawk, Trump rolls on, handing out great ideas like gift baskets.

T: I spoke to Secretary General yesterday and we had a great conversation. He was very, – I think he was actually excited by it. And I actually had a name. NATO, right? And then you have ME, – Middle East. You'll call it: NATO ME. I said, what a beautiful name NATO ME. I'm good at names.

A: That is, we don't deserve him. Meanwhile, Mayor Pete tweets that maybe we should share the blame for that downed plane, even though it was Iran who did the shooting, and that guy is running for president. So, Trump once again foils his critics, not just by being right, but letting them be so wrong. Check out this CNN interview.

CNN: The American government, the American president made a serious miscalculation. They made a serious mistake, by assassinating, by taking this terrorist action against commander Soleimani and I'm sure that they regret what they've done.

A: Does that lady look familiar to you?

S: You said at the press conference the other day, you said yourself that if there was an attack on this embassy, that you would destroy the hostages? Could you really do that?

I: Yes, we mean it.

S: Could you personally lift up a gun, put it to the head of one of these people and kill him?

I: Yes, when I have seen a gun being lifted up, an American machine gun being lifted up and killing my sisters and brothers in the streets. Of course, oppression, and tyranny must be destroyed.

A: You know, I'm thinking maybe don't get an opinion on America from someone who threatened to kill American hostages. But I guess the network's got to find one person outside their own newsroom, who's mad that Soleimani is dead. And that's hard because that one person – Soleimani – is dead.

A: So, my thought, I want to go to you first about the plane, we're learning that it was probably or likely shot down by Iran. But you had Pete Buttigieg tweeting, I think we have the tweet that, you know, it's tit for tat between military powers that led to this, essentially spreading the blame.

D: I mean, this suggestion that there's blame from the United States or from this decision by President Trump, for the 176 individuals who perished in this plane crash, I think is really a remarkable, remarkable statement on behalf of someone who's running for president of the United States. To not understand that this missile from what we're learning was sent up by Iranians, it was Russian made. It was aimed in their own effort to retaliate, which they said they wanted to do, but to not go a step further back to talk about the killing of an American contractor, to talk about the overrun or the attempted overrun of a US Embassy sovereign territory in Iraq, that was built by the United States. I just think it's an irresponsible statement by a presidential candidate.

A: Yeah. I don't think that helped him. Lorax, what do you make of the War Powers Act that they're voting on?

E: Yeah, I think it's a complicated matter. But I think there's two camps. Mike Lee is saying, 'look, I went in there yesterday to question the generals and the briefers about – not the attack, but authorization'. When do you think you need to come back to Congress to declare war? He agrees with the killing of Soleimani, he believed that the President has power. As a matter of fact, if you don't believe it, go back to the documents that Congress signed back in 2002, that gave the president the call to make this happen. And he only has to notify them before, or he has 48 hours to notify Congress then. So that is a wash. We don't even have to debate this. What Mike Lee is saying is that there have been moments where the intelligence community has misled, there's been moments where the military has misled, we just saw reports on Afghanistan. And we need to know all of the raw intelligence before we decide to go to war. And Congress does have the right to do that. But Democrats are using Mike Lee to say, 'the president should have never killed Soleimani'. And that's not what he's saying.

F: Well, and the resolutions, specifically that the House is working is really non-binding. It's more of a statement than anything that the President is going to be beholden to. But I want to go back to the media for a minute, and democrats, and Pete Buttigieg. They're making this false moral equivalency between the Iranian regime and President Donald Trump, aka America, and what we're doing to protect Americans in the Middle East. For him to say that we had just as much responsibility for this plane shoot-down, as the Iranians did, completely eliminates any kind of responsibility for them. They are hiding the black boxes; they don't want us to find out what happened. And also it's really interesting to see the media constantly say that the President is a bigot, the president is anti-gay, the President is this or now they are openly defending and equating people like Soleimani to someone like Martin Luther King, Jr., or princess Di, when they stone women, they hang gays off of cranes and just justified it just the other day; they kill innocent protesters in the streets for daring to speak out and not show up to Soleimani's funeral. So, they need to pick a side here. You can't just be against this kind of behavior

when you think it's coming from President Trump, which it never is, and then turn around and defend something like the Iranian regime.

G: This is a stupid war.

A: It's not a war!

G: This is a stupid war and the President's friends have had the guts to tell him killing Soleimani at this time was a terrible idea. As I told [...], as I said to Martha the other day, a terrible idea brilliantly executed. Why now? What does America win? Why are we picking this fight, for what? We killed General Grant the general Patton, we get General Petraeus, we assassinated him and the third... for what why did we do that exactly. Why did we do that? To protect the embassy?

D: You're really equating him to Patton?

G: I certainly am. Listen, I got news for you. They say he killed 600 Americans. The last time I counted, there were 600,000 Iraqis who've been killed. I'm sick of this war since 2003 for false pretenses and now we're picking a fight with the other people, with Iran. What do our GIs get for this fight?

A: You're conflating two things. I agree with you about the Iraq war, and I'm hoping that this is a direction...

G: And what about Afghanistan. At what point do we say enough already? At what point do journalist stop aiding and abetting?

A: I agree with you on that. But this is different. This is not about war. You're in a prison of two ideas: war, no war. No, this was an executive action to take out somebody that's been killing Americans.

G: We have already retaliated. This started when the militia killed in American contract that wounded several others. That's on the 27th of December more or less. You're missing a key thing that happened. They killed the American contractor, wounded the others. We had a massive retaliation against the same militia in Syria and in Iraq. They killed the contractor, we killed 25 Iraqis, then they had the demonstration in the uprising, the siege of the embassy. This was action-reaction, action-reaction. What about the 25 dead Iraqis?

F: We took off the head of the snake of the largest terror organization in the world.

A: But that's the middle east right now. You kill somebody bad, a new one comes along but we killed somebody bad.

Rep. Crenshaw on Iran: I'm tired of Dems using 'false talking points'

Jan 11, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ESrzo4ZD3qI&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: We begin tonight with Democrats, including Elisabeth Warren saying that the strike on Soleimani had little to do with national security and everything to do with impeachment. Watch.

Warren: We've known about this for years. Why not a month ago, why not a month from now? One of the questions I raised just right after this came out, does this have anything to do with the fact that Donald Trump is right on the eve of an impeachment hearing?

A: Some democrats blamed President Trump's decision to kill Soleimani for the crash of the Ukrainian airplane that world officials increasingly believe was taken down by an Iranian missile. Watch.

C: This is yet another example of collateral damage from the actions that have been taken in provocative way by the President of the United States.

D: This is one of these consequences of this escalation and this state of war that we are in.

A: We begin tonight with the Republican Congressman Dan Crenshaw from Texas, he's a former Navy seal who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and he sits on the House Homeland Security Committee. Thank you for being here. Let me go backwards here with some of the points that we just made, starting with Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard who says, you know, this is the collateral damage of the state of war that we are in. What do you say to that?

B: That doesn't mean anything. What does she mean by that? State of war that we're in? We're not at war with Iran, we're not. The Democrats know that, but they keep using this strawman argument, like "don't send us to war". We're not going to war. This President has no intention of going to war. There isn't this false choice between doing nothing and letting ourselves get punched in the face, letting our American citizens die, letting our embassies get attacked and going to full-scale war. There's options in between, like taking out the guy who's responsible for that attack and re-establishing our deterrence. I'm so tired of these false talking points and the sloganeering that is absolutely meaningless, and she knows it, that what's so frustrating.

A: What about those, though, who say, look it's really too soon to say what happens next, what other attacks could happen and where we really are in this whole thing.

B: Yeah, that's fair, I mean we should never be overly optimistic. But with all the facts that we have now, it does appear like we've re-established deterrence in a pretty effective way. We forced the Iranians to recalculate; we've drawn very clear red lines; they're no longer escalating rapidly in violence. You know, I saw that clip from Elisabeth Warren about "why now?" OK, Elisabeth Warren, I've got an answer for you, the reason why now is because Soleimani just orchestrated an attack on our embassy, killed an American citizen and we had very good intel from the CIA, from the DNI, from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, they said it was some of the best intel they had ever seen, that there was an imminent attack coming within days. So, Elisabeth Warren, that is why.

A: So, I was going to ask you the answer to that. So, I'm glad you brought that up. In terms of Jackie Speier's, congresswoman Speier, she suggests that the action that the President took is more the reason for the tragic crash of this jet, 176 people killed. More so than the Iranian missile, that the decision was made to send that Iranian missile or perhaps it was a system that was just seeking everything that was incoming.

B: That's such a disgusting and deplorable accusation. I'm reluctant to even address it. But we have to because, you know, they keep saying it. Pete Buttigieg, the presidential candidate, said something similar, the implication was similar. But somehow this is our fault? So, this relies on a false premise that history begins with Donald Trump's actions, the democrats often believe this. So, they don't want to believe that Iran has this long history of escalations, right, they want to believe that Trump's started this fight. They don't want to look back in history since 1979, they don't want to look, since the JCPOA was signed, since they tested multiple nuclear capable missiles, since they quadrupled funding the Hezbollah, since they more than doubled their own funding to the IRGC, since they instigated multiple civil wars, and the list goes on and again, they killed an American citizen, took down the US drone, boarded US Navy vessels, and orchestrated an attack against our embassy. They want to ignore all that, and when we finally react, when we finally say enough is enough, we're a superpower, we're the United States of America, we will not let this stand, the Democrats wring their hands and look to blame the United States. When the Iranians make a very tragic mistake and it is extremely tragic – it really is that they downed their own airliner and we know why it happened, but to blame us for that is so absurd and, frankly, immoral and they know it. To tell you what, Martha, I'm absolutely sick of this, we shouldn't be this way. We should be unified. Every member of Congress should be calling free Iran, that the Iranian people are more like us than you realize, their regime is so evil, but these people want freedom. 1500 of them gave their lives fighting that regime not too long ago. They are unified against the United States. They are more emboldened now against their regime and they will be even more emboldened if we

would actually act like the freedom-loving people that I know we are and support them with moral support.

A: Congressman Dan Crenshaw, thank you very much for being here tonight. Good to have with us, sir.

Iran admits its military shot down Ukrainian jetliner

Jan 11, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJJAgMEm-cE&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: We are back with the Fox News Alert. Iranian officials admit the military unintentionally shot down the Ukrainian passenger jet liner. Leaving 176 people dead. A military statement said the plane was mistaken for a “hostile target”. Our next guest spent his entire career on the front lines, first as an air force combat pilot in Eastern Ukraine, Afghanistan and Iraq, and now is a war correspondent imbedded with Ukraine’s army. Nolan Peterson is the author of *Why Soldiers Miss War*, and he joins us now from Ukraine. Nolan, thank you for joining us this morning. When it comes to this incident, a civilian Ukrainian jet liner shot down in Iran, they’re now admitting it they didn’t want to, what do you think happened here?

B: Well, I think, the bottom-line takeaway for me is that this whole tragedy has been a real embarrassment for Iran. The country has shown that it’s proficient at raging proxy wars and so-called grey zone warfare. But this incident with the Ukraine airliner shows to me that Iran’s conventional military is not well-trained. The Iranian ground crew that was operating the Russian-made Tor missile, which US intelligence suggests, was behind the Ukrainian airliner’s shooting down. Those Iranian operators should have been able to tell from their radar data that they were looking at a civilian airliner. The Boeing 737, which the Ukrainian jet was, typically climbs at a speed of about 250 knots and a rate of climb of about 2500 feet per minute, and that’s not a very aggressive behavior by an aircraft. So, for the Iranian radar operators behind that missile system, it should have been very obvious to them, if they were well-trained, that they were looking at a civilian jet. Also, the modern version of this Russian missile, which the Iranians bought from Russia in 2005 should also be able to detect the transponder signal from an aircraft. And transponders are the radio beacons which aircraft use to identify themselves, that would have been another dead giveaway for the Iranians that they were looking at a civilian plane.

A: Nolan, so you’re saying this mistake is actually grounded in Iranian incompetence, yet a lot of people want to point at our President or the United States, the Foreign Minister saying, “this was all caused by US adventurism”. What do you say to them?

B: Yeah, to me that’s ridiculous. The only responsible party in this tragedy is Iran. Also, I have to say, as a former combat pilot and somebody who’s been up to warzones quite a bit over the course of my life, it’s just crazy to me that Iran would have left open its airspace to civilian traffic just hours the country had lobbed ballistic missiles at US troops in Iraq. The country was essentially a warzone and yet they kept allowing civilian airliners to fly. So, I think, just based on my experience as a pilot and as a war correspondent, that seems to me like the blame is squarely on Iran’s shoulders.

A: Absolutely, somebody who knows what they’re talking about. Nolan Peterson, thank you very much for that insight this morning, we needed it, appreciate it.

B: Thank you.

Trump admin voices support for anti-government protests in Iran

Jan 12, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZrueBku1Svs&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: The Trump administration pointing to the protest in Tehran as proof that the Iranian people are ready for more accountability from their government. Here to talk about this is Dr. Rebecca Grant, she's a National Security and Military advisor and President of IRS Independent Research. Dr. Grant, thanks for joining us. So, the people of Iran protesting in the streets, they are chanting "down with the dictator" not "death to America". The protestors also refuse to walk on or tramp on the American flag, or the Israeli flag. So, is this the beginning of a sea change and if it is, where is it all heading in terms of potential outcome?

B: The protest that we're seeing in Iran is mainly because Iranians are angry. They've lost 82 of their own citizens, the government covered everything up. And to my mind, the maximum pressure strategy right now includes diplomacy, it includes economic and financial sanctions, a strong military posture. But I think that these protests are sort of the fourth part of the maximum pressure strategy, and they could, hopefully, have an impact on the Ayatollah.

A: And of course, now President Trump is tweeting support for the protestors in Farsi as well as English. So, what's the world reaction to President Trump's direct message to the people of Iran, and more importantly, how will the leaders of Iran react to this direct messaging?

B: Well, in that tweet is a direct message reminding Iran that the US is watching with intelligence or surveillance. So, President Trump wants to see if the Iranian military is still in that stand down mode from last week and not escalating again to the crisis. The international reaction, we have seen Britain, France and Germany put out a fresh call to Iran to get back in compliance with the nuclear deal. So that is a very positive sign.

A: So, does the U.S. have a solid strategy concerning Iran because as you said, you know, by most accounts, people in the know, people with authority and expertise figured that Iran won't really escalate or they're going to stand down as they have now, and they don't want a war, President Trump has said he doesn't want a war. So, you know, what is the US strategy considering they'd still just have to pivot, possibly.

B: The U.S. strategy is and remains to confront Iran, keeping military pressure on, and to contain Iran. But aside to that, there is a lot going on in the background. We saw this morning that the Secretary of Treasury Steven Mnuchin said he is working with a Chinese delegation to strangle off that last little bit of oil sales, that China is still buying some oil from Iran, and they're trying to get that step down.

A: 70% of the China's oil is coming from Iran, although Secretary Mnuchin also pointed out he was on with Maria Bartiromo, he said that yeah, 70%, but it is still a small amount. So, let me go here, if the protestors are calling for regime change, is this an on-ramp for the Trump administration to negotiate a change in Iranian leadership or perhaps squeeze them out?

B: Well, I think the path that the Trump administration really wants is for Iran to come to the table and talk about amendments to the nuclear deal – no nuclear weapons, control the missiles and put an end to the terrorism. The administration has been pretty clear about not wanting regime change, meaning getting rid of the government; they want this regime to change its behavior and this is a great opportunity for Iran to do that.

A: Defense Secretary Mark Esper was on CBS Face the Nation this morning, let's listen and we'll talk about it.

C: We want to sit down and discuss without precondition a new way forward, a series of steps by which Iran becomes a more normal country.

D: That offer still stands? And if something happens to these protestors in the streets, [...].

C: That offer still stands. The president has drawn no preconditions other than say we want to meet with the Iranian government.

A: But Dr. Grant, meanwhile, the U.S. has cranked up economic sanctions. Are Iran leaders willing to return to the negotiating table or is diplomacy dead? Or at least dormant?

B: They came so close with Zarif almost ready to do it back in September. So, I think that that door is still open, as per Secretary Pompeo, the White House, they've all reconfirmed 'no preconditions', and very important, President Trump has said he would even let the Europeans give Iran some immediate cash relieve if they start negotiation. So, it is a great opportunity, clearly the whole US administration trying to point Iran to just coming to the table, that's all they want, just come to the table.

A: Meanwhile, finally, you know, Iran sponsors multiple terror groups, how might they be processing the current uprising of the Iranian people and this olive branch to get back to the negotiating table reached out by or, you know, handed over by the US?

B: Well, this is a huge question. Of course, it was the Islamic Revolutionary Guards that shot down the airliner, but we know Iran still has a lot of internal capacity to suppress protests and they have trained so many Iraqis in the paramilitary forces. So that's a question, how does the snake, the head of the snake is dead, with Soleimani gone, but how does the rest of the terror network react? We want to see Iran continue in that de-escalated stand out posture, and we really want to see them getting ready to talk as they crack under this financial pressure.

A: Talk soon, yes, or no?

B: I think soon, but soon may be a little while. I think there will be some back-channel talks fairly soon, I certainly hope so. The time is really right for them to do that and to carry out the investigation of the airliner shoot-down and the respectful return of remains, like a normal nation. This is their chance for a good offramp.

A: OK, Dr. Rebecca Grant, thank you very much.

Trump issues warning to Iran in response to possible 'sneak attack'

Apr 1, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRxFpIp6w6k&t=5s&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: President Trump saying that Iran and its proxies are planning a sneak attack against US troops in Iraq. John Roberts says that story from the north lawn. What do we know at the moment, John?

B: Bill, good afternoon to you. As if there wasn't enough going on around the world with this coronavirus business, national security rearing its head again today with the president sending a sharp warning to the Iranian leadership about what might be in the works in Iraq in the coming days. The President tweeting, "upon information and belief, Iran or its proxies are planning a sneak attack on US troops and/or assets in Iraq. If this happens, Iran will pay a very heavy price, indeed!". Sources tell Fox News the sneak attack was apparently being planned by Iranian-backed proxies in Iraq. Remember back on March 11, the Iranian-backed Kata'ib Hezbollah launched some 15 rockets at Camp Taji, north of Baghdad, killing two American and one British service member, wounding 14 more people. A day later, the US launched airstrikes against Kata'ib Hezbollah bases across Iraq. After those strikes the top US commander for the Middle East marine general Frank Mackenzie said the United States has a right to and will act in self-defense. Listen here.

C: Also want to reiterate these strikes, these defensive strikes, were designed to destroy Iranian supplied advanced conventional weapons, and that the United States acted in self-defense in response to a direct and deliberate attack on an Iraqi base that host coalition service members.

B: Now the warning about a sneak attack comes as the successor to Quds Force Commander Qasem Soleimani, Esmail Qaani arrived in Baghdad in attempt to unify Iraq's fractured political leaders and again assert Iranian influence over the area. The last time, again, that this happened back at the beginning of March, the United States responded solely against the militia responsible. But, Bill, in the tweet that he issued just a little while ago, President Trump indicating that if it happens again, and he responds, might not be limited to Kata'ib Hezbollah, we'll see.

Third major explosion in Iran in 3 weeks; Gen. Jack Keane reacts

Jul 12, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qHQ_p09J68&t=127s&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: Well, for the third time in three weeks there was a major explosion of what's suspected to be a sensitive military site in Iran. The latest occurred yesterday morning in western Tehran and caused widespread power outages. As of now remains unclear who or what is behind these strings of explosions. There have been three of them, including one at the Parchin military site and another one where they make centrifuges for their nuclear program. Joining us now is retired general Jack Keane, Fox News military strategic analyst. General Keane, we had Stuxnet, that computer virus to sabotage their computers. What do you think is behind these mysterious explosions?

B: Well, in the last several months, there has been dozens of so-called accidents that the Iranians claimed have been taking place. And largely they're explosions or fires. That is no longer a credible claim, given the sheer numbers of them. And as you noted, just in the last couple of weeks, we've had a missile production plant that exploded, we had that their advanced centrifuge plant, which exploded with an incredible fire, literally destroyed the place and set the nuclear program back at least a year, I reckon, possibly two. And then this week, there's been two other power plants that have had explosions and chemical gas leak in another plant. I mean, it's pretty obvious there's two countries that have the capability to do this. One is the United States. The other is Israel. You mentioned the cyber-attacks that took place a decade ago, the United States was involved in that with the Israelis as a matter of public knowledge now. The Israelis conducted an assassination campaign against Iranian scientists, which you also mentioned early on. And then in 2018, Eric, Israel has penetrated deep into Tehran, the capital of Iran, and took out of a warehouse, a secure warehouse, half a ton of classified information, which they turned over to the UN inspectors. And they documented the fact that Iran was developing a nuclear weapon. So, what is happening here? This is a covert espionage campaign, likely being conducted by the Israelis, and being assisted by informants inside Iran and others who are part of the resistance movement in Iran.

A: I was going to mention the National Council of resistance of Iran, huge group that have a lot of people out there on the ground potentially helping out in this.

B: Yeah, I don't think the Mossad who is likely executing this could do it without assistance. I mean, the most secret sites that Iran had were disclosed to us a number of years ago and that came as a result of informants who knew where those sites were. So, I think there is logically some cooperation. I believe it's a smart strategy. If you accept the objective, that we don't want Iran to have nuclear weapons with missiles that can deliver them and I'm one of those who supports that. Then the strategy that the Israelis are doing, likely with support from the United States, at least in terms of moral support, any intelligence that could give would assist them, it's fairly savvy. And here's why – because it gives you Israelis

deniability and what we're not dealing with is airstrikes that are going into these missile sites and nuclear sites, obviously, it would be known that Israelis are delivering that and that would force the Iranians to do what? To escalate up. And this, it gives them the capability of denying it and making them much more patient and less likely to have this cyber espionage and also kinetic espionage, which was seen, lead to war. The Iranians don't want that. And the Israelis, I think are executing their strategy, which right now already has slowed this program down a year or two, and they may not be finished yet.

A: Quickly, 30 seconds. Do you think we allegedly have other tricks up our sleeves to try to set the nuclear program back?

B: Oh yes. And certainly, cyber activity is one of our strongest suits, and also one of the Israelis suits as well. No, they're not finished, but I don't believe the Iranians are going to respond very strongly, because I believe they're waiting for the November elections in the United States to see who wins that election and determine who they should negotiate with.

A: All right, and if former Vice President Biden is elected, how do you think that will impact their thinking?

B: Well, it, I can't predict what Vice President Biden would do as President, but I can say he was part of the team that can construe the nuclear deal, which brought us to this debacle that we're dealing with, which permits Iran actually to acquire a nuclear weapon, when you would think the purpose of the nuclear deal would be to prevent them from having one. So certainly, he could be seriously along those lines again, but hopefully not.

A: Yeah, no sunset clause on that. General Keane, as always, thank you.

Trump admin set to reimpose UN sanctions on Iran

Sep 18, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_H0wbPjOWY&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: Developing now: The Trump administration set to announce new sanctions on Iran, which were eased under the 2015 nuclear deal under President Obama. Now this move is being met by overwhelming opposition by other UN Security Council members, by the way, including American allies. Meanwhile, Joe Biden says he would want the US to re-join the Iran nuclear deal if he becomes president, "I will offer Tehran a credible path back to diplomacy. If Iran returns to strict compliance with the nuclear deal, the United States would re-join the agreement as a starting point for follow-on negotiations." Good idea? Let's bring in Judy Miller, adjunct fellow at the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research and Pulitzer Prize winning journalist. Judy, great to see you. First of all, what do you make of the President's administration? They plan to announce tomorrow that the UN sanctions on Iranian under the 2015 nuclear deal under Obama are back in force?

B: Well, yes, they're going to announce new sanctions. But the problem, Julie, is whether or not our allies will enforce them. And every indication is that they will not because the Trump administration has systematically alienated the very people it needs to enforce sanctions against Iran and get it to comply with the agreement that it's signed in 2015.

A: Well, I mean, this is all happening as Joe Biden is offering what some have called a failed strategy on Iran. He says that if he's elected president, the US would re-join the Iran deal. While addressing some of the deal's weaknesses he says, you know, that he wants to go back to that policy that was set in place by his former administration. Is Biden and his Iran strategy a smart way forward or is it a step backward to a flawed approach?

B: clearly, this negotiation would have to involve a renegotiation of the terms of the JCPOA, that is the Iran nuclear deal, which was signed in 2015 by seven powers. The problem here is that Iran has not stopped its aggressive activity. So, the nuclear deal has to be part of a broader campaign to get Iran to stop those belligerent activities. Now, you can't do that, without allies. And when the United States tried to get sanctions against Iran reimposed in the form of extending an arms embargo last month, the UN Security Council, our allies, basically said, "no deal. You withdrew from this agreement. You don't have any standing here." So, what the United States really has to do, which is what Joe Biden wants to do, is to repair relations with the very people whom we need to implement the Trump administration's maximum pressure policy. You can't impose maximum pressure on alone, the United States needs allies in this fight.

A: So, then what is going to happen then? Because I mean, like you just pointed out, you know, despite the administration's intentions, there are other members of the UN Security Council, including US allies that disagree with the sanctions. So, if they vowed to ignore this step, where does it move forward? Well, here is the president at an event last night with words for Iran, and then you'll react.

C: But right now, I will tell you, Iran, if we win, Iran will be calling us within the first week, they're dying to make a deal, GDP down 27%. They don't have too much money for terror anymore. It's actually amazing.

A: What do you make of that?

B: You know, it's just amazing to be the extent to which countries like Iran always find enough money for terror. And Iran is very insistent that if Trump is re-elected, they are not going to knock on his door to make a deal. I've heard this from Iranian diplomats again and again. On the other hand, something must be done about Iran, and the maximum pressure campaign of Donald Trump has not succeeded in stopping Iranian misbehavior. So, I think the Biden plan would have to be twofold. One, you have to return to the JCP away, even though it has very little time left. But secondly, you've got to renegotiate a tougher deal with allied buy-in. That's the secret. Everyone agreed that Iran cannot develop a nuclear weapon, and that we will work together to stop it from doing so. And you know, the President did a very good thing in brokering the UAE Israel deal, because that puts added pressure on Iran to come to the table. Yeah. So ironically, if Biden has leverage, it will be because of the deal that President Trump made to further isolate Iran.

A: Alright, Judy Miller, thank you very much. Great to see you as always.

Gen Keane analyzes fallout from killing of top Iranian nuclear scientist

Nov 29, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BiFAQgOC9eA&t=195s&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: Well, Iran's Supreme Leader vowing definitive punishment for those involved in the assassination of Iran's top military scientist, believed to be linked to Tehran's nuclear program. This comes as the Pentagon orders the USS Nimitz back to the Persian Gulf, though claiming it was only deployed as a backup for troops being pulled out of Iraq and Afghanistan. Let's bring in now, Fox News Senior strategic analyst and retired four-star general Jack Keane to weigh in. General, good morning, as always, thank you for being here. So, when you look at this assassination that we believe was likely done by the Israelis, what is the impact of this?

B: Well, I think clearly what they're trying to say, the Israeli, certainly they have intelligence that, that we're not privy to have publicly, suddenly the United States is sharing that with them. And the Israelis

have always believed, and they had the evidence to prove it that Iran really intends to build a nuclear weapon. They went into Tehran in 2018, in January and cleaned out a warehouse of classified information that they brought back to Tel Aviv. And it revealed absolutely that Iran is developing nuclear weapons, and they fully intend to, despite the nuclear deal. So that's really the issue here. What the Israelis have attempted to do, Pete, is below the level of conflict, delay the development of these weapons as much as possible. And it explains why there's explosions taking place all over Iran in the last year to include one at Natanz, which is a uranium enrichment facility, and another is a missile production facility, widely believed to be the Mossad doing this in an espionage campaign along with Iranian resistance groups. Why? To slow down the development of their nuclear enterprise.

A: Yeah, because, general, for Israel, it's existential, it may be academic for others, but Iran has said quite clearly what they would want to do with a nuclear weapon. Now, they're saying they're going to retaliate? Do you believe it'll be a significant retaliation or something that they can just use for internal propaganda to make it look like they did?

B: Well, I think the election certainly will have an impact on the Iranians. They never really, significantly retaliated, Qasem Soleimani being killed by the Trump administration last January. And that is because they wanted to see the outcome of the election. Now, what appears that we're heading towards a Biden presidency, and I believe they will meter their response, because the one thing they don't want to do is with a new administration, so poisoned the well that they're not going to be able to get the sanction relief that they believe this administration will give them. So, I suspect that will cause them to limit their response somewhat. They don't want to walk up the ladder of escalation to that degree with a new administration, and therefore, put any negotiated deal off the table.

A: So potentially lob a few missiles and say it was revenge and move on to see if they can get a better deal and move toward a bomb, which is ultimately what we know they want. Now, not everyone agrees that it was a good move. In fact, former Obama administration ex-CIA director John Brennan slammed this attack. He said this, "this was a criminal act and highly reckless. It risks lethal retaliation and new round of regional conflict. Iranian leaders would be wise to wait for the return of responsible American leadership on the global stage to resist the urge to respond against perceived culprits." Was this a criminal act? Was it reckless? I mean, he probably would have said the same thing about killing Qasem Soleimani.

B: Yeah, I mean, that's pretty extraordinary. And it takes a lot of gall to say something like that in the face of what Israel is dealing with Iran. I mean, Iran is a threat to the United States. They've proven that, they've blown up our embassies, they've killed our soldiers in Iraq. They've killed 1000s of us in the 40 years. But they're not an existential threat. They're not challenging the survival of the United States. Nuclear weapons in their hands with ballistic missiles, and a continuous and repeated threat to destroy the State of Israel, Iran is an existential threat to the survival of Israel. That is why their actions are so different than ours. That is why their determination and resolve is so different. I'm stunned that a former CIA director would not recognize this level of intensity and determination for what for what it really is, is to protect the security of the Israeli people.

A: He knows better, and he knows it. General Jack Keane, thank you very much for your time.

Iran-backed militias blamed for Baghdad rocket attack

Dec 22, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKk9wpoxx4A&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: For the first time in eight years, the US Navy's Fifth Fleet publicly announced that it moved a guided missile submarine into the Persian Gulf. This comes one day after the American Embassy in Baghdad

was attacked by a barrage of rockets that was said to have caused minor damage and one death. The USS Georgia guided missile submarine armed with 154 Tomahawk cruise missiles has transited the Strait of Hormuz and entered the Persian Gulf. Let's get details on Sunday's attack in Baghdad. Correspondent Trey Yanks reports tonight from our middle east newsroom.

B: The US embassies air defense system fires interception rounds into the sky over Baghdad. Its target – eight Katyusha rockets aimed at the green zone inside the Iraqi capital. Diplomatic sources told Reuters at least one civilian was killed, and minor damage was done to the embassy compound. The event drew condemnation from the Iraqi government that called this a terrorist attack. As US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo blamed Iranian backed militias tweeting, “these violent and corrupt criminals must cease their destabilizing actions.” This statement drew a direct response from Iran's foreign ministry, “I think that the Iraqi Government will definitely find the perpetrators and those who order it based on its duties. I also want the United States regime not to seek starting a fire and waging conflict these days.” The American embassy was the target of numerous rocket attacks over the past year conducted by suspected Iranian-backed Shia militias. Though Sunday's rocket fire comes just two weeks before the one-year anniversary of a US drone strike that killed top Iranian general Qasem Soleimani in Baghdad. The killing led Iran to fire ballistic missiles at a military base housing American troops in Iraq last January. This January, the Trump administration will reduce the number of US forces operating in the country from 3000 to 2500 soldiers. Calculations are ongoing for Iran and its proxies across the Middle East. There is hope by the regime in Tehran that a Biden administration could lift economic sanctions on the Islamic Republic while allowing them to continue a controlled nuclear program, Brett.

Iran threatens revenge for Trump killing of Soleimani

Jan 4, 2021

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fT1F6KvKDcA&ab_channel=FoxNews

A: Tensions high in the Middle East. Thousands protesting to mark one year since Iran's top General Qasem Soleimani was killed in a US drone strike. Meanwhile, Iran's foreign minister says Tehran will begin 20% uranium enrichment at a nuclear facility. All this has happening as the Pentagon reverses the decision to bring home an aircraft carrier after 10 months in the Persian Gulf. General Jack Keane is a retired four star general and a chairman of the Institute for the Study of war. Also, a Fox News Senior strategic analyst. General, always good to talk with you. Thanks for being here. How exactly is Iran threatening revenge on the United States?

B: Well, first of all, they did attack the United States on our troops on a base right after we killed Soleimani last year. And they warned the Iraqis who ran that base a few hours before the attack that attack was eminent and that gave us plenty of opportunity to get our troops into bunkers. And while some of them were injured, none of them were killed. I think what the rhetoric surrounding this issue is largely a quid pro quo. I mean, it is seeking an opportunity if it presents itself, and hopefully it does not. For them to kill a US government official, similar to what we did, in terms of killing Qasem Soleimani, obviously, who was an Iranian government official, but really a lot of this rhetoric is just that. They notice a transition coming here in the United States and a lot of what is happening here is messages to the Biden administration, not so much to the Trump administration. They want to negotiate with the Biden administration, and get the sanctions removed that President Trump imposed on them because they are back on their heels, Sandra, in a way I haven't seen in 41 years, economically and also huge amount of civil unrest in the country as a result of it.

A: Javad Zarif, the Iranian Foreign Minister sent this tweet out on January 2, the day after New Year's Day, “new intelligence from Iraq indicate that Israeli agent-provocateurs are plotting attacks against

Americans putting an outgoing Trump in a bind”, he goes on to say, “be careful of a trap”, warning the president, “any fireworks will backfire badly.” How's the United States responding to this?

B: Well, the United States certainly has our forces on alert because of the rhetoric. Clearly, we were going to bring an aircraft carrier home, we haven't redeployed that aircraft carrier for this reason. We brought B-52s into the theater to show the Iranians that... remind them of the huge capability that the United States military has. So, the United States military and the national security team certainly isn't ignoring it. We don't take these things lightly. But I also don't believe the Iranians are going to do anything. Why is that? One, they don't want to deal with President Trump over the next couple of weeks in terms of what his response would be if Americans are killed. And two, and most significantly, they don't want to interfere with the potential to have a negotiation with President Biden who they are hoping will remove the sanctions in return for the United States returning to the nuclear deal. That really, I think is uppermost on the Iranians mind – not seeking revenge for Qasem Soleimani. They want removal of those sanctions because it's crippling them.

A: Really interesting analysis and perspective. General Jack Keane, always great to talk with you. Thank you.

B: Yeah, good talking to Sandra, have a great week.

Appendix 2. Metaphorical expressions with their corresponding conceptual structures

1. Identified in CNN

STATE IS A PERSON

- (1) *This is after **the United States killed Iran's most powerful military and intelligence leader** in an airstrike near the airport in Baghdad in Iraq. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (2) *Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who was on with us just moments ago, said the attack was carried out to thwart some kind of an imminent **attack by Iran against the United States**. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (3) *Is this going to be **an accidental slouch into a war** in the Middle East? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (4) *Or are all parties not just the United States, which is say that they want to de-escalate, but all the leaders of the Shiite Islamic factions, **which are backed by Iran in that region**, not to mention Iran itself? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (5) *But also remember that Qasem Soleimani, was the only person with his militias, **who stood between ISIS and Baghdad** when ISIS took over a lot of Iraq back in 2014. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (6) *But also remember that Qasem Soleimani, was the only person with his militias, who stood between ISIS and Baghdad when **ISIS took over a lot of Iraq** back in 2014. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (7) *But France, **the French government this morning says** the world is now a more dangerous place. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (8) *Remember that some, you know, on the eve of the Iraq War, the US invasion of Iraq in March of 2003, then-president Chirac said **the United States was going to open a can of worms**, and France did not go along with this action, and wanted more time to figure out what exactly was the intelligence with the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (9) *Remember that some, you know, on the eve of the Iraq War, the US invasion of Iraq in March of 2003, then-president Chirac said the United States was going to open a can of worms, and **France did not go along with this action**, and wanted more time to figure out what exactly was the intelligence with the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (10) *Remember that some, you know, on the eve of the Iraq War, the US invasion of Iraq in March of 2003, then-president Chirac said the United States was going to open a can of worms, and **France did not go along with this action, and wanted more time to figure out what exactly was the intelligence with the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq**. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (11) *So that is going to be, again, something to watch because as everybody has said, **it's unlikely that Iran would take on the United States in any effort at symmetrical warfare**, it's very, very unlikely, it hasn't happened in the past, it's unlikely to happen now. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (12) *But the asymmetrical, **the ability to lash out** in many parts of that region is clear and present. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (13) ***The US relationship with Iraq**, the Iraqi Prime Minister Abdul Mahdi condemned these actions, it's a violation of the US agreement to stationed troops in Iraq. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (14) *What will this do to **the US presence there**? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (15) *Well, overnight, the US missile attacks on the Al-Khateeb, the Hezbollah Al-Khateeb base, changed **the US-Iraq relationship**. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (16) ***Iraq suddenly went**, and this is what experts are telling me, from, you know, demonstrating against Iranian presidents and others to demonstrating against United States. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (17) ***Did the United States expect its embassy in Iraq**, one of the most guarded embassies in the world, to be breached by pro-Iranian militias in Baghdad, did the United States expect that when it retaliated for the killing of that American contractor, and now the Government of Iraq is under massive pressure? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*

- (18) *Did the United States expect its embassy in Iraq, one of the most guarded embassies in the world, to be breached by pro-Iranian militias in Baghdad, **did the United States expect that when it retaliated for the killing of that American contractor**, and now the Government of Iraq is under massive pressure?* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (19) *And of course, **what will Iran do?*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (20) *I mean, **the idea of Iran wanting now to do that famous photo-op** that President Trump wanted back in September at the UN, – it's over, they're talking about revenge now.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (21) *And remember, the French is saying it's more dangerous, because Emmanuel Macron was the mediator between President Trump and Hassan Rouhani trying to get that relationship back on track, **but the US have gone from maximum economic pressure to now military action.*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (22) *This is after **the US killed Iran's most powerful military commander overnight.*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (23) *What will **Iran's response** be?* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (24) *Well, a lot of this is starting with that death of the American contractor several weeks ago, that's what led to those **other strikes by the United States**, then leading a course to those protests, those attacks on the US Embassy in Baghdad.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (25) *What exactly this intelligence was that they hinted at in that **statement from the Pentagon**, essentially accusing this figure, this commander of masterminding further activities that could harm the United States or its citizens, accusing him of the deaths of hundreds of American soldiers.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (26) *What exactly this intelligence was that they hinted at in that statement from the Pentagon, **essentially accusing this figure, this commander of masterminding further activities** that could harm the United States or its citizens, accusing him of the deaths of hundreds of American soldiers.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
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- (28) ***The IRGC Quds force has demonstrated its willingness and intent to strike American citizens, to strike American diplomats for foreign protections under international law.*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (29) ***The IRGC Quds force has demonstrated its willingness and intent to strike American citizens, to strike American diplomats for foreign protections under international law.*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (30) *Let's not forget that **the IRGC Quds force has tried to implement terrorist plots in Europe.*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (31) *But outside of, you know, **physical threat** and potential military action **by Iran.*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (32) *But outside of, you know, physical threat and **potential military action by Iran.*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (33) *Think also cyber, because **Iran is one of the most capable along with Russia and China, in terms of carrying out cyber-attacks, they do it.*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (34) *It may be an all of the above **response from Iran.*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (35) *But there have been Democrats, including Senator Chris Murphy, and others overnight who have noted, 'Hey, wait a second here. Where's the authorization for this type of action? Hey, wait a second. **Is the United States now involved with the assassination of government officials?'*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (36) ***US strikes 5 facilities in Iraq and Syria** linked to Iranian-backed militia. (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*
- (37) *So, **the US has been looking for some time now what its response should be** and what they want to do. (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*
- (38) *So, **the US has been looking for some time now what its response should be** and **what they want to do.*** (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)

- (39) *And this morning, Washington time 7 o'clock in the evening, on the ground in Iraq, US F-15 conducted strikes against spy facilities in Iraq and Syria, operated by this militia group that **the US says** are responsible for these attacks. (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*
- (40) *And to answer the obvious question, **will the US conduct more strikes?** (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*
- (41) *But President Trump has made clear that he will not tolerate attacks against US forces, so **the US swinging into action** with these strikes in the last several hours. (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*
- (42) *So again, this is clearly something that the President is still monitoring, something that is still very much a developing situation, and it does appear that a tipping point for these strikes was indeed this attack that took place on Friday, where you saw one US defense contractor who has killed four US troops, who were wounded in **attacks carried out by Iranian proxies in Iraq.** (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*
- (43) *Following that you saw statements from some Republicans, including Republican Senator Tom Cotton, a hawkish ally of the President in the Senate, who called for **retaliation from the United States against Iran.** (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*
- (44) *It is interesting, of course, that the president's course of retaliation here was focused on **attacking those Iranian proxies** and not Iran itself. (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*
- (45) *It is interesting, of course, that the president's course of retaliation here was focused on **attacking** those Iranian proxies and **not Iran itself.** (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*
- (46) *Of course, those Iranian proxies are the ones that **the US says** is responsible for many of those attacks on Iraqi bases where the US troops are housed. (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*
- (47) *But of course, we know that in the past the President has considered **retaliation directly against Iran;** and again, as he sits down today with his top military and foreign policy officials, that is certainly something that we expect the President will be discussing, Martin. (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*
- (48) *Coming out of it, do you have any question as to **whether or not Iran intentionally shot down a US drone?** (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (49) *Well, **Iran certainly shot the drone.** (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (50) *There had been multiple **provocative and dangerous acts by Iran,** so we should be working with our allies to de-escalate the situation, to deter this conduct – yes, but also to make sure that this doesn't end up in unintentional conflict and escalation. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (51) *There had been multiple provocative and **dangerous acts by Iran,** so we should be working with our allies to de-escalate the situation, to deter this conduct – yes, but also to make sure that this doesn't end up in unintentional conflict and escalation. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (52) *There had been multiple provocative and dangerous acts by Iran, so we should be working with our allies to de-escalate the situation, **to deter this conduct** – yes, but also to make sure that this doesn't end up in unintentional conflict and escalation. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (53) *So, we need to figure out a strategy to de-escalate, **to deter this kind of conduct,** to protect shipping, to protect our aircraft, and I think most significant, as this is an attack on many nations, it ought to be an international response; we shouldn't allow Iran to drive us away from our allies. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
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- (56) *Do you think that **Iran knew what it was shooting at?** (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (57) *One of them said, basically, "we did it. They came into our space, so we did it. We're going to go to the UN and prove that **the US is lying about where it was**". (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*

- (58) *Yeah, I don't know whether we have great clarity on whether **Iran knew what it was shooting at** in terms of whether it was manned or unmanned aircraft. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (59) *I don't know the answer to that question, but, you know, certainly this is **a provocation by Iran**, an attack on our aircraft, an attack on shipping belonging to other nations, and I think there is no question that Iran has chosen these acts of belligerence partly to divide us from our allies, partly to get out of economic pressure and lash out at the United States in particular, but also to drive up oil prices and it does call for us to think strategically about this, not to take actions that play into Iranian hands, but at the same time that we protect the right of navigation. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
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- (63) *Well, look, we don't want war here, I don't think **Iran wants war here**, and the big risk is that neither nation wanting war nonetheless ends up in a war because of miscalculations. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (64) *Well, look, we don't want war here, I don't think Iran wants war here, and the big risk is that **neither nation wanting war nonetheless ends up in a war** because of miscalculations. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (65) *We can't ignore the fact that the situation we're in now was so eminently predictable, that if we backed out of the Iran nuclear deal, if we cause other nations to, once again, impose sanctions on Iran, then we shouldn't be all that surprised that **Iran is going to lead the deal** and go back to enriching or that we're going to get these increased tensions and likelihood of conflict, that step plus, you know, the designation of the RGC is a terrorist group, I think, is predictable right that Iran would lash out through the IRGC in terms of that decision as well. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
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- (68) *So, I think it's necessary, and yes, it's, I think, frustrating, and it is also dangerous in terms of system of checks and balances that **the administration would take us down this path**, but Congress has really left with no choice except to litigate to make sure we get answers. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (69) *So, I think it's necessary, and yes, it's, I think, frustrating, and it is also dangerous in terms of system of checks and balances that the administration would take us down this path, but **Congress has really left with no choice** except to litigate to make sure we get answers. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (70) *So, chairman, you have already proposed bill that is really straightforward, that the campaign committees and different agents within the different campaigns need to sign on that they understand that, and as broad a definitional understanding as possible, **you can't let foreign powers interfere in the election and in your campaign**. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (71) ***Iran condemns US airstrike that killed top commander as 'foolish'**. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (72) *"The US' act of international terrorism, targeting & assassinating General Soleimani - THE most effective force fighting Dyess (ISIS), Al Nusrah, and Al Qaeda is extremely dangerous and a foolish escalation. **The US bears responsibility for all consequences of its rogue adventurism.**" (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (73) *And I think the big question is, since **the United States certainly had plenty of opportunities to kill him in the past**, why did they choose to do this now if in fact, they chose to do it that in other words, if they knew that he was going to be in that motorcade that was out near the Baghdad airport, and we don't know for sure whether or not they knew that Soleimani would be in that? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (74) *We'll see what **Iran's response** is, but what do you think that the US should prepare for as a form of retaliation by Iran? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (75) *We'll see what Iran's response is, but what do you think that **the US should prepare for as a form of retaliation by Iran**? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (76) *I think if you're thinking about whether this would deter **an attack by Iran**, I think the prospect of that is zero. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (77) *Look, we have a simmering, or we had until a few hours ago, a simmering conflict with Iran that included things like attacks in Iraq, but also remember **Iran was picking up ships in the Persian Gulf**. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (78) *So, they're looking at this not just as the elimination of a general, but as **an opportunity to respond to America** that just decided they wanted to go from a simmer to a boil. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (79) ***Is Russia going to broaden their adventurism** and go into some nation state or go further into Ukraine? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (80) ***Is China going to attack our ships** in the South China Sea? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (81) *And this, the kind of proxy war that we're looking at right now that we just turned up the heat on, was one of the top five, either **Iran against the United States**, or Iran against the ally of the United States. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (82) *And this, the kind of proxy war that we're looking at right now that we just turned up the heat on, was one of the top five, either Iran against the United States, or **Iran against the ally of the United States**. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (83) *Well, we've already seen now the rhetorical **response from Iran**. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (84) ***Iran designates all US forces 'terrorists'**. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
- (85) ***Iran's parliament has passed a bill** designating all US forces terrorist after Soleimani's killing by the US on Friday. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
- (86) *Iran's parliament has passed a bill designating all US forces terrorist after **Soleimani's killing by the US** on Friday. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*

- (87) *That doesn't give a huge amount of relief for the United States' allies in the region, because of the concerns that there could still be the potential for a trigger for a broader conflict. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
- (88) *But certainly, **the United States' allies in the region will be concerned** if the United States draws down its forces significantly in the region, – that's something that they looked to as being a guarantor a part of the stability in security within the region, particularly within Iraq. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
- (89) *But certainly, the United States allies in the region will be concerned if the **United States draws down its forces significantly in the region**, – that's something that they looked to as being a guarantor a part of the stability in security within the region, particularly within Iraq. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
- (90) *But it has a feel at the moment as well, something of a tit for tat with the United States because **the United States has designated so many people** and groups in Iran as terrorist organizations that the Iranians have bridled against, you know, the whole time that President Trump has been, sort of, escalating up his maximum sanctions and isolation of Iran. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
- (91) *Again, this is in part in keeping with isolating and **demonizing the United States**. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
- (92) *This is a moment in the region where **Iran can capitalize on Qasem Soleimani's death**, can capitalize on the fact that large numbers of people come out on the streets in Iraq and in Iran, – that not only sends a big message to the peoples of those countries, that support for Soleimani was big and that anyone that actually oppose that support, oppose the government in Tehran, opposes the large number of people on the streets, it amplifies that kind of message and that's something that, you know, Iran will be very keen to exploit and is exploiting at this time. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
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- (94) *Many thanks, Nic. Well, in Washington, **the Trump administration is defending the strike**, but officials are not speaking with one voice. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
- (95) *And what Defense Secretary Mark Esper told reporters today is no, that is not policy right now and in fact **the Iraqi government has not yet officially asked US troops to leave**. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
- (96) *Of course, when you have the Iraqis, who have over the past few days made it clear, the political leadership here, the Prime Minister, his office, have come out and said that they are going with **what Parliament had asked them to do**, they're starting to work with the coalition governments to ask them at some point to withdraw their forces from here. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
- (97) *The security implications here with the current threat level that we, you know, we've heard the threats coming from the Iranian-backed proxies on the ground in the past 48 hours or so, some of their top leadership of the most powerful Iranian-backed paramilitary groups coming out and saying that if **the United States does not withdraw immediately** as was decided by the Iraqi Parliament, that they are going to be considered occupying forces and that they will be dealt with as such. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
- (98) *The security implications here with the current threat level that we, you know, we've heard the threats coming from the Iranian-backed proxies on the ground in the past 48 hours or so, some of their top leadership of the most powerful Iranian-backed paramilitary groups coming out and saying that if the United States does not withdraw immediately as was **decided by the Iraqi Parliament**, that they are going to be considered occupying forces and that they will be dealt with as such. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*

- (99) *Our breaking news are in: **Iran fires more than a dozen missiles** to Iraqi bases housing US troops, – US forces, I should say.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (100) ***Iran says the attack was revenge for the American airstrike that killed top Iranian general Qasem Soleimani last week.*** (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (101) *So, when Trump comes into office, **Iran is abiding by the nuclear deal**, it's engaging in some activities in the region.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (102) *So, when Trump comes into office, **Iran is abiding by the nuclear deal, it's engaging in some activities in the region.*** (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (103) *And the theory behind it was presumably, that this would get a better deal, except **the Trump administration never asked for a better deal.*** (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (104) ***Iran has pulled out of the nuclear deal completely.*** (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (105) ***Our allies in the region are stunned** because they're not sure where to go.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (106) *Our allies in the region are stunned because **they're not sure where to go.*** (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (107) ***Even the Saudis and the UAE that are anti-Iranian are stunned**, the Europeans have not supported us.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (108) *And they are increasingly in countries **like the UAE and Jordan wondering, do they just have to take matters in their own hands** because they can't trust the Americans?* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (109) *And they are increasingly in countries like the UAE and Jordan wondering, **do they just have to take matters in their own hands because they can't trust the Americans?*** (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (110) ***They can't trust the Trump administration to follow through with what it says**, everything instead is erratic, emotional, and impulsive.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (111) *Video shows **Iran shooting down US drone.*** (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (112) *President Trump saying today that the American people will soon find out if **the United States is going to war with Iran**, saying the regime made a very big mistake shooting down a US military surveillance drone, like the one you see on your screen, at 4:05am Iranian time over the Strait of Hormuz.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (113) ***Iran says the US drone violated its airspace and they claim they shot down the drone right off its coast.*** (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (114) *It's all coming as **the Pentagon is deploying an additional thousand troops to the region** as a deterrent against what the Trump administration calls increased Iranian aggression.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
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- (116) *It's all coming as the Pentagon is deploying an additional thousand troops to the region as a deterrent against what the Trump administration calls **increased Iranian aggression.*** (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (117) ***Iran made a big mistake.*** (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (118) ***But Iran claims** the American drone was in Iranian airspace and had its own dire warning.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (119) ***We have no intention to fight with any countries.*** (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (120) *In the wake of intelligence, **the US said**, showed Iran was planning an attack.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (121) *In the wake of intelligence, the US said, showed **Iran was planning an attack.*** (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (122) ***Then Iran is believed to have attacked commercial tankers last month and again last week**, using mines to leave gaping holes leading to another 1000 troops being sent for further deterrence of Iran.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (123) *At the same time, a dire warning coming from the Iranians to the US, the Iranians saying, '**this is what Iran does with its enemies**', and essentially saying, 'yes, this was a clear message to the United States, that if it gets too close, this is what the Iranians are going to do'.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)

- (124) *At the same time, a dire warning coming from the Iranians to the US, the Iranians saying, ‘this is what Iran does with its enemies’, and essentially saying, ‘yes, this was a clear message to **the United States, that if it gets too close, this is what the Iranians are going to do**’.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (125) *And one of the things that the Iranians have been telling us again, and again and again, is that if this escalates, Jake, they say that **the Americans are not only going to be facing Iran's regular military, but all of its proxy forces in the region as well, Jake**.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (126) *So, you think **the US should respond diplomatically** and not militarily is that what I'm hearing you saying, – further isolation, diplomatically and economically?* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (127) ***That's not in the United States' interest.*** (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (128) *So, to me, the proper response is to isolate Iran, sanctions help us do that, getting on the same page as our traditional allies, getting the international community to recognize that **Iran's activities, and now threats in regard to nuclear programs, are against international norms.*** (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (129) ***The White House said** there was recent intelligence showing the possibility of Iran using proxy forces to attack US interests in the Middle East.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
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- (131) *The White House said there was recent intelligence showing the possibility of Iran using proxy forces to attack **US interests in the Middle East.*** (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (132) ***Is that Iran planning to use proxies to kill American soldiers in Iraq?*** (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (133) ***Well, traditionally, it's been Iran supporting proxy forces** that they help groups in different parts of the world, including in Iraq, including in Syria, including certainly in Yemen, which are against our interests, it'd be rare to see those assets being used against America other than in the theatres in which they're operating currently. So, I think it's more the fact that Iran supports these groups than these groups are supporting Iran.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (134) *Well, traditionally, it's been Iran supporting proxy forces that they help groups in different parts of the world, including in Iraq, including in Syria, including certainly in Yemen, which are against our interests, it'd be rare to see those assets being used against America other than in the theatres in which they're operating currently. So, I think it's more the fact that **Iran supports these groups** than these groups are supporting Iran.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
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- (136) *There's breaking news tonight on the attacks on the oil fills in Saudi Arabia, the President today saying it appears that **Iran is behind them.*** (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (137) *He also didn't rule out the possibility of **retaliatory strike by the US.*** (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (138) *Take, for instance, **whether we will attack Iran.*** (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (139) *There is reason to believe that we know the culprit, are locked and loaded depending on verification, but are waiting to **hear from the Kingdom** as to who they believe was the cause of this attack, and under what terms we would proceed!* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (140) ***Now that the administration appears to be considering a strike against Iran,** the president's claiming he never said he wanted to negotiate with the Iranian president without any preconditions.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (141) *On Sunday, he tweeted: “The Fake News is saying that I am **willing to meet with Iran, ‘No Conditions.’** That is an incorrect statement (as usual!).”* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (142) *So, I believe in meeting, **I would certainly meet with Iran if they wanted to meet.*** (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (143) *Boris, so the president's saying it's, “**looking like Iran was behind this attack**”, he still is not definitively saying they did it, correct?* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)

- (144) *We pretty much know who it is, that's the closest that President Trump came to actually **blaming Iran** for short of when he went on Twitter in terms of a response over the weekend.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (145) *We should know the Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, not apprehensive at all, is squarely placing **the blame on Iran**, and the discrepancy is so glaring that today reporters asked Trump if Pompeo perhaps had information that the president had yet to see.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (146) *We should point out, the President has used very similar language in the past specifically speaking about military action in **Iran after they downed the US drone this summer in June**, the president tweeted that the military was 'cocked and loaded', ready to strike on Iran, but that ultimately, he called that off.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (147) *He said that **the US had all the materials that it needs to prove that Iran was behind this**.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (148) *Unclear what the president means because as you know, Anderson, CNN had previously reported that the US officials had told CNN that **American intelligence showed that this attack originated in Iran** and that it was communicating that to our allies in the region.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (149) *Unclear what the president means because as you know, Anderson, CNN had previously reported that the US officials had told CNN that American intelligence showed that this attack originated in Iran and that **it was communicating that to our allies in the region**.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (150) ***Iran's government trying to contain the fallout over the downing of a passenger plane** over Tehran.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (151) *It is not only facing the scrutiny of the world, but its own people, too – with one tragic blunder, **Iran has turned a wave of popular supporting to a tide of anti-government fury**.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (152) *Let's walk you through the very latest in Tehran: anti-government protest by Iranians **angry at the regime for shooting down that Ukrainian passenger jet**.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (153) *Meanwhile, **the White House, apparently, seizing this moment**, President Trump tweeting out this message in Farsi: "To the brave, long-suffering people of Iran: I've stood with you since the beginning of my Presidency, and my Administration will continue to stand with you. We are following your protests closely and are inspired by your courage."* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (154) *Meanwhile, the White House, apparently, seizing this moment, President Trump tweeting out this message in Farsi: "To the brave, long-suffering people of Iran: I've stood with you since the beginning of my Presidency, and **my Administration will continue to stand with you**. We are following your protests closely and are inspired by your courage."* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (155) ***An admission of guilt by the Islamic Republic of Iran** is almost unheard of, it has to be said.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (156) ***Iran has zero credibility** on the international stage and for several days they said that they didn't shoot down the airliner, international countries were putting forward evidence that that wasn't the case, they had no way to turn.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
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- (159) *Iran has zero credibility on the international stage and for several days they said that they didn't shoot down the airliner, international countries were putting forward evidence that that wasn't the case, **they had no way to turn**.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (160) ***Another big slap down for Iran's leadership** – protestors avoid walking on American and Israeli flags, painted on the ground some years ago by the regime, out of disrespect.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)

- (161) *Another big slap down for Iran’s leadership – protestors avoid walking on American and Israeli flags, **painted on the ground some years ago by the regime**, out of disrespect. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (162) *“**Iran’s leadership, now facing great external as well as internal pressure.**” (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (163) *“**Iran’s admission** that its own armed forces unintentionally shot down flight 752 is an important step towards providing answers for families, but I noted that many more steps must be taken.” (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (164) *“Iran’s admission that its own **armed forces unintentionally shot down flight 752** is an important step towards providing answers for families, but I noted that many more steps must be taken.” (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (165) *President Trump, heaping on his pressure, too, tweeting: “[t]he world is watching” the protests, “[t]here can not be another massacre of peaceful protesters”, as happened last year. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (166) *Fallout over the downed plane now becoming a perfect storm for Iran in the global spotlight with international investigators poking around as domestic protests grow and sanctions increase, and **Iran’s recourse to violence**, muted by fear of escalation. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (167) *So, **the message from the Iranian leadership**, they’re, – this is what they want the International Community to see. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (168) *Let’s get to Kristen who is at the White House, because the U.S. President has been pretty active on Twitter, he has issued **another warning to Iran**, telling its leaders in a tweet: “DO NOT KILL YOUR PROTESTORS. Thousands have already been killed or imprisoned by you, and the World is watching. More importantly, the USA is watching”. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
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- (171) *You could also argue that the US President sitting back, watching what is going on, **this is a country, which didn’t accept what happened**, lied its way through the first 48 hours of the downing of this jet, has people out protesting against it once again, and the US President simply sitting back and saying, “we are watching you”. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
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- (174) *Just moments ago, we heard from the defense Secretary Mark Esper, we also heard from the National Security Advisor Robert O’Brien, as they’re trying to fumble their way through **the intelligence that led to the US airstrikes on Soleimani**. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (175) *And then we see Iranians, essentially, **united in the street against America**, we hear them chanting death to America, weeping, wailing about their military leader who was killed, and now a complete 180, and for obvious reasons. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (176) *And then we see Iranians, essentially, **united in the street against America**, we hear them chanting **death to America**, weeping, wailing about their military leader who was killed, and now a complete 180, and for obvious reasons. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*

- (177) *Becky, this is a better narrative for President Trump, he gets to now not have ‘death to America’ but instead, essentially, undermining of the Iranian regime. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (178) *So if you do want to take a step back and say that this is him just saying **the US is watching you**, that could very well be it, but you have to look at the larger context here. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (179) *US officials say **Iran seized a British oil tanker**. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (180) *Well, the US Officials are saying that **Iran seized this vessel** diverting it into Iranian waters. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (181) *And just yesterday the **US said it had downed an Iranian drone** and also where Iran had shut down a US drone just a few weeks ago. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (182) *And just yesterday the US said it had downed an Iranian drone and also where **Iran had shut down a US drone** just a few weeks ago. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (183) *Now again, **Iran has been threatening** to do this for some time after it had one of its vessels seized by Royal Marine commandos in Gibraltar, some of the UK government did over sanctions violations issue. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (184) ***Iran has threatened retaliation**, they had approached the British vessel earlier, British warship had intervened that time, it looks like this time, Iranian forces were able to seize the British vessel in this very critical waterway, the Strait of Hormuz. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (185) *Iran has threatened retaliation, they had approached the British vessel earlier, British warship had intervened that time, it looks like this time, **Iranian forces were able to seize the British vessel** in this very critical waterway, the Strait of Hormuz. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (186) *Fred, what would be **Iran’s motivation** for this, for escalating tensions? (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (187) *There had been a flurry of incidents in that waterway: attacks on tankers that **the US has attributed** to Iran, the Iranians saying they weren’t behind it: the shooting down of that US drone, which the US says was an international airspace, the Iranians are saying that it went into their airspace. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (188) *There had been a flurry of incidents in that waterway: attacks on tankers that the US has attributed to Iran, the Iranians saying they weren’t behind it: the shooting down of that US drone, which **the US says** was an international airspace, the Iranians are saying that it went into their airspace. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (189) *So certainly, that is a very dangerous time, but you can tell that the Iranians are showing that they are bold, that they are extremely confident, despite the fact that a lot of the gear they use is, of course, no match with what **the US says**. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (190) *How would you expect **the US or the UK to respond**? (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (191) *Let’s add one more thing to this issue though, is right now, whenever there are tensions like this between any two countries, diplomatic agencies can talk to each other, the ambassadors can talk to each other, we have really, **the US has really no way to communicate** with the Iranian government other than open communication, and what I mean by that is either news releases or, in some cases, twitter feeds. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (192) *So that increases the danger and the complexity of the situation, **where you can’t call up the government of Iran** and say, “what’s going on, let’s solve this without any kinetic action, let’s try do something before somebody gets hurt”. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (193) *Quickly, I just want to follow on something you said at, kind of, the top of your remarks, you discussed the tit for tat on the different drones that were brought down: first **Iran brought down the US drone**, then it was back 24 hours ago on this program when we brought the breaking news, since we learned that the US had now brought down an Iranian drone. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (194) *Quickly, I just want to follow on something you said at, kind of, the top of your remarks, you discussed the tit for tat on the different drones that were brought down: first Iran brought down the US drone, then it was back 24 hours ago on this program when we brought the breaking news, since we learned that **the US had now brought down an Iranian drone**. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (195) *Donald Trump says **Iran appears to be standing down** after firing missiles at those bases housing American troops in Iraq, and Iraq is the proxy battlefield, – it was at least in this case, the site*

- of both the US strike that killed Qasem Soleimani and also the site of Iran's retaliatory missile attack. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (196) *Donald Trump says Iran appears to be standing down **after firing missiles at those bases housing American troops in Iraq**, and Iraq is the proxy battlefield, – it was at least in this case, the site of both the US strike that killed Qasem Soleimani and also the site of Iran's retaliatory missile attack. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (197) *But more importantly, I think, in many ways highlight **the Iranian-backed Shia militias here, notably Kata'ib Hezbollah, have said** that this is the first salvo in what they say is revenge for the killing of the leader of Kata'ib Hezbollah, who died alongside Qasem Soleimani in that US strike last Friday. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (198) *The thing that nobody can really grasp yet to this point, and this includes house lawmakers, as you spoke to who had the briefing already, is what is the evidence based on the intelligence, particularly intelligence from the CIA director, Gina Haspel, who is briefing, will brief the House, will brief the Senate, that made clear that this was something that had to happen now, when you put it all in context based on **the Bush administration and the Obama administration deciding to pass on the opportunity to strike Qasem Soleimani**. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (199) *And frankly, **how prepared is the United States** for anything that may come next? (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (200) *The Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan issued a joint statement **saying their countries are deeply concerned**. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (201) *Mr. Erdogan said that **Turkey will not allow the region “to be drowned in blood and tears”**. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (202) ***The world was on tenterhooks** waiting to see if he would announce a further escalation, or he would dial it back. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (203) *In the end, I mean, **Iran certainly doesn't want to just sit there and wait** for maximum pressure to play out there. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (204) *And what needs to happen is, I think, ultimately some form of regional security arrangement, where **Iran accepts they can't be interfering in Arab countries**, that it has a legitimate right to security, but it mustn't secure that security by basically ruining Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (205) *And what needs to happen is, I think, ultimately some form of regional security arrangement, where Iran accepts they can't be interfering in Arab countries, that **it has a legitimate right to security**, but it mustn't secure that security by basically ruining Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
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- (207) ***That relationship has deteriorated rapidly** since Trump took office by design mostly. (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (208) *Well, Boris, we're here because of Trump's failed Iran policy, Trump withdrew from the nuclear deal, and **Iran resumed banned activities**. (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (209) *And as Alex just mentioned, the string of sabotage operations and assassinations that **Iran has suffered of the past several months**, are a black eye to the regime security-wise. (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (210) *And as Alex just mentioned, the string of sabotage operations and assassinations that Iran has suffered of the past several months, **are a black eye to the regime** security-wise. (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (211) *That's why it is likely that **Iran will not take this line down**. (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (212) *But I anticipate that **Iran may have more of a calibrated response**. (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (213) *President Rouhani said earlier that **Iran won't be trapped into creating chaos**. (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)*

- (214) *Sanctions relief is only possible via **negotiations with the United States**.* (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)
- (215) *Basically, **a policy that was imposed by the Trump administration**.* (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)
- (216) ***The Trump team stored information** on this codeword server that was not at a codeword classification level.* (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)
- (217) ***US confirms** fighter jet flew close to Iranian passenger plane for inspection.* (CNN, Jul 24, 2020)
- (218) ***The US Defense Department is now confirming** that one of its fighter jets flew as close as 1000 meters from an Iranian passenger plane and Central Command spokesman says, "it was a standard visual inspection".* (CNN, Jul 24, 2020)
- (219) ***The US is saying** this was a standard visual, kind of, reconnaissance flight.* (CNN, Jul 24, 2020)
- (220) ***And they have accused Iran in the past of using civilian aircraft** to deliver men and materiel, money, weapons and other supplies and indeed carrying out surveillance operations in that war zone.* (CNN, Jul 24, 2020)
- (221) ***And they have accused Iran in the past of using civilian aircraft** to deliver men and materiel, money, weapons and other supplies **and indeed carrying out surveillance operations** in that war zone.* (CNN, Jul 24, 2020)
- (222) *I must say also that **the Lebanese authorities, Hala, have said** that they don't believe anybody was injured on that aircraft.* (CNN, Jul 24, 2020)
- (223) *I must say also that the Lebanese authorities, Hala, have said that **they don't believe anybody was injured on that aircraft**.* (CNN, Jul 24, 2020)
- (224) ***If the US engages in a military clash with Iran**, it could be costly.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (225) *Military analysts say **Iran could stage attacks** such as those last year on tankers in the Strait of Hormuz and Saudi oil fields.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (226) ***US blamed Iran for those hits**, Iran denied it.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (227) *US blamed Iran for those hits, **Iran denied it**.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (228) ***Or Iran could call on its many allies in the region to carry its fight against America**.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (229) ***Shia militias, Hezbollah, Hamas, the Houthis groups that could use Iranian intelligence, logistics, weapons and more to launch terror strikes on US allies, embassies, military bases, American officials, or even private citizens abroad or at home**.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (230) *There is a network of Iranian elements within the United States that the **FBI is watching**.*
- (231) *In terms of sheer firepower, **Iran is no match for the US** which has more warships, planes, helicopters, tanks and active troops.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (232) *They know that if we go all the way up the escalation ladder, you know, **our capabilities, our Air Force, our naval capabilities will destroy theirs**.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (233) *Footage shows **chemical tanker seized by Iranian forces**.* (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)
- (234) ***Iran's Parliament passed a law last month** to boost enrichment after the country's top nuclear scientists was killed.* (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)
- (235) ***Iran also seized a South Korean-flagged chemical tanker** on Monday, and you can see on the right side of the screen an Iranian patrol boat approaching the tanker.* (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)
- (236) *This is because **the US at that point increased the sanctions against Iran**, South Korea had been importing a fair bit of Iranian oil, but from September 2019, that simply wasn't possible in, those funds had been frozen.* (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)
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- (238) *But from some points of view, **South Korea really does find itself between a rock and a hard place**, South Korea trying to toe the line with its main ally, the US.* (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)
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- (240) *But of course, **it does have commercial interests with Iran in its balance** that it's been trying to control for a number of months now.* (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)

- (241) *But of course, it does have commercial interests with Iran in its balance that **it's been trying to control for a number of months now.** (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (242) *But clearly whether or not this is **the chemical pollution Iran causes** or not, the South Korea is in a tricky position. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (243) *But clearly whether or not this is the chemical pollution Iran causes or not, **the South Korea is in a tricky position.** (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (244) *Now this all comes of course, as **Iran ramps up uranium enrichment** in its biggest breach yet of the nuclear deal. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (245) *Now this all comes of course, as Iran ramps up uranium enrichment in its **biggest breach yet of the nuclear deal.** (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (246) *This is the words of the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu saying that **they will never allow Iran to develop a nuclear weapons capability.** (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (247) *This is, in a sense, the moment in which **the international community might be expected to be galvanized into a unified response** to the uranium decision to start refining uranium to such a high level. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (248) *But what's interesting, and I think it's very strongly reflected by what Paula was just saying there, is that the **US administration under Trump has been out of whack very seriously with the international community** resulting, for example, in the sanctions that have been unilaterally imposed by the United States on Iran, means that the international banking system when it tries to deal with Iran is crippled, since most of these debts and trades are managed in US dollars. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (249) *But what's interesting, and I think it's very strongly reflected by what Paula was just saying there, is that the **US administration under Trump has been out of whack very seriously with the international community** resulting, for example, in **the sanctions that have been unilaterally imposed by the United States on Iran**, means that the international banking system when it tries to deal with Iran is crippled, since most of these debts and trades are managed in US dollars. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (250) *The Europeans have been in very similar situation trying to make the nuclear deal stick together to some extent, since **the United States walked away from it** while simultaneously trying to contain Iranian destabilization efforts that they have stepped up in response to this, these sanctions. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (251) *The Europeans have been in very similar situation trying to make the nuclear deal stick together to some extent, since the United States walked away from it **while simultaneously trying to contain Iranian destabilization efforts that they have stepped up in response to this**, these sanctions. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (252) *And there's also, Paula, **as signs of more unity now emerging among Gulf nations** with a very important breakthrough in which Qatar and the Saudis have agreed to open their border after three years of, in a sense, mutual blockade, very bitter relations with the Qatari, and they're heading to the Gulf Cooperation Council meeting in Saudi Arabia today. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (253) *And there's also, Paula, **as signs of more unity now emerging among Gulf nations** with a very important breakthrough in which **Qatar and the Saudis have agreed to open their border** after three years of, in a sense, mutual blockade, very bitter relations with the Qatari, and they're heading to the Gulf Cooperation Council meeting in Saudi Arabia today. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (254) *That puts up more of a united front, if you like, **in response to Iran**, although of course, Qataris have been a lot more sympathetic to the Iranian position and certainly the Saudis or the rulers in the United Arab Emirates. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (255) ***Iran shoots down US drone aircraft.** (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (256) ***Iran shot down an unmanned US military drone** like this one that is not in question. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (257) *What is clear, **where the two sides disagree** is where the drone was flying at the time. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*

- (258) *It comes after **the US Navy said** that a mine allegedly used to attack oil tankers last week bears a striking resemblance to others displayed at Iranian military parades and Tehran denies it was involved in any attacks on tankers and we will have a live report from Tehran in a moment. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (259) *It comes after the US Navy said that a mine allegedly used to attack oil tankers last week bears a striking resemblance to others displayed at Iranian military parades and **Tehran denies it was involved in any attacks** on tankers and we will have a live report from Tehran in a moment. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (260) *Well, finally there is **an agreement between Iran and the United States**. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (261) *On the water, though there's no doubt at all about the location of two vessels that were hit a week ago by what **the United States is insisting** was Iranian-made mines and they demonstrated some of the evidence behind this claim during a visit which I paid to them just yesterday. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (262) ***The US taking the media to see the damage** done to the Kokuka Courageous. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (263) *Since **the US withdrew from the deal** intended to reduce sanctions against Iran in return for it suspending its nuclear program, and, in fact, imposed even heavier sanctions, tensions have steadily increased, especially at sea. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (264) ***The US sent a carrier group to the region to signal power** and discourage Iranian retaliation. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (265) ***The US sent a carrier group to the region to signal power and discourage Iranian retaliation**. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (266) ***The US has blamed Iran for many similar attacks**. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (267) ***Iran denies all allegations of using violence** to signal its anger over the US sanctions, but it backs many militias capable of launching such assaults. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
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- (269) *Iran denies all allegations of using violence to signal its anger over the US sanctions, but **it backs many militias capable of launching such assaults**. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (270) *The commander of its Revolutionary Guard Corps has warned that **Iran has missiles that could destroy an aircraft carrier**, the US Secretary of State insisting that the US can't pursue diplomacy. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (271) *The commander of its Revolutionary Guard Corps has warned that Iran has missiles that could destroy an aircraft carrier, the US Secretary of State insisting that **the US can't pursue diplomacy**. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (272) *We can't do that without making sure that we have the capability to respond **if Iran makes a bad decision**, if it makes a decision to go after an American or an American interest, or to continue to proliferate its nuclear weapons program. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (273) *We can't do that without making sure that we have the capability to respond if Iran makes a bad decision, **if it makes a decision to go after an American or an American interest**, or to continue to proliferate its nuclear weapons program. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (274) ***So far Iran has done neither**. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (275) ***America is saying 'no'**, leaving the gunboats to circle amid spiraling tensions. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (276) *But **there's been no parallel response from the United States** in terms of any signal that they're prepared to dial down on those very heavy sanctions being posed on the Iranian economy. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (277) *And, Fred, **we have these conflicting accounts from the US and Iran**, about this unmanned drone, where it was when it was shot down. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (278) *Now, I think Sam was already talking about, **the US, of course, has a very different take on things**. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (279) *And that's why **the US says that this was an unprovoked attack**. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*

- (280) ***The unit that shot this drone down is Iran's most elite military unit, the Revolutionary Guard Corps, and the head of the Revolutionary Guard Corps said that the shooting down of this drone is a very clear message to the United States that Iran is drawing a red line, let's listen to what he had to say. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)***
- (281) ***The unit that shot this drone down is Iran's most elite military unit, the Revolutionary Guard Corps, and the head of the Revolutionary Guard Corps said that the shooting down of this drone is a very clear message to the United States that Iran is drawing a red line, let's listen to what he had to say. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)***
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- (283) ***There's been a flexing of military muscle on both sides, Iranian and American. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)***
- (284) ***Not clear whether or not this was involved in this but it's certainly something that also sends a message to the US and other countries as well, Kristie. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)***
- (285) ***CNN reports exclusively from air base attacked by Iran. (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)***
- (286) ***Now, the State Department dismissed the request saying troops are crucial for the fight against ISIS. (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)***
- (287) ***And the key point here is that Iran is continuing to allow the IAEA, the International inspectors to remain on site to monitor and verify Iran's nuclear program. (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)***
- (288) ***This is key because that will allow the international community to still know what Iran is up to. (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)***
- (289) ***But because the Trump administration has essentially said, 'make a choice, either do business with Iran or do business with the United States', they've had to stick with the United States, which means that Iran is not getting the economic benefits it expected to get as a trade-off for restricting its nuclear program in the deal. (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)***
- (290) ***The administration hasn't put anything forward to prove that... they haven't even tried to justify that statement that's been made. (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)***
- (291) ***And even after the nuclear deal came into effect, the Obama administration was very clear, the vast majority of those funds, and by the way, it was a lot less than what President Trump says, went to domestic infrastructure projects and paying off debt in Iran. (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)***
- (292) ***Soon after Iran fired missiles on US forces in Iraq, a passenger plane lit up in Iran's sky and went down in a ball of flames. (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)***
- (293) ***New evidence indicates Iran shot down Ukrainian flight 752 with two surface-to-air missiles made by Russia. (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)***
- (294) ***The US apparently saw Iranians' radar signals or radar signatures logging on to the jetliner before it was shot down along with satellite and other data. (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)***
- (295) ***Canada also says it has Intel that the plane was shot down but may have been unintentional. (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)***
- (296) ***Iran has gone back and forth with defenses whether they did it, they're not going to talk about it, their desire to share data. (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)***
- (297) ***Iran has gone back and forth with defenses whether they did it, they're not going to talk about it, their desire to share data. (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)***
- (298) ***David, the idea that Iran would not clear the airspace during this, does this show how sloppy they are, how they don't really know what they're doing, or is there another explanation? (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)***
- (299) ***David, the idea that Iran would not clear the airspace during this, does this show how sloppy they are, how they don't really know what they're doing, or is there another explanation? (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)***
- (300) ***Do we know that this plane was taking off during the time of active missile bombardment by Iran? (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)***

- (301) *David, the ability to escape responsibility for this, there's this suggestion, oh, **they'll probably blame the United States.*** (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)
- (302) *The latest word is that **Iran would let Boeing the manufacturer have a representative there,** which may well be an NTSB rep to go, would you be able to rule out that this was anybody but them? (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)*
- (303) *This is somebody who's been with Iran since the revolution 41 years ago, this guy has been with the people who were the sponsors of the revolution in Iran, **he is somebody who's a brother to the leadership of Iran.***
- (304) *The Iranians, – and I follow them, when I was at the CIA, one of my responsibilities was, was looking at the Iranian special services, their intelligence and Quds force, this sort of external military force they have, – **they are very aggressive, and they're fearless.***
- (305) *The US Defense Secretary contradicted President Donald Trump's threat to target Iranian cultural sights **if Tehran retaliates.***
- (306) *Sam, the killing of Iran's top nuclear scientists could fuel **more tensions between Tehran and Washington.*** (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)
- (307) *So those are going to be **the questions facing the White House** now and we're still waiting to hear more on exactly on how all of this went down when the President made this decision. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (308) *Now expect **the White House response** to that to be that the President has pretty broad powers here. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (309) *And so that is something that **the White House could potentially use for justification.*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (310) *Barbara, officials say that **the Pentagon had a plan and brought it to the President Saturday** for approval, so this was not just a spur of a moment, talking about opportunity kind of thing. (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*
- (311) *So, I hope that's **the approach that the White House takes;** there have been indications that the White House has been at odds with itself, that the president, for example, is reported to have tried to do a diplomatic approach through the Japanese Prime Minister to re-enter negotiations, but precisely that moment it appears that Bolton was announcing new sanctions on Iran. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (312) *So, I hope that's the approach that the White House takes; there have been indications that **the White House has been at odds with itself,** that the president, for example, is reported to have tried to do a diplomatic approach through the Japanese Prime Minister to re-enter negotiations, but precisely that moment it appears that Bolton was announcing new sanctions on Iran. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (313) *I'm not surprised, I don't think anyone is surprised that the **White House is stonewalling** in such a comprehensive fashion. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (314) *Well, not really, Viktor, if we're talking about intelligence information that's going to provide the requirement for a pre-emptive strike **the Pentagon, the Department of Defense had been watching the actions of the Iranian Quds Force over the last year plus,** but specifically over the last couple of months, because there have been indicators that they were conducting the various attacks throughout Iraq against American forces, and the Iraqi security forces. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (315) ***The statement from the Pentagon tonight.*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (316) ***Does the Pentagon, does the President have a responsibility** now to kind of flesh that out some, to offer more details potential? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (317) *Again, **that's all we have from the Pentagon.*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (318) ***Only thing we have from the White House** is a tweet of an American flag from the President. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (319) ***The Pentagon says this attack was to prevent or deter future attacks.*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (320) *Barbara Starr has more on **the Pentagon struggle to clarify** what that letter actually means. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*

- (321) *What **it says** is that US troops are repositioning in Iraq and that is true. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
- (322) *It's all coming as **the Pentagon is deploying an additional thousand troops** to the region as a deterrent against what the Trump administration calls increased Iranian aggression. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (323) *Well, right now **the Pentagon has been focused on defense and deterrence against Iran**. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (324) *Barbara, what type of military options is **the Pentagon considering**? (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (325) *Murky new video **released by the Pentagon** of a US Navy drone being shot down by an Iranian surface to air missile may be the moment that changes everything. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (326) *This map showing the missile launched from the Iranian coastline more than 20 miles away from the drone, **according to the Pentagon**. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (327) *In early May **the Pentagon sent** an aircraft carrier Strike Group, Patriot missile defenses, and fighter jets. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (328) *Is there definitive proof that it was shot down where **the Pentagon says** it was shot down, as opposed to where the Iranian say it was shot down? (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (329) ***Tehran counters** that the drone was destroyed after it violated Iranian airspace. (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)*
- (330) *And the way forward, as I mentioned, **announcement of new sanctions against Iran came from the White House yesterday**, I want you here to listen to now former Secretary of State John Kerry, this is back in 2015. (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)*

POWER IS PHYSICAL FORCE

- (331) ***Qasem Soleimani, his footprint, his handprints are all over that place**. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (332) ***Qasem Soleimani, his footprint, his handprints are all over that place**. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (333) *Did the United States expect its embassy in Iraq, one of the most guarded embassies in the world, to be breached by pro-Iranian militias in Baghdad, did the United States expect that when it retaliated for the killing of that American contractor, and now the Government of Iraq is **under massive pressure**? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (334) *And whether these Shiite militias, whether it's Muqtada al-Sadr in Iraq, whether it's Hassan Nasrallah, the head of Hezbollah in Lebanon, you know, what is **the pressure from the streets**? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (335) *And remember, the French is saying it's more dangerous, because Emmanuel Macron was the mediator between President Trump and Hassan Rouhani trying to get that relationship back on track, but the US have gone from **maximum economic pressure** to now military action. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (336) *We're not at the levels that we were even in October of 2018, when we peaked at 86 dollars a barrel from **the pressure from Donald Trump onto Iran**, but something like this and having a removal of so much oil and, as you suggested Paula, there is no magic spigot in the United States. (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)*
- (337) *I don't know the answer to that question, but, you know, certainly this is a provocation by Iran, an attack on our aircraft, an attack on shipping belonging to other nations, and I think there is no question that Iran has chosen these acts of belligerence partly to divide us from our allies, partly to get out of **economic pressure** and lash out at the United States in particular, but also to drive up oil prices and it does call for us to think strategically about this, not to take actions that play into Iranian hands, but at the same time that we protect the right of navigation. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (338) *Now that's a conflicting message, I think that would leave anyone confused, what are you really trying, are you making diplomatic overture, are you just **trying to turn the screws to us**. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (339) *Look, we have a simmering, or we had until a few hours ago, a simmering conflict with Iran that included things like attacks in Iraq, but also remember Iran was **picking up ships in the Persian Gulf**. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*

- (340) *Fareed Zakaria: Trump put **Iran in a box** without any endgame. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (341) *Trump decides to rather than deal with the issue of Iranian involvement in Syria or Yemen, to pull out of the Iran deal, **squeeze Iran much more tightly**. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (342) *So, all you got was **maximum pressure**, putting Iran in a box, without any endgame, without any objective other than seemingly regime change. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (343) *So, all you got was maximum pressure, **putting Iran in a box**, without any endgame, without any objective other than seemingly regime change. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (344) *On the one hand, he's something of an isolationist, on the other hand, he loves **the bravado and the machismo of wielding this enormous stick**, which he keeps talking about, the greatest military in the world, which it is. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (345) *What **impact** do you think he's had on this conflict? (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (346) *And so, it's puzzling as to why he has ratcheted up the **pressure on Iran** so dramatically, at a time when things as I say were perfectly manageable with the Iran nuclear deal. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (347) *Meanwhile, the White House, apparently, **seizing this moment**, President Trump tweeting out this message in Farsi: "To the brave, long-suffering people of Iran: I've stood with you since the beginning of my Presidency, and my Administration will continue to stand with you. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (348) *Their biggest existential threat is, they believe, US troops in the region and they're going to need all this international good will that they think maybe out there for them in sort of **pushing off the United States**. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (349) *So, calculation: you have to come clean on the airline being forced down but of course that is having a huge backlash not only internationally – **a pressure on them**, – but domestically as well. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (350) *"Iran's leadership, now facing great external as well as **internal pressure**." (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (351) *President Trump, heaping on his **pressure**, too, tweeting: "[t]he world is watching" the protests, "[t]here can not be another massacre of peaceful protesters", as happened last year. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (352) *Kristen, it would be easy to accuse the U.S. President of **seizing the moment** here, in fact, many people are accusing him of exactly that. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (353) *We've just learned that **a British tanker has been seized**, and this is an image of this vessel, it's called the Stena Impero. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (354) *Well, the US Officials are saying that Iran **seized this vessel** diverting it into Iranian waters. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (355) *So again, this very tense area, at least **one British vessel has been seized** according to US officials and according to Iran's, there's a lot of Revolutionary Guard Corps, which say it seized the vessel. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (356) *So again, this very tense area, at least one British vessel has been seized according to US officials and according to Iran's, there's a lot of Revolutionary Guard Corps, which say it **seized the vessel**. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (357) *Now again, Iran has been threatening to do this for some time after it had one of its **vessels seized** by Royal Marine commandos in Gibraltar, some of the UK government did over sanctions violations issue. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (358) *Iran has threatened retaliation, they had approached the British vessel earlier, British warship had intervened that time, it looks like this time, Iranian forces were able to **seize the British vessel** in this very critical waterway, the Strait of Hormuz. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (359) *On the one hand, it does appear that there still might be a tit for tat response to the Brits, **taking that Iranian tanker off the coast of Gibraltar**, that Ryan was just talking about. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (360) *And in fact, in Iranian parliament there had been senior military commanders, but also parliamentarians who had called for Iran to also **try and take a British tanker as well**. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*

- (361) *One of the interesting little nuggets that we've learned is that just today the government of Gibraltar extended **the detention of that Iranian tanker** by another 30 days. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (362) *So hard to see that it would be a coincidence that the Iranians would **take a British-flagged tanker** on exactly the day that that happened. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (363) *In the end, I mean, Iran certainly doesn't want to just sit there and wait for **maximum pressure** to play out there. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (364) *The American strategy is to create **maximum pressure** on the Iranians to come back to the negotiating table. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (365) *Their allies do not want to come to the negotiating table **under pressure**. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (366) *Footage shows **chemical tanker seized** by Iranian forces. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (367) *Iran also **seized a South Korean-flagged chemical tanker** on Monday, and you can see on the right side of the screen an Iranian patrol boat approaching the tanker. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (368) *So, Paula, what is the latest on this **seized South Korean-flagged tank** or now, of course, the arrival of the destroyer? (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (369) *The latest we've heard from the foreign ministry here in South Korea is that they believe that **the tanker has been taken to the Banda Arbus port in Iran**. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (370) *The Europeans have been in very similar situation trying to make the nuclear deal stick together to some extent, since the United States walked away from it while simultaneously trying to **contain Iranian** destabilization efforts that they have stepped up in response to this, these sanctions. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)*
- (371) *So, I don't know how you can get back to the deal just with this so-called **maximum pressure**. (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)*
- (372) *It's not dead yet, but I don't think that imposing additional sanctions is going to make that much of **an impact** at this point. (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)*

MACHINES ARE ANIMATE BEINGS

- (373) *And this morning, Washington time 7 o'clock in the evening, on the ground in Iraq, **US F-15 conducted strikes** against spy facilities in Iraq and Syria, operated by this militia group that the US says are responsible for these attacks. (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*
- (374) *Iran says **the US drone violated its airspace** and they claim they shot down the drone right off its coast. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (375) *And we've also heard from the vessel's owner, Stena Bulk and Northern Marine Management, who has said that the vessel was **approached by unidentified small craft and a helicopter** and that they'd lost contact with the vessel while it was operating in the Strait of Hormuz, that narrow stretch of waterway that has been the focal point between these tensions, between the US and Iran. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
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- (378) *Iran has threatened retaliation, they had approached the British vessel earlier, **British warship had intervened that time**, it looks like this time, Iranian forces were able to seize the British vessel in this very critical waterway, the Strait of Hormuz. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (379) *Iranians, whether or not that drone was being shot down, were definitely buzzing that ship, they had a helicopter around that ship as well; they've released surveillance video of them tracking the USS Boxer and I can tell you I've gone through this Strait of Hormuz on a **USS Nimitz** class*

- carrier – it is extremely narrow and it’s a time when a big ship like that is very vulnerable. (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (380) *Iranians, whether or not that drone was being shot down, were definitely buzzing that ship, they had a helicopter around that ship as well; they’ve released surveillance video of them tracking the USS Boxer and I can tell you I’ve gone through this Strait of Hormuz on a USS Nimitz class carrier – it is extremely narrow and it’s a time when a **big ship like that is very vulnerable**.* (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (381) ***The Iranian drone that was shot down was invading the defensive space of the Boxer yesterday.*** (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (382) ***US confirms fighter jet flew close to Iranian passenger plane for inspection.*** (CNN, Jul 24, 2020)
- (383) ***The US Defense Department is now confirming that one of its fighter jets flew as close as 1000 meters from an Iranian passenger plane and Central Command spokesman says, “it was a standard visual inspection”.*** (CNN, Jul 24, 2020)
- (384) ***It's the same airspace for example that Israeli aircraft regularly penetrate to carry out attacks, particularly on Hezbollah, and other Iranian-backed targets, Hala.*** (CNN, Jul 24, 2020)
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- (386) ***Iran also seized a South Korean-flagged chemical tanker on Monday, and you can see on the right side of the screen an Iranian patrol boat approaching the tanker.*** (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)
- (387) ***In response, a South Korean destroyer arrived in the Strait of Hormuz just a few hours ago, in fact.*** (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)
- (388) ***US officials tells CNN the aircraft was operating over the Strait of Hormuz in international airspace.*** (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)
- (389) ***Tehran counters that the drone was destroyed after it violated Iranian airspace.*** (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)
- (390) ***An American naval craft fast approaches a Japanese ship allegedly attacked with an Iranian mine.*** (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)
- (391) ***An American naval craft fast approaches a Japanese ship allegedly attacked with an Iranian mine.*** (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)
- (392) ***Nonetheless, it flew through both the outer hull and the inner hull of the ship, penetrating the fuel tank area.*** (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)
- (393) ***Nonetheless, it flew through both the outer hull and the inner hull of the ship, penetrating the fuel tank area.*** (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)
- (394) ***There have been more mysterious attacks on land, most recently in Basra, where a building housing foreign oil companies, including Exxon Mobil, was hit by a rocket.*** (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)
- (395) ***Now, they say that this drone took off some time, actually, shortly past midnight, local time, was then circling around the area that Iranians say that it's turned off, or as they put it, mast, some of their identification equipment on board, obviously, not wanting to be seen, the Iranian say, by Iranian detection equipment.*** (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)
- (396) ***Now, they say that this drone took off some time, actually, shortly past midnight, local time, was then circling around the area that Iranians say that it's turned off, or as they put it, mast, some of their identification equipment on board, obviously, not wanting to be seen, the Iranian say, by Iranian detection equipment.*** (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)
- (397) ***And then they say that it violated Iranian airspace sometime this morning and was shot down south of the Strait of Hormuz.*** (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)
- (398) ***US troops are stationed at the Al Assad airbase and that was hit with more than a dozen ballistic missiles.*** (CNN, Jan11, 2020)
- (399) ***The missiles hit areas of the base that were not occupied by troops.*** (CNN, Jan11, 2020)
- (400) ***They had the SA-15, which is a Russian-made surface to air missile, made in the early 80s, not particularly overly sophisticated, but it has some capabilities to go after particularly, you know,***

– *cruise missiles is why it was developed, which means it has some incredible maneuverability.* (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)

- (401) *So there's a man either in the loop or there's a man on the loop and defers to the machine.* (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)
- (402) *Could that be the case here that some dope decided to fire missile in clear error of something that looks nothing like **something coming to hit you, right?*** (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)

CONFLICT IS A PHYSICAL FORCE

- (403) *Rep. Schiff on CNN: Trump Must De-Escalate **Tensions** with Iran.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (404) *We can't ignore the fact that the situation we're in now was so eminently predictable, that if we backed out of the Iran nuclear deal, if we cause other nations to, once again, impose sanctions on Iran, then we shouldn't be all that surprised that Iran is going to lead the deal and go back to enriching or that we're going to get these **increased tensions** and likelihood of conflict, that step plus, you know, the designation of the RGC is a terrorist group, I think, is predictable right that Iran would lash out through the IRGC in terms of that decision as well.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (405) *'What this is is just notifying the Iraqis of movements that are going to be happening, that this is standard, there was going to be a lot of chopper, helicopter movement in Baghdad and they did not want, considering the current **tensions**, people to think that there are any additional coming in, so this was just notifying them of that'.* (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)
- (406) ***Tensions** have been rising for weeks.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (407) *And of course, Jake, all of this comes as the **tensions** here have been boiling over and continue to boil over.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (408) *But the **tensions** couldn't be higher.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (409) *You're following breaking news in the **escalating tensions** with Iran.* (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (410) *And we've also heard from the vessel's owner, Stena Bulk and Northern Marine Management, who has said that the vessel was approached by unidentified small craft and a helicopter and that they'd lost contact with the vessel while it was operating in the Strait of Hormuz, that narrow stretch of waterway that has been the focal point between these **tensions, between the US and Iran.*** (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (411) *Fred, what would be Iran's motivation for this, for **escalating tensions**?* (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (412) *But of course, generally also, this has to do with the general **tensions between the US and Iran** in that waterway, Ryan was just saying it.* (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (413) *There had been a **flurry of incidents** in that waterway: attacks on tankers that the US has attributed to Iran, the Iranians saying they weren't behind it: the shooting down of that US drone, which the US says was an international airspace, the Iranians are saying that it went into their airspace.* (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (414) *They're clearly sending the message that they are the ones who are in control of that area, they're not going to back down from that area, obviously all this coming amid the **tensions** between the Trump administration and the Iranian government over the nuclear agreement, over Iran's nuclear program, Ana.* (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (415) *Right, let's get to General Hertling because, as Fred just mentioned, General Hertling, **there's been a lot going now between this, back and forth, between Iran and the US.*** (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (416) *And as Fred just said, that's a very tight waterway, ships are very well-controlled in that area, you know exactly where you are, according to either [...] or to satellite feeds, and folks know whether you're in international waters or in territorial waters. It's confusing, it's **tough**, it's tight, so it will be tense.* (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (417) *And as Fred just said, that's a very tight waterway, ships are very well-controlled in that area, you know exactly where you are, according to either [...] or to satellite feeds, and folks know whether you're in international waters or in territorial waters. It's confusing, it's tough, it's **tight**, so it will be tense.* (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)

- (418) *And as Fred just said, that's a very tight waterway, ships are very well-controlled in that area, you know exactly where you are, according to either [...] or to satellite feeds, and folks know whether you're in international waters or in territorial waters. It's confusing, it's tough, it's tight, so it will be **tense**.* (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (419) *Let's add one more thing to this issue though, is right now, whenever there are **tensions like this between any two countries**, diplomatic agencies can talk to each other, the ambassadors can talk to each other, we have really, the US has really no way to communicate with the Iranian government other than open communication, and what I mean by that is either news releases or, in some cases, twitter feeds.* (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (420) *Sam, the killing of Iran's top nuclear scientists could fuel more **tensions** between Tehran and Washington.* (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)
- (421) *Give us a sense of how significant this is and **the impact that it has on national security**.* (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)
- (422) *And when we look at **the impact in Iran**, let's remember, in addition to his current role, the target of this attack also was a human library of historical information with respect to Iran's nuclear program.* (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)
- (423) *Yeah, and we can understand why, perhaps, in that region flying over Syrian airspace, not many months after the Iranians shot down a Ukrainian airliner coming out of Tehran with two rockets, the black box for that being delivered, as you know, Hala, a few days ago to Paris for a further examination, **highly intense war zone**.* (CNN, Jul 24, 2020)
- (424) *There have been **tensions between Iran and South Korea**, we know that there is an estimated \$7 billion in Iranian funds that have been frozen in South Korean banks since 2019.* (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)
- (425) *Since the US withdrew from the deal intended to reduce sanctions against Iran in return for it suspending its nuclear program, and, in fact, imposed even heavier sanctions, **tensions have steadily increased**, especially at sea.* (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)
- (426) *America is saying 'no', leaving the gunboats to circle **amid spiraling tensions**.* (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)
- (427) *Yeah, the sanctions, the accusations of tanker attacks at sea, this US drone being shot down, **tensions in the region are indeed, as you put it, spiraling**.* (CNN, Jun 20, 2019)

POLITICS IS A JOURNEY

- (428) *And it's really hard to see **which way this is going right now**.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (429) *And it is the reason, or at least one of the main reasons, why successive US presidents from George W. Bush to Barack Obama, and up until now, President Trump, **have not taken this massive escalatory step**.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (430) *And remember, the French is saying it's more dangerous, because Emmanuel Macron was the mediator between President Trump and Hassan Rouhani **trying to get that relationship back on track**, but the US have gone from maximum economic pressure to now military action.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (431) *So, this is **a tough road ahead**.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (432) *So, we need to figure out a strategy to de-escalate, to deter this kind of conduct, to protect shipping, to protect our aircraft, and I think most significant, as this is an attack on many nations, it ought to be an international response; we shouldn't allow Iran **to drive us away from our allies**.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (433) *What do you think **the way is forward**?* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (434) *So, it's very important that the international response be a cohesive one and **we take whatever steps have the least risk of escalating the situation**.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (435) *So, I think it's necessary, and yes, it's, I think, frustrating, and it is also dangerous in terms of system of checks and balances that the administration would **take us down this path**, but Congress has really left with no choice except to litigate to make sure we get answers.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)

- (436) *General Hertling, **what should we expect from the US moving forward?*** (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (437) *So, these words from the Iranian Foreign Minister, although not surprising, are obviously going to now help shape the understanding for the United States and its allies **the direction of travel for Iran at the moment**, Rosemary.* (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)
- (438) *The Iranians were abiding by the terms of a nuclear deal, which had essentially stopped them for at least 15 years **on a pathway to a nuclear weapon**.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (439) *Military commanders behind the scenes are not looking **for a march to war**, but they are not excusing the attack, highlighting the international nature of the Iranian threat.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (440) *So again, we don't know exactly why **President Trump is walking this fine line**.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (441) *These crowds demanding Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei step down, this coming at a critical time for the regime, **it tries to map a route out of the crisis with the U.S.*** (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (442) *And still, **no real diplomatic off-ramp in sight**.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (443) *And today, it does seem that the Iranians, Becky, are **taking a different tack**, pro-regime elements having a prayer vigil at the same site as the protests.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (444) *Just moments ago, we heard from the Defense Secretary Mark Esper, we also heard from the National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien, as they're trying **to fumble their way through the intelligence that led to the US airstrikes on Soleimani**.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (445) *I would agree with the French Foreign Minister, the statement that Foreign Minister Javad Zarif of Iran put out the day that they announced that they were going to **take another step away from the nuclear deal** was very clear that they were staying in the deal.* (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)
- (446) *And that's why **they've started to step away**, starting about in May of 2019.* (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)
- (447) *Again, the good news here is that **Iran has not actually moved forward very far in moving back towards the huge, much larger stockpile of uranium that it had prior to the deal**.* (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)
- (448) *Again, the good news here is that Iran has not actually moved forward very far in **moving back towards the huge, much larger stockpile of uranium that it had prior to the deal**.* (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)

POLITICS IS BUSINESS

- (449) *The American strategy is to create maximum pressure on the Iranians to come back to **the negotiating table**.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (450) *So that is their aim to get them back to **the negotiating table**.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (451) *Their allies do not want to come to **the negotiating table** under pressure.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (452) *But no one has actually answered the question of why in the first place were there any indications in this letter that there would be some sort of a withdrawal, why mention that, why say it is **on the table**.* (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)
- (453) *If that was **on the table**, you would have the basis for talks.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (454) *Sanctions brought them to **the table to negotiate**.* (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)
- (455) *What do you think the chance is that **you get any buy-in** from Republicans on this bill as simple as it is?* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (456) *Perhaps, it's because he feels that playing coy **could buy him, a sort of, meeting with the Iranian leadership**, which we know he wants, Anderson.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)

CONFLICT IS HEAT

- (457) *Look, we have **a simmering, or we had until a few hours ago, a simmering conflict with Iran that included things like attacks in Iraq, but also remember Iran was picking up ships in the Persian Gulf**.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (458) *Going back a few months, we've decided to take a **simmering relationship** into a boiling relationship.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)

- (459) *Going back a few months, we've decided to take a simmering relationship into a **boiling relationship**.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (460) *So, they're looking at this not just as the elimination of a general, but as an opportunity to respond to America that just decided they wanted to go from a **simmer** to a **boil**.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (461) *So, they're looking at this not just as the elimination of a general, but as an opportunity to respond to America that just decided they wanted to go from a **simmer** to a **boil**.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (462) *And this, the kind of proxy war that we're looking at right now that we just **turned up the heat on**, was one of the top five, either Iran against the United States, or Iran against the ally of the United States.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (463) *And of course, Jake, all of this comes as **the tensions here have been boiling over and continue to boil over**.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (464) *The Trump **policies have sort of heated things up**.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (465) *Chants of death to the Supreme Leader, **angry blowback** for the downing of the Ukrainian passenger jet gathering momentum in Tehran.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (466) *Their death – a **spark igniting tinder-dry middle-class frustrations**.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (467) *Their death – a **spark igniting tinder-dry middle-class frustrations**.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (468) *And they've got, you know, Hezbollah in Lebanon and Syria and elsewhere, they've played a very destructive role in other parts of the Middle East, through their proxies **to raise the temperature once again**, without invoking a more substantial US strike.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (469) *Sam, the killing of Iran's top nuclear scientists **could fuel more tensions** between Tehran and Washington.* (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)
- (470) *So, you have a **very hot, contested, busy airspace over Iran**.* (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)

POLITICS/WAR IS A GAME

- (471) *Our John Defterios is in Abu Dhabi for us. Now, I mean, can we overstate really, John, how much of a **game changer this attack** has been when it comes to the energy market?* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (472) ***This is no simple game**, and it certainly makes it very challenging for the crown prince to push forward his vision, 2030 plan, I would say, Paula.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (473) *This is no simple game, and it certainly makes it **very challenging** for the crown prince to push forward his vision, 2030 plan, I would say, Paula.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (474) *Fareed Zakaria: Trump put Iran in a box **without any endgame**.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (475) *So, all you got was maximum pressure, putting Iran in a box, **without any endgame**, without any objective other than seemingly regime change.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (476) *When asked about a US military response, President Trump **playing his cards close to the vest** in the initial hours.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (477) *And then of course all the incidents surrounding the transit of **the USS Boxer** into that area not too long ago.* (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (478) *Iranians, whether or not that drone was being shot down, were definitely buzzing that ship, they had a helicopter around that ship as well; they've released surveillance video of them tracking **the USS Boxer** and I can tell you I've gone through this Strait of Hormuz on a USS Nimitz class carrier – it is extremely narrow and it's a time when a big ship like that is very vulnerable.* (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (479) *The Iranian drone that was shot down was invading the defensive space of **the Boxer** yesterday.* (CNN, Jul 19, 2019)
- (480) *There's been headlines, some very misleading headlines, I would say in newspapers saying that **Iran is now racing to a nuclear weapon**.* (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)
- (481) *They see it as a **huge victory for European diplomacy**.* (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)
- (482) *So, you have a very hot, **contested, busy airspace over Iran**.* (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)
- (483) *Forensically are you going to be able to determine where these missiles came from, if they let the NTSB in on the investigation, **as has been ping ponged**, back and forth?* (CNN, Jan 10, 2020)

POLITICS IS A PLAY (THEATRE)

- (484) *We'll see how it **plays out**.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (485) *But we do know that of course, **behind the scenes** this was going on.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (486) *He's a fascinating **character**, he commanded a division in the Iran-Iraq war in the late 80s.* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (487) *Military commanders **behind the scenes** are not looking for a march to war, but they are not excusing the attack, highlighting the international nature of the Iranian threat.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (488) *There's no question that Iran is **the bad actor**.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (489) *But clearly Iran's **the bad actor**, we've got to try to re-engage the international community to isolate Iran, rather than isolate America.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)
- (490) *Trump assured reporters that they were both on the same page, but that would lead you to ask, why President Trump is suddenly **playing coy**, giving all the bluster and all the rhetoric that he's spewed in the past about Iran, specifically that 'locked and loaded' tweet.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (491) *Perhaps, it's because he feels that **playing coy** could buy him, a sort of, meeting with the Iranian leadership, which we know he wants, Anderson.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (492) *Iran has zero credibility **on the international stage** and for several days they said that they didn't shoot down the airliner, international countries were putting forward evidence that that wasn't the case, they had no way to turn.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (493) *Fallout over the downed plane now becoming a perfect storm for Iran **in the global spotlight** with international investigators poking around as domestic protests grow and sanctions increase, and Iran's recourse to violence, muted by fear of escalation.* (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)
- (494) *And they've got, you know, Hezbollah in Lebanon and Syria and elsewhere, **they've played a very destructive role** in other parts of the Middle East, through their proxies to raise the temperature once again, without invoking a more substantial US strike.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (495) *Military analysts say Iran could **stage attacks** such as those last year on tankers in the Strait of Hormuz and Saudi oil fields.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (496) *Well, traditionally, it's been Iran, a supporting proxy forces that they help groups in different parts of the world, including in Iraq, including in Syria, including certainly in Yemen, which are against our interests, it'd be rare to see those assets being used against America other than **in the theatres in which they're operating currently**.* (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)

PEOPLE ARE OBJECTS

- (497) *Or was it about trying to have a regime change in Iran, get the Iraqis **to throw the Iranians out there**?* (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)
- (498) *Then, a letter from the top US journal leaked appearing to indicate **the US troops would withdraw** from Iraq. Barbara Starr has more on the Pentagon struggle to clarify what that letter actually means.* (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)
- (499) *What it says is that **US troops are repositioning** in Iraq and that is true.* (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)
- (500) *You heard there from Barbara, US officials here were saying 'listen, this is not a withdrawal, this is absolutely not happening, **this is just repositioning of troops**, moving them around, they're remaining in the region.* (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)
- (501) *What we know is, US officials here, US officials in Washington DC coming out and clearly saying that that is not happening, that **US troops are not planning at this point to withdraw** from the country, and that could also have some reaction here, some implications.* (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)
- (502) *So, with that said, he's caught, you know, right now between having promised to **bring troops** home from the Middle East and having drawn a red line when it comes to Iran.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (503) *He doesn't want to **keep troops** in Syria, even in Afghanistan.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)

- (504) *It's all coming as the Pentagon is **deploying an additional thousand troops** to the region as a deterrent against what the Trump administration calls increased Iranian aggression. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (505) *Then Iran is believed to have attacked commercial tankers last month and again last week, using mines to leave gaping holes leading to **another 1000 troops being sent** for further deterrence of Iran. (CNN, Jun 21, 2019)*
- (506) *Police toss tear gas, **scatter the crowds**. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (507) *And when we look at the impact in Iran, let's remember, in addition to his current role, **the target of this attack also was a human library of historical information** with respect to Iran's nuclear program. (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)*

METONYMY

- (508) *Fareed Zakaria: **Trump put Iran in a box** without any endgame. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (509) *The anger – quite simply: Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei doesn't care about his people; **he didn't pause civilian flights** while attacking US bases in Iraq. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (510) *The anger – quite simply: Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei doesn't care about his people; he didn't pause civilian flights **while attacking US bases in Iraq**. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (511) *I think that's because President Rouhani has his eye on the prize, which is sanctions relief. (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (512) *And I think that that's the most important question that we have going forward, it is absolutely clear that it costs **Qasem Soleimani, the head of the Quds force of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps** was, as we've all been saying all morning since this happened, the second if not the most important person in Iran, who was the major arm of Iran's foreign policy abroad, and who has networks and tentacles and huge influence across that region: Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, you name it. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (513) *And I think that that's the most important question that we have going forward, it is absolutely clear that it costs Qasem Soleimani, the head of the Quds force of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps was, as we've all been saying all morning since this happened, the second if not the most important person in Iran, who was **the major arm of Iran's foreign policy abroad**, and who has networks and tentacles and huge influence across that region: Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, you name it. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (514) *Is **Kim now going to launch something** and give us two parts of the world to look at? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (515) *Is **Kim now going to launch something** and give us two parts of the world to look at? (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (516) *What about the Secretary of State Mike Pompeo? I mean, he is known for his anti-Iran stance, and he has **the President's ear** in this conflict. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*
- (517) *Fareed Zakaria: **Trump put Iran in a box** without any endgame. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*

PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS

- (518) *And I think that that's the most important question that we have going forward, it is absolutely clear that it costs Qasem Soleimani, the head of the Quds force of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps was, as we've all been saying all morning since this happened, the second if not the most important person in Iran, who was the major arm of Iran's foreign policy abroad, and **who has networks and tentacles** and huge influence across that region: Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, you name it. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (519) *But it's not the person you take out, it's what they leave behind, **and the tentacles** and who comes next. (CNN, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (520) *Following that you saw statements from some Republicans, including Republican Senator Tom Cotton, **a hawkish ally of the President** in the senate, who called for retaliation from the United States against Iran. (CNN, Dec 29, 2019)*

- (521) *Secondly, the people he seems to trust, and that is Bibi Netanyahu in Israel and Mike Pompeo are very anti-Iran and **very hawkish**, and in the absence of any formed geopolitical views of his own, he has essentially sort of adopted those.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)

ENERGY MARKET IS AN EARTHQUAKE

- (522) *Well, when speaking about **the global energy market**, I would describe it as an earthquake, Paula, because the epicenter is Saudi Arabia and it is the number one exporter, and we go on to say that there's probably going to be tremors for at least four weeks going forward.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (523) *Well, when speaking about the global energy market, I would describe it as an earthquake, Paula, because **the epicenter is Saudi Arabia** and it is the number one exporter, and we go on to say that there's probably going to be tremors for at least four weeks going forward.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (524) *Well, when speaking about the global energy market, I would describe it as an earthquake, Paula, because the epicenter is Saudi Arabia and it is the number one exporter, and we go on to say that there's probably going to be **tremors** for at least four weeks going forward.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (525) *But **world oil markets were briefly rocked** nonetheless, and bigger attacks could undeniably create larger shocks.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (526) *But world oil markets were briefly rocked nonetheless, **and bigger attacks could undeniably create larger shocks.*** (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)

THE IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL IS A PERSON

- (527) *We've got EU foreign minister and the NATO Secretary General met Friday **to try to resuscitate the deal.*** (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)
- (528) *We know that the French Foreign Minister Le Drian said that the deal, "**is not dead**", is it?* (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)
- (529) *So, it's a bit of a **zombie deal** at this point.* (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)
- (530) *It's **not dead yet**, but I don't think that imposing additional sanctions is going to make that much of an impact at this point.* (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)

ECONOMIC INSTABILITY IS PHYSICAL FORCE

- (531) *Alright, **grave impacts** of all of this: the Saudi Arabian oil output now slashed by 5.7 million barrels a day after that coordinated attack on its facilities.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (532) *Alright, grave impacts of all of this: **the Saudi Arabian oil output now slashed by 5.7 million barrels a day** after that coordinated attack on its facilities.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)
- (533) *Now we're looking at a shortage, as you suggested, 5.7 million barrels a day is a record **knocked out** over a weekend by any stretch of the imagination; go back to the 1990s the invasion of Kuwait, the ouster of Muammar Quaddafi.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)

A STATE/NATION IS A HOME

- (534) *So, with that said, he's caught, you know, right now between having promised to **bring troops home from the Middle East** and having drawn a red line when it comes to Iran.* (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)
- (535) *Shia militias, Hezbollah, Hamas, the Houthis groups that could use Iranian intelligence, logistics, weapons and more to launch terror strikes on US allies, embassies, military bases, American officials, or even private citizens abroad or **at home.*** (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)

ESCALATION HAS LEVELS

- (536) *But it has a feel at the moment as well, something of a tit for tat with the United States because the United States has designated so many people and groups in Iran as terrorist organizations*

- that the Iranians have bridled against, you know, the whole time that President Trump has been, sort of, **escalating up his maximum sanctions** and isolation of Iran. (CNN, Jan 7, 2020)*
- (537) *They know that if we go **all the way up the escalation ladder**, you know, our capabilities, our Air Force, our naval capabilities will destroy theirs. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*

CONFLICT IS A NATURAL DISASTER

- (538) *Fallout over the downed plane now becoming **a perfect storm** for Iran in the global spotlight with international investigators poking around as domestic protests grow and sanctions increase, and Iran's recourse to violence, muted by fear of escalation. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*

ENERGY MARKET IS A PERSON

- (539) *And I think they are trying **to guide the market**. (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)*

DIPLOMACY IS A PERSON

- (540) *Because diplomacy has been dead, there has been an increased reliance on covert operations. (CNN, Nov 29, 2020)*

STATE IS AN ANIMAL

- (541) *So, his loss will be a temporary setback, but **the IRGC has tentacles** everywhere and will replace him that will, have already placed him with his deputies, Mark Carney. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*

THE IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL IS AN OBJECT

- (542) *Unfortunately, by leaving the Iran nuclear deal, the president basically very much frustrated the Europeans by **throwing out what had been a great accomplishment**. (CNN, Jan 11, 2020)*

ARGUMENT IS A PHYSICAL FORCE

- (543) *Trump assured reporters that they were both on the same page, but that would lead you to ask, why President Trump is suddenly playing coy, giving all the bluster and **all the rhetoric that he's spewed** in the past about Iran, specifically that 'locked and loaded' tweet. (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)*

PEOPLE ARE WAVES

- (544) *It is not only facing the scrutiny of the world, but its own people, too – with one tragic blunder, Iran has turned **a wave of popular supporting to a tide of anti-government fury**. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*

CONFLICT IS A RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCE

- (545) ***Fallout over the downed plane** now becoming a perfect storm for Iran in the global spotlight with international investigators poking around as domestic protests grow and sanctions increase, and Iran's recourse to violence, muted by fear of escalation. (CNN, Jan 12, 2020)*

CONFLICT IS A PLANT

- (546) *I think, from the American and Iraqi perspective, that is going to remain **a very thorny issue** in the coming days and weeks, Hannah. (CNN, Jan 8, 2020)*

ECONOMY IS A PERSON

- (547) *But what's interesting, and I think it's very strongly reflected by what Paula was just saying there, is that the US administration under Trump has been out of whack very seriously with the international community resulting, for example, in the sanctions that have been unilaterally imposed by the United States on Iran, means that **the international banking system when it tries***

to deal with Iran is crippled, since most of these debts and trades are managed in US dollars. (CNN, Jan 5, 2021)

CONFLICT IS MEDICINE

(548) *The final thing I would add, whoever is doing this, **the perpetrators have been extremely surgical**, if we can bring up the graphic here.* (CNN, Sep 17, 2019)

2. Identified in Fox News

THE STATE IS A PERSON

- (20) ***Iran intercepts another UK oil tanker** in Strait of Hormuz.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (21) ***Iran denied that claim** and then today the deputy foreign minister of Iran said in fact that it's possible that the United States shot down its own drone.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (22) *Iran denied that claim and then today the deputy foreign minister of Iran said in fact that it's possible that **the United States shot down its own drone**.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (23) ***This is also frustrating for the United States** because the president has said time and time again, he needs European allies to jump in and actually assist in trying to secure this shipping channel where this is all taking place.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (24) *This is also frustrating for the United States because the president has said time and time again, he needs **European allies to jump in** and actually assist in trying to secure this shipping channel where this is all taking place.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (25) *This is also frustrating for the United States because the president has said time and time again, he needs **European allies to jump in and actually assist in trying to secure this shipping channel** where this is all taking place.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (26) *He has made clear we're prepared to conduct negotiations with no preconditions, the Iranians continue to say, "well, we'll talk, but if and only if **the United States does something**."* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (27) ***And Iran wants the world to believe that it's dangerous and possibly risky to go to the Strait of Hormuz**, and thereby, oil goes up.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (28) ***If they go over the line** and they push it too far, there will be a US military response directly – and that changes the dynamic 100%.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (29) ***If they go over the line and they push it too far**, there will be a US military response directly – and that changes the dynamic 100%.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (30) *If they go over the line and they push it too far, **there will be a US military response directly** – and that changes the dynamic 100%.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (31) *So, **it is a game of chicken that Iran is playing** currently, and we will see how far it goes.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (32) *I mean, let's talk about how serious it would be for the failure to secure support for the maritime initiative because not only would that be a big blow to the **efforts made by the United States**, it would be a blow to its Sunni Muslim ally Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates to isolate Shia Muslim Iran and Iran-backed forces in the Middle East.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (33) *This whole thing is escalating by the day and the question now is who is going to take the upper hand. Obviously, **the United States wants to tamper things down**, but without our allies, can we do it?* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (34) *Yeah, and I think they are hoping that **the allies will be on the US side**, they are increasing sanctions.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (35) *Tensions could prompt **Iran to wage a cyber-attack against US**.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (36) *Yeah, a lot of attention on Russia lately, but **Iran is a serious cyber-actor**.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (37) *They certainly don't have **the capability that Russia has**.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)

- (38) *But you have to remember for Iran, particularly given the region they're in and the competitiveness they have with other Gulf states, as well as the US, this is an existential battle for them, right.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (39) *So, Iran is targeting military personnel through somewhat sophisticated techniques to try to gain access to their accounts and learn about the US activities, particularly in the region, so we've seen a lot of targeted attacks against navy personnel, because obviously we have a huge naval presence in the Gulf.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (40) *So, Iran is targeting military personnel through somewhat sophisticated techniques to try to gain access to their accounts and learn about the US activities, particularly in the region, so we've seen a lot of targeted attacks against navy personnel, because obviously we have a huge naval presence in the Gulf.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (41) *So, they have demonstrated the capability, they have not used destructive attacks against the US, but Iranian cyber-activities are usually a pretty good proxy for US-Iranian relations, which is to say, as relations deteriorate between the US and Iran, as they have over the last weeks significantly, we tend to see an uptick or escalation in Iranian cyber-operations, and that's playing out right now.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (42) *So, they have demonstrated the capability, they have not used destructive attacks against the US, but Iranian cyber-activities are usually a pretty good proxy for US-Iranian relations, which is to say, as relations deteriorate between the US and Iran, as they have over the last weeks significantly, we tend to see an uptick or escalation in Iranian cyber-operations, and that's playing out right now.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (43) *The head of American forces in the region General Frank McKenzie was recently in the Middle East warning of an unspecified imminent threat from Iran and its proxies.* (Fox News, Jun 13, 2019)
- (44) *In a few moments I'll be talking to General Jack Keane about Iran's suspected hand in all this.* (Fox News, Jun 13, 2019)
- (45) *And this comes just a month after four different oil tankers were attacked by mines, which the Pentagon blamed on Iran, Eric.* (Fox News, Jun 13, 2019)
- (46) *I think it's wonderful to see the administration stand up, call these thugs and killers out for who they really are and back the Iranian people.* (Fox News, Nov 27, 2019)
- (47) *I think it's wonderful to see the administration stand up, call these thugs and killers out for who they really are and back the Iranian people.* (Fox News, Nov 27, 2019)
- (48) *I think it's wonderful to see the administration stand up, call these thugs and killers out for who they really are and back the Iranian people.* (Fox News, Nov 27, 2019)
- (49) *It's not so much a problem that the government can solve.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (50) *Of course, the government can help with investigating these and ultimately deterring future attacks by bringing these people to justice.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (51) *But the end users, the organizations themselves have a responsibility to make sure that their systems are up to date, so that they're not being exploited by this malware that ultimately locks it up.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (52) *Secretary Pompeo signing 20,000 pieces of digital evidence, he says, shows the Irani regime's abuses of street protesters and others, saying he and the President are following the deadly protests very closely.* (Fox News, Nov 27, 2019)
- (53) *But it doesn't mean we can't change this regime's behavior, and that's what the sanctions is all about and I think there is a real opportunity out there to do that.* (Fox News, Nov 27, 2019)
- (54) *So, they don't want to believe that Iran has this long history of escalations, right, they want to believe that Trump's started this fight.* (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (55) *Every member of Congress should be calling free Iran, that the Iranian people are more like us than you realize, their regime is so evil, but these people want freedom.* (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (56) *Secretary Perry on Saudi oil attacks: Iran will have to pay a price.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)

- (57) *All right, well, more fallout from the attacks on Saudi oil facilities as **France and Germany and Great Britain now say that they believe Iran was behind those drone strikes.*** (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (58) *All right, well, more fallout from the attacks on Saudi oil facilities as France and Germany and Great Britain now say that **they believe Iran was behind those drone strikes.*** (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (59) *In the meantime, **the Kingdom has now restored** more than 75% of its overall crude output.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (60) *But again, the key here **from the United States'**, and I think our allies' **standpoint**, is that Iran cannot be allowed to get by with this type of activity.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (61) *But again, the key here from the United States', and I think **our allies' standpoint**, is that Iran cannot be allowed to get by with this type of activity.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (62) *But again, the key here from the United States', and I think our allies' **standpoint**, is that **Iran cannot be allowed to get by** with this type of activity.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (63) *But again, the key here from the United States', and I think our allies' **standpoint**, is that Iran cannot be allowed to get by **with this type of activity.*** (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (64) *Now, you know, **the UK and the French coming on with some of our other allies** and they're going to be sending a clear message today, I know the president's going to be stronger than garlic when it comes to the message.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (65) *Now, you know, **the UK and the French coming on with some of our other allies** and **they're going to be sending a clear message today**, I know the president's going to be stronger than garlic when it comes to the message.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (66) *I think he's going to **speak very bluntly to the Iranian leadership** that this is activities, this is the type of... if you're going to be a part of the community in this world, you cannot attack your neighbors.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (67) *I think he's going to **speak very bluntly to the Iranian leadership** that this is activities, this is the type of... if you're going to be **a part of the community in this world**, you cannot attack your neighbors.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (68) *I think he's going to **speak very bluntly to the Iranian leadership** that this is activities, this is the type of... if you're going to be a part of the community in this world, **you cannot attack your neighbors.*** (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (69) *So, I think the message is going to be strong, it's going to be powerful, that **Iran is going to have to pay a price** and could pay a very dear price economically.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (70) *So, I think the message is going to be strong, it's going to be powerful, that **Iran** is going to have to pay a price and **could pay a very dear price economically.*** (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (71) *So okay, first start with **the response from the United States** when it comes to Iran and how far this administration is willing to go.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (72) *So okay, first start with the response from the United States when it comes to Iran and **how far this administration is willing to go.*** (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (73) ***Iran makes the case**, Mr. Secretary, that those sanctions primarily hurt the Iranian people and not the leadership.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (74) *Iran makes the case, Mr. Secretary, that **those sanctions primarily hurt the Iranian people and not the leadership.*** (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (75) *These leaders over there, they're not suffering the way the Iranian people are, but these sanctions are clearly being put in place to **send a message to the leadership of Iran**, 'we will continue to squeeze you'.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (76) *Trump **blames Iran** for US Embassy attack in Iraq, vows to hold regime 'fully responsible'.* (Fox News, Dec 31, 2019)
- (77) *Trump blames Iran for US Embassy attack in Iraq, **vows to hold regime 'fully responsible'**.* (Fox News, Dec 31, 2019)
- (78) ***The Trump administration** says Kata'ib Hezbollah is responsible for a missile attack Friday on an Iraqi military base that killed an American contractor.* (Fox News, Dec 31, 2019)

- (79) *The Trump administration says **Kata'ib Hezbollah is responsible for a missile attack** Friday on an Iraqi military base that killed an American contractor. (Fox News, Dec 31, 2019)*
- (80) *Senior State Department officials say after so many attacks from Iran-backed fighters and their significant presence in Iraq, **the United States had to respond** in a way Iran understands that's with airstrikes. (Fox News, Dec 31, 2019)*
- (81) *Senior State Department officials say after so many attacks from Iran-backed fighters and their significant presence in Iraq, **the United States had to respond in a way Iran understands** that's with airstrikes. (Fox News, Dec 31, 2019)*
- (82) ***The Iraqi government caught here between American and Iranian influence** protested the American airstrikes as a violation of Iraqi sovereignty and warned they would invite trouble just hours before these protests began. (Fox News, Dec 31, 2019)*
- (83) *The Iraqi government caught here between American and Iranian influence protested the American airstrikes as a violation of Iraqi sovereignty and **warned they would invite trouble** just hours before these protests began. (Fox News, Dec 31, 2019)*
- (84) ***Iran denies involvement** in drone attacks on Saudi oil facilities. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (85) *Back to our top story: **Iran says** that they are not responsible for this weekend's massive drone attacks on two Saudi Arabia oil facilities. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (86) *Back to our top story: Iran says that **they are not responsible for this weekend's massive drone attacks** on two Saudi Arabia oil facilities. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (87) *This, after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo **directly blamed Iran**. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (88) *Michael, Secretary of State, some people have been very critical of him, coming out and saying this early on that **Iran is responsible for this**, but you believe he's spot on. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (89) *I believe he's spot on because it is **the Islamic Republic that provided the training**, the lethal aid and the capability to not only Iraqi militias but also to Houthis. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (90) *I believe he's spot on because it is **the Islamic Republic that provided the training, the lethal aid** and the capability to not only Iraqi militias but also to Houthis. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (91) *I believe he's spot on because it is **the Islamic Republic that provided the training, the lethal aid and the capability** to not only Iraqi militias but also to Houthis. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (92) *I believe **Iran without a doubt is responsible for this** attack through, again, providing lethal aid and training these proxies on how to do exactly this. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (93) *I believe Iran without a doubt is responsible for this attack through, again, **providing lethal aid** and training these proxies on how to do exactly this. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (94) *I believe Iran without a doubt is responsible for this attack through, again, providing lethal aid and **training these proxies on how to do exactly this**. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (95) *And it's **definitely Iran that's responsible for this, not without a doubt, the Islamic Republic, the IRGC is responsible for this**. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (96) *And it's **definitely Iran that's responsible for this, not without a doubt, the Islamic Republic, the IRGC is responsible for this**. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (97) *Remember, prime minister Abe was sitting with the supreme leader when, or with Rouhani, when **the IRGC attacked a Japanese oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz** – that's why. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (98) ***This is just what Iran does**. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (99) *You have senator Lindsay Graham calling for possibly a retaliatory attack on Iranian oil refineries, the type of attack that would, **"break the regime's back."** (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (100) *And you have Kuwaiti media, eyewitnesses saying that the attack came from the north and flew over Kuwaiti air space into Saudi Arabia, and that's crucial because it's actually uniting – **UAE's kind of stayed a little bit away from Saudi Arabia**, and this is kind of bringing them down into the fold. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (101) *And you have Kuwaiti media, eyewitnesses saying that the attack came from the north and flew over Kuwaiti air space into Saudi Arabia, and that's crucial because it's actually uniting –*

- UAE's kind of stayed a little bit away from Saudi Arabia, and **this is kind of bringing them down into the fold.*** (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)
- (102) *This is a brazen attack on a US ally **from a dedicated enemy.*** (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)
- (103) *And I know everybody talks about Saudi Arabia and Iran, one's a necessary ally, **one's a dedicated enemy.*** (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)
- (104) *And this attack was meant to **embarrass the Kingdom** and also embarrass the US strategy in the region.* (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)
- (105) *And this attack was meant to embarrass the Kingdom and also **embarrass the US strategy** in the region.* (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)
- (106) *And now **the US military through the Navy is going to be moving assets** and has assets in the region, according to the head of Centcom, that essentially is going to be escorting various vessels, and there you have the possibility, at least, of something, you know, ticking off and creating a military incident.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (107) *But if you hear from a lot of the – I call them cheerleaders on Iraq – they're surprised that Iraq has gotten this bad to the point where **Israel is conducting airstrikes on Iraqi militias in Iraq,** and Iraqi people aren't protesting.* (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)
- (108) *You know, analysts on Iraq and Iran are surprised by this, but they shouldn't be, **this is exactly what the Islamic Republic does.*** (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)
- (109) ***Iran admits** its military shot down Ukrainian jetliner.* (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (110) ***Iran admits its military shot down** Ukrainian jetliner.* (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (111) *Iranian officials admit **the military unintentionally shot down** the Ukrainian passenger jet liner.* (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (112) *Well, I think, the bottom-line takeaway for me is that this whole tragedy has been **a real embarrassment for Iran.*** (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (113) ***The country has shown** that it's proficient at raging proxy wars and so-called grey zone warfare.* (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (114) *The country has shown that **it's proficient at raging proxy wars** and so-called grey zone warfare.* (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (115) *Also, I have to say, as a former combat pilot and somebody who's been up to warzones quite a bit over the course of my life, it's just crazy to me that **Iran would have left open its airspace** to civilian traffic just hours the country had lobbed ballistic missiles at US troops in Iraq.* (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (116) *Also, I have to say, as a former combat pilot and somebody who's been up to warzones quite a bit over the course of my life, it's just crazy to me that Iran would have left open its airspace to civilian traffic just hours **the country had lobbed ballistic missiles at US troops in Iraq.*** (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (117) *So, I think, just based on my experience as a pilot and as a war correspondent, that seems to me like the **blame is squarely on Iran's shoulders.*** (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (118) *Not so much on a personal level, but they are exploiting Navy personnel, so that the Iranians can understand more about **what the military is doing in the region** and potentially gain access to their accounts as a means of furthering access into military networks.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (119) ***Iran-backed militias blamed** for Baghdad rocket attack.* (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (120) *For the first time in eight years, **the US Navy's Fifth Fleet publicly announced** that it moved a guided missile submarine into the Persian Gulf.* (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (121) *For the first time in eight years, **the US Navy's Fifth Fleet publicly announced** that it **moved a guided missile submarine into the Persian Gulf.*** (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (122) ***The event drew condemnation from the Iraqi government** that called this a terrorist attack.* (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (123) *As US Secretary of State **Mike Pompeo blamed Iranian-backed militias** tweeting, "these violent and corrupt criminals must cease their destabilizing actions."* (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (124) *This statement drew **a direct response from Iran's foreign ministry,** "I think that the Iraqi Government will definitely find the perpetrators and those who order it based on its duties. I also*

- want the United States' regime not to seek starting a fire and waging conflict these days." (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (125) This statement drew a direct response from Iran's foreign ministry, "I think that the Iraqi Government will definitely find the perpetrators and those who order it based on its duties. I also want **the United States' regime not to seek starting a fire and waging conflict these days.**" (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (126) This statement drew a direct response from Iran's foreign ministry, "I think that the Iraqi Government will definitely find the perpetrators and those who order it based on its duties. I also want **the United States' regime not to seek starting a fire and waging conflict these days.**" (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (127) The American embassy was the target of numerous rocket attacks over the past year **conducted by suspected Iranian-backed Shia militias.** (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (128) The killing led **Iran to fire ballistic missiles** at a military base housing American troops in Iraq last January. (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (129) This January, **the Trump administration will reduce the number of US forces** operating in the country from 3000 to 2500 soldiers. (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (130) **There is hope by the regime in Tehran** that a Biden administration could lift economic sanctions on the Islamic Republic while allowing them to continue a controlled nuclear program, Brett. (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (131) There is hope by the regime in Tehran that **a Biden administration could lift economic sanctions** on the Islamic Republic while allowing them to continue a controlled nuclear program, Brett. (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (132) There is hope by the regime in Tehran that a Biden administration could lift economic sanctions on the Islamic Republic while **allowing them to continue a controlled nuclear program,** Brett. (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)
- (133) **Iran threatens revenge** for Trump killing of Soleimani. (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (134) How exactly is **Iran threatening revenge on the United States?** (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (135) **They want to negotiate with the Biden administration,** and get the sanctions removed that President Trump imposed on them because they are back on their heels, Sandra, in a way I haven't seen in 41 years, economically and also huge amount of civil unrest in the country as a result of it. (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (136) They want to negotiate with the Biden administration, and get the sanctions removed that President Trump imposed on them because **they are back on their heels,** Sandra, in a way I haven't seen in 41 years, economically and also huge amount of civil unrest in the country as a result of it. (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (137) **How's the United States responding to this?** (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (138) Well, **the United States certainly has our forces on alert** because of the rhetoric. (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (139) We brought B-52s into the theater to show the Iranians that... remind them of **the huge capability that the United States military has.** So, the United States military and the national security team certainly isn't ignoring it. (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (140) We brought B-52s into the theater to show the Iranians that... remind them of the huge capability that the United States military has. So, **the United States military** and the national security team **certainly isn't ignoring it.** (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (141) We brought B-52s into the theater to show the Iranians that... remind them of the huge capability that the United States military has. So, **the United States military** and the **national security team certainly isn't ignoring it.** (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (142) And two, and most significantly, they don't want to interfere with the potential to have a negotiation with President Biden who they are hoping will remove the sanctions in return for **the United States returning to the nuclear deal.** (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)

- (143) *Well, I think clearly what they're trying to say, the Israeli, certainly they have intelligence that, that we're not privy to have publicly, suddenly **the United States is sharing that with them.*** (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (144) *And the Israelis have always believed, and they had the evidence to prove it that **Iran really intends to build a nuclear weapon.*** (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (145) *And it revealed absolutely that **Iran is developing nuclear weapons,** and they fully intend to, despite the nuclear deal. (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (146) *And it revealed absolutely that Iran is developing nuclear weapons, and **they fully intend to,** despite the nuclear deal. (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (147) *And it explains why there's explosions taking place all over Iran in the last year to include one at Natanz, which is a uranium enrichment facility, and another is a missile production facility, widely believed to be **the Mossad doing this in an espionage campaign along with Iranian resistance groups.*** (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (148) *Yeah, because, General, for Israel, it's existential, it may be academic for others, but **Iran has said quite clearly** what they would want to do with a nuclear weapon. (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (149) *Yeah, because, General, for Israel, it's existential, it may be academic for others, but Iran has said quite clearly **what they would want to do with a nuclear weapon.*** (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (150) *And it takes a lot of gall to say something like that in the face of what **Israel is dealing with Iran.*** (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (151) *I mean, **Iran is a threat to the United States.*** (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (152) *They're not challenging **the survival of the United States.*** (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (153) *Nuclear weapons in their hands with ballistic missiles, and a continuous and repeated threat to destroy the State of Israel, **Iran is an existential threat to the survival of Israel.*** (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (154) *Nuclear weapons in their hands with ballistic missiles, and a continuous and repeated threat to destroy the State of Israel, Iran is an existential threat to **the survival of Israel.*** (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (155) *Trump offers peace to Iranian people hours after **Iran strikes US military bases.*** (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (156) ***The United States is ready to embrace peace with all who seek it.*** (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (157) *It's too bad that many in this country and abroad in the Western media think that **this regime speaks for its people.*** (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (158) *That's unfortunately **the sad story by Iran.*** (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (159) ***This regime tells the Iranian people** how to dress, women have to cover up, men are not allowed to be outlandish in their dress, in their outfit; what to think, what to read. (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)*
- (160) *So, **this is a regime that wants to dictate.*** (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (161) *The true Iranians, what do they want, – they remember where they came from and they know what they are capable of doing and going, and **this regime does not speak for them.*** (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (162) *They say yes, they have resistance units across the country, it's impossible to verify that, but certainly they do see this as a moment for opportunity because, as Khomeini said, **Soleimani was, what he called the soul of the regime,** right, the de facto or number two. (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)*
- (163) *So, Nazeer, you and I were talking before for the podcast, and we talked about the sanctions and the President ramped up the sanctions today, and I ask you do the Iranian people, do they **blame the United States** for everything that they can't do, everything they don't have. (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)*
- (164) *Do they **blame the US?*** (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (165) *And that's the irony of all this, **the blustery regime rhetoric deems America.*** (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (166) *They're not "**death to America**".* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)

- (167) *They're holding the regime accountable for their misery, they're saying they're not Syria, not Lebanon, "my life is only for Iran".* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (168) *So, they know that the regime elite is cracking down on them, they know that this is not the regime that they bargained for, then the revolution, and they want, as Lara said very aptly, **they want the regime to be held accountable.*** (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (169) *You got to ask every taxicab, you know, is this it, is it possible that the **regime could fall** this time and, Lara, you called it a moment, and that's the hope here is that potentially some of this will crack and we will see.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (170) ***Trump issues warning to Iran** in response to possible 'sneak attack'.* (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (171) *President Trump saying that **Iran and its proxies are planning a sneak attack against US troops in Iraq.*** (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (172) *As if there wasn't enough going on around the world with this coronavirus business, **national security rearing its head again today** with the president sending a sharp warning to the Iranian leadership about what might be in the works in Iraq in the coming days.* (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (173) *As if there wasn't enough going on around the world with this coronavirus business, national security rearing its head again today with the president sending a sharp **warning to the Iranian leadership** about what might be in the works in Iraq in the coming days.* (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (174) *The President tweeting, "upon information and belief, **Iran or its proxies are planning a sneak attack on US troops and/or assets in Iraq.*** (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (175) *If this happens, **Iran will pay a very heavy price, indeed!**"* (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (176) *Sources tell Fox News **the sneak attack was apparently being planned by Iranian-backed proxies in Iraq.*** (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)140
- (177) *Remember back on March 11, **the Iranian-backed Kata'ib Hezbollah launched some 15 rockets at Camp Taji,** north of Baghdad, killing two American and one British service member, wounding 14 more people.* (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (178) *A day later, **the US launched airstrikes against Kata'ib Hezbollah bases across Iraq.*** (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (179) *After those strikes the top US commander for the Middle East marine general Frank Mackenzie said **the United States has a right to** and will act in **self-defense.*** (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (180) *After those strikes the top US commander for the Middle East marine general Frank Mackenzie said **the United States has a right to** and **will act in self-defense.*** (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (181) *Also want to reiterate these strikes, these defensive strikes, were designed to destroy Iranian supplied advanced conventional weapons, and that **the United States acted in self-defense** in response to a direct and deliberate attack on an Iraqi base that host coalition service members.* (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (182) *The last time, again, that this happened back at the beginning of March, **the United States responded solely against** the militia responsible.* (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (183) *The last time, again, that this happened back at the beginning of March, the United States responded solely against **the militia responsible.*** (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (184) *I mean, it's pretty obvious **there's two countries that have the capability to do this.** One is the United States. The other is Israel.* (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)
- (185) *You mentioned the cyber-attacks that took place a decade ago, **the United States was involved in that** with the Israelis as a matter of public knowledge now.* (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)
- (186) *And they documented the fact that **Iran was developing a nuclear weapon.*** (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)
- (187) *Yeah, I don't think **the Mossad, who is likely executing this,** could do it without assistance.* (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)
- (188) *Yeah, I don't think **the Mossad, who is likely executing this, could do it without assistance.*** (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)
- (189) *If you accept the objective, that **we don't want Iran to have nuclear weapons** with missiles that can deliver them and I'm one of those who supports that.* (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)

- (190) *Then the strategy that the Israelis are doing, likely with **support from the United States**, at least in terms of moral support, any intelligence that could give would assist them, it's fairly savvy.* (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)
- (191) *Then the strategy that the Israelis are doing, likely with support from the United States, **at least in terms of moral support**, any intelligence that could give would assist them, it's fairly savvy.* (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)
- (192) *Well, it, I can't predict what Vice President Biden would do as President, but I can say he was part of the team that can construe the nuclear deal, which brought us to this debacle that we're dealing with, **which permits Iran** actually to acquire a nuclear weapon, when you would think the purpose of the nuclear deal would be to prevent them from having one.* (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)
- (193) *Well, it, I can't predict what Vice President Biden would do as President, but I can say he was part of the team that can construe the nuclear deal, which brought us to this debacle that we're dealing with, **which permits Iran actually to acquire a nuclear weapon**, when you would think the purpose of the nuclear deal would be to prevent them from having one.* (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)
- (194) ***Trump admin set to reimpose UN sanctions on Iran.*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (195) *Developing now: **The Trump administration set to announce** new sanctions on Iran, which were eased under the 2015 nuclear deal under President Obama.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (196) *Meanwhile, Joe Biden says he would want **the US to re-join the Iran** nuclear deal if he becomes president, "I will offer Tehran a credible path back to diplomacy. If Iran returns to strict compliance with the nuclear deal, the United States would rejoin the agreement as a starting point for follow-on negotiations."* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (197) *Meanwhile, Joe Biden says he would want the US to re-join the Iran nuclear deal if he becomes president, "I will **offer Tehran** a credible path back to diplomacy. If Iran returns to strict compliance with the nuclear deal, the United States would rejoin the agreement as a starting point for follow-on negotiations."* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
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- (199) *Meanwhile, Joe Biden says he would want the US to re-join the Iran nuclear deal if he becomes president, "I will offer Tehran a credible path back to diplomacy. If Iran returns to strict compliance with the nuclear deal, **the United States would rejoin** the agreement as a starting point for follow-on negotiations."* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (200) *And every indication is that they will not because **the Trump administration has systematically alienated the very people it needs** to enforce sanctions against Iran and get it to comply with the agreement that it signed in 2015.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (201) *And every indication is that they will not because the Trump administration has systematically alienated the very people it needs to enforce sanctions against **Iran and get it to comply with the agreement** that it signed in 2015.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (202) *And every indication is that they will not because the Trump administration has systematically alienated the very people it needs to enforce sanctions against Iran and get it to comply with **the agreement that it signed in 2015**.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (203) *He says that if he's elected president, **the US would re-join the Iran deal**.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (204) *Clearly, this negotiation would have to involve a renegotiation of the terms of the JCPOA, that is the Iran nuclear deal, which was **signed in 2015 by seven powers**.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (205) *The problem here is that **Iran has not stopped its aggressive activity**.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (206) *So, the nuclear deal has to be part of a broader campaign **to get Iran to stop those belligerent activities**.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)

- (207) *And when the United States tried to get sanctions against Iran reimposed in the form of extending an arms embargo last month, the UN Security Council, our allies, basically said, “no deal. You withdrew from this agreement. You don't have any standing here.”* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (208) *And when the United States tried to get sanctions against Iran reimposed in the form of extending an arms embargo last month, **the UN Security Council, our allies, basically said, “no deal. You withdrew from this agreement. You don't have any standing here.”*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (209) ***So, what the United States really has to do, which is what Joe Biden wants to do, is to repair relations with the very people whom we need to implement the Trump administration's maximum pressure policy.*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (210) *You can't impose maximum pressure on alone, **the United States needs allies in this fight.*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (211) *Because I mean, like you just pointed out, you know, despite **the administration's intentions, there are other members of the UN Security Council, including US allies, that disagree with the sanctions.*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (212) *Because I mean, like you just pointed out, you know, despite the administration's intentions, there are **other members of the UN Security Council, including US allies, that disagree with the sanctions.*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (213) *But right now, I will tell you, Iran, if we win, **Iran will be calling us within the first week, they're dying to make a deal, GDP down 27%.*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (214) *But right now, I will tell you, Iran, if we win, Iran will be calling us within the first week, **they're dying to make a deal, GDP down 27%.*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (215) *You know, it's just amazing to be the extent to which **countries like Iran always find enough money for terror.*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (216) *And Iran is very insistent that if Trump is re-elected, they are not going to knock on his door to make a deal.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (217) *And Iran is very insistent that if Trump is re-elected, **they are not going to knock on his door to make a deal.*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (218) *On the other hand, something must be done about Iran, and the maximum pressure campaign of Donald Trump has not succeeded in **stopping Iranian misbehavior.*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (219) *Everyone agreed that **Iran cannot develop a nuclear weapon, and that we will work together to stop it from doing so.*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (220) *Everyone agreed that Iran cannot develop a nuclear weapon, and that we will work together **to stop it from doing so.*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (221) ***Trump admin voices support for anti-government protests in Iran.*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (222) ***The Trump administration pointing to the protest in Tehran as proof that the Iranian people are ready for more accountability from their government.*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (223) *The Trump administration pointing to the protest in Tehran as proof that the Iranian people are ready for more **accountability from their government.*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (224) *So, the people of Iran protesting in the streets, they are chanting “down with the dictator” not **“death to America”.*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (225) *They've lost 82 of their own citizens, **the government covered everything up.*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (226) *So, what's **the world reaction** to President Trump's direct message to the people of Iran, and more importantly, how will the leaders of Iran react to this direct messaging?* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (227) *Well, in that tweet is **a direct message reminding Iran** that the US is watching with intelligence or surveillance.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (228) *Well, in that tweet is a direct message reminding Iran that **the US is watching with intelligence or surveillance.*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (229) *The international reaction, **we have seen Britain, France and Germany put out a fresh call to Iran** to get back in compliance with the nuclear deal.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)

- (230) *The international reaction, we have seen Britain, France and Germany put out **a fresh call to Iran to get back in compliance with the nuclear deal.*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (231) *So, President Trump wants to see if **the Iranian military is still in that stand down mode** from last week and not escalating again to the crisis.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (232) ***So does the US have a solid strategy concerning Iran** because as you said, you know, by most accounts, people in the know, people with authority and expertise figured that Iran won't really escalate or they're going to stand down as they have now, and they don't want a war, President Trump has said he doesn't want a war.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (233) *So does the US have a solid strategy concerning Iran because as you said, you know, by most accounts, people in the know, people with authority and expertise figured that **Iran won't really escalate** or they're going to stand down as they have now, and they don't want a war, President Trump has said he doesn't want a war.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (234) *So, you know, **what is the US strategy** considering they'd still just have to pivot, possibly.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (235) ***The US strategy** is and remains to confront Iran, keeping military pressure on, and to contain Iran.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (236) *The US strategy is and remains to **confront Iran**, keeping military pressure on, and to contain Iran.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (237) *We saw this morning that the Secretary of Treasury **Steven Mnuchin said he is working with a Chinese delegation to strangle off that last little bit of oil sales**, that China is still buying some oil from Iran, and they're trying to get that step down.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (238) *We saw this morning that the Secretary of Treasury Steven Mnuchin said he is working with a Chinese delegation to strangle off that last little bit of oil sales, that **China is still buying some oil from Iran**, and they're trying to get that step down.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (239) *Well, I think the path that the Trump administration really wants is for **Iran to come to the table** and talk about amendments to the nuclear deal – no nuclear weapons, control the missiles and put an end to the terrorism.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (240) *Well, I think the path that the Trump administration really wants is for Iran to come to the table and **talk about amendments to the nuclear deal** – no nuclear weapons, control the missiles and put an end to the terrorism.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (241) *The administration has been pretty clear about not wanting regime change, meaning getting rid of the government; they want **this regime to change its behavior**, and this is a great opportunity for Iran to do that.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (242) *The president has drawn no preconditions other than say **we want to meet with the Iranian government.*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (243) *So I think that that door is still open, as per Secretary Pompeo, the White House, they've all reconfirmed 'no preconditions', and very important, President Trump has said he would even let the Europeans **give Iran some immediate cash relief** if they start negotiation.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (244) *So it is a great opportunity, clearly **the whole US administration trying to point Iran to just come to the table**, that's all they want, just come to the table.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (245) *So it is a great opportunity, clearly the whole US administration trying to point **Iran to just come to the table**, that's all they want, **just come to the table.*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (246) *Meanwhile, finally, you know, **Iran sponsors multiple terror groups**, how might they be processing the current uprising of the Iranian people and this olive branch to get back to the negotiating table reached out by or, you know, handed over by the US?* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (247) *Meanwhile, finally, you know, Iran sponsors multiple terror groups, how might they be processing the current uprising of the Iranian people and **this olive branch to get back to the negotiating table reached out by or, you know, handed over by the US?*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)

- (248) *Of course, it was **the Islamic Revolutionary Guards that shot down the airliner**, but we know Iran still has a lot of internal capacity to suppress protests and they have trained so many Iraqis in the paramilitary forces.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (249) *Of course, it was the Islamic Revolutionary Guards that shot down the airliner, but we know **Iran still has a lot of internal capacity to suppress protests** and they have trained so many Iraqis in the paramilitary forces.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (250) *Of course, it was the Islamic Revolutionary Guards that shot down the airliner, but we know Iran still has a lot of internal capacity to suppress protests and **they have trained so many Iraqis in the paramilitary forces**.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (251) *We want to see **Iran continue in that de-escalated stand out posture**, and we really want to see them getting ready to talk as they crack under this financial pressure.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (252) *We want to see Iran continue in that de-escalated stand out posture, and **we really want to see them getting ready to talk** as they crack under this financial pressure.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (253) *Iraqi television has just confirmed that Qasem Soleimani, former general in Iran's Revolutionary Guard and a commander of the Quds force, has been killed in a rocket attack, apparently **initiated by the United States**, near the Baghdad airport along with the top official in the Iraqi Shiite militia.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (254) ***The US government blamed that attack on Iran**, and it retaliated with strikes.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (255) *Defense Secretary Mark Esper warned that **the United States is prepared to launch additional pre-emptive military strikes** against Iranian interests in the region which apparently are what we are seeing right now.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (256) *Defense Secretary Mark Esper warned that the United States is prepared to launch additional pre-emptive military strikes **against Iranian interests in the region** which apparently are what we are seeing right now.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (257) *Now, again there's been virtually no debate or even discussion about this, but **America appears to be lumbering toward a new Middle East war** and we have to say it's one that official Washington has wanted for decades.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (258) *Well, the last time we took John Bolton's advice in the region **Iran became far more powerful than it was before**, – before we took John Bolton's advice.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (259) *It's not that anyone, I think, in **the United States has particular affection for Iran** or trusts its government, much less the Revolutionary Guard of the Quds forces, of course not.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (260) *It's not that anyone, I think, in **the United States has particular affection for Iran or trusts its government**, much less the Revolutionary Guard of the Quds forces, of course not.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (261) *Right so I think the president of the United States, his convictions on this matter are sincere, but I think it's relevant, particularly extremely relevant, in matters of war and peace, of life and death, **who he stabbed his administration with**.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (262) *Gutfeld on the media and Democratic **response to Iran**.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (263) *Chris, you've been around, **Iran can form a crowd over a sneeze**, and they'll shout 'death to America' over anything, including when HBO cancelled Sex in the City.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (264) *Chris, you've been around, **Iran can form a crowd over a sneeze**, and they'll shout 'death to America' over anything, including when HBO cancelled Sex in the City.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (265) *Meanwhile, Mayor Pete tweets that maybe we should share the blame for that downed plane, even though **it was Iran who did the shooting**, and that guy is running for president.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (266) *So, my thought, I want to go to you first about the plane, we're learning that it was probably or likely **shot down by Iran**.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)

- (267) *I mean, this suggestion that there's **blame from the United States** or from this decision by President Trump, for the 176 individuals who perished in this plane crash, I think is really a remarkable, remarkable statement on behalf of someone who's running for president of the United States.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (268) *It was aimed in their own effort to retaliate, which they said they wanted to do, but to not go a step further back to talk about the killing of an American contractor, to talk about the overrun or the attempted overrun of a US Embassy sovereign territory in Iraq, that was **built by the United States**.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (269) *As a matter of fact, if you don't believe it, go back to the **documents that Congress signed back in 2002**, that gave the president the call to make this happen.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (270) *And **Congress does have the right to do that**.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (271) *You can't just be against this kind of behavior when you think it's coming from President Trump, which it never is, and then turn around and **defend something like the Iranian regime**.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (272) *I'm sick of this war since 2003 for false pretenses and **now we're picking a fight with the other people, with Iran**.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (273) *I'm sick of this war since 2003 for false pretenses and **now we're picking a fight** with the other people, **with Iran**.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (274) *Tucker: **US came within minutes of war with Iran**.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (275) *After weeks of slow escalation and **without a single vote from the Congress, the United States came within minutes of war with Iran**.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (276) *They never really, significantly retaliated, **Qasem Soleimani being killed by the Trump administration** last January.* (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (277) ***The Pentagon is confirming** that they brought down an Iranian drone and it wasn't shot down, it was brought down, kind of, with this new device that jams the drone and kind of confuses it and brings it down.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (278) *The Pentagon is confirming that **they brought down an Iranian drone** and it wasn't shot down, it was brought down, kind of, with this new device that jams the drone and kind of confuses it and brings it down.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (279) *Look, **Baltimore paid \$18 million**.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (280) ***Atlanta paid \$17 million**.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (281) *And this comes just a month after four different oil tankers were attacked by mines, **which the Pentagon blamed on Iran**, Eric.* (Fox News, Jun 13, 2019)
- (282) *Meanwhile, Iran's foreign minister says **Tehran** will begin 20% uranium enrichment at a nuclear facility.* (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (283) *All this has happening as **the Pentagon reverses the decision** to bring home an aircraft carrier after 10 months in the Persian Gulf.* (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (284) *This comes as **the Pentagon orders** the USS Nimitz back to the Persian Gulf, though claiming it was only deployed as a backup for troops being pulled out of Iraq and Afghanistan.* (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (285) *This comes as the Pentagon orders the USS Nimitz back to the Persian Gulf, **though claiming** it was only deployed as a backup for troops being pulled out of Iraq and Afghanistan.* (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (286) ***China or Russia, particularly China, would love to see another decade or two of Americans my age dying in the sand for no particular purpose.*** (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (287) *I would say the deep concern is, look, a general in the Iranian forces being assassinated is not necessarily something to mourn or **begrudge the US getting involved in**.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)

POWER IS PHYSICAL FORCE

- (288) *A Fox News alert: **Iran seizing control of a British oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz**.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)

- (289) *We are being told through the associative press and **the Iran revolutionary guard that it seized this vessel with Iranian ships, small crafts, and a helicopter.*** (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (290) *The same problem, you know, the north Koreans have, but they truly want to **put pressure on the Trump administration** to slow down the sanctions and eventually to stop them – that is what creating their chaos is about, what disrupting the oil, that is what the military operations are about, that's what they're sabotaging about.* (Fox News, Nov 27, 2019)
- (291) *These leaders over there, they're not suffering the way the Iranian people are, but these sanctions are clearly being put in place to send a message to the leadership of Iran, **'we will continue to squeeze you'**.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (292) *Remember, **it was the IRGC that seized 12 US sailors** on the eve of ratification of the Iran deal in January of 2016.* (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)
- (293) *But I think as we look at the intelligence over the next week, it basically narrows where this attack came from, we're going to be able to **put pressure on** the government in Iraq, on Bagdad, on Tehran.* (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)
- (294) *Well, I think **the election certainly will have an impact on the Iranians.*** (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (295) *So, what the United States really has to do, which is what Joe Biden wants to do, is to repair relations with the very people whom we need to implement **the Trump administration's maximum pressure policy.*** (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (296) *You can't impose **maximum pressure** on alone, the United States needs allies in this fight.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (297) *On the other hand, something must be done about Iran, and **the maximum pressure campaign of Donald Trump** has not succeeded in stopping Iranian misbehavior.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (298) *And you know, the President did a very good thing in brokering the UAE Israel deal, because that puts added **pressure on Iran** to come to the table.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)
- (299) *And to my mind, **the maximum pressure strategy** right now includes diplomacy, it includes economic and financial sanctions, a strong military posture.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (300) *But I think that these protests are sort of the fourth part of the **maximum pressure strategy**, and they could, hopefully, have an impact on the Ayatollah.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (301) *But I think that these protests are sort of the fourth part of the maximum pressure strategy, and they could, hopefully, **have an impact** on the Ayatollah.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (302) *The U.S. strategy is and remains to confront Iran, **keeping military pressure on**, and to contain Iran.* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (303) *The U.S. strategy is and remains to confront Iran, keeping military pressure on, and **to contain Iran.*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (304) *So, let me go here, if the protesters are calling for regime change, is this an on-ramp for the Trump administration to negotiate a change in Iranian leadership or perhaps **squeeze them out?*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (305) *But Dr. Grant, meanwhile, **the U.S. has cranked up economic sanctions.*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (306) *We want to see Iran continue in that de-escalated stand out posture, and we really want to see them getting ready to talk as they **crack under this financial pressure.*** (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (307) *In order to counter Iran, I think the choice is clear, the President should **contain Iranian influence** in the region, which should avoid a hot war which we are barreling towards at all costs.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)

MACHINES ARE ANIMATE BEINGS

- (308) *This UK oil tanker called the Stena Impero, the company put out a notice that it lost **contact with the vessel** sometime today.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)

- (309) *This is an escalation; you had a UAE vessel and oil tanker that was taken control of by the Iranian vessels in that area.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (310) *You just mentioned the statement from the UK company, and we have it, let's put it back on the screen so that we can read it because we literally just got this, we didn't read it, though. "U.K. registered vessel **Stena Impero** was approached by unidentified small crafts and a helicopter during a transit of the Strait of Hormuz while the vessel was in international waters.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (311) *We are presently **unable to contact the vessel** which is now heading north towards Iran.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (312) *The Pentagon is confirming that they brought down an Iranian drone and it wasn't shot down, it was **brought down, kind of, with this new device** that jams the drone and kind of confuses it and brings it down.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (313) *The Pentagon is confirming that they brought down an Iranian drone and it wasn't shot down, it was brought down, kind of, with **this new device that jams the drone** and kind of confuses it and brings it down.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (314) *The Pentagon is confirming that they brought down an Iranian drone and it wasn't shot down, it was brought down, kind of, with **this new device that jams the drone and kind of confuses it** and brings it down.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (315) *The Pentagon is confirming that they brought down an Iranian drone and it wasn't shot down, it was brought down, kind of, with **this new device that jams the drone** and kind of confuses it and **brings it down.*** (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (316) *So, they have been trying to tamper back with sanctions and small actions, but if these **boats attack**, something tells me, there will be a forceful response.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (317) *Officials say **USS Bainbridge**, a guided missile destroyer part of the Lincoln strike group, is in the vicinity and rescued 21 of those sailors.* (Fox News, Jun 13, 2019)
- (318) *Officials say **USS Bainbridge, a guided missile destroyer part of the Lincoln strike group**, is in the vicinity and **rescued 21 of those sailors.*** (Fox News, Jun 13, 2019)
- (319) ***USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier**, sent to the region last month, had just completed a port visit to Oman and had just gone underway today when the incident occurred.* (Fox News, Jun 13, 2019)
- (320) ***USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier**, sent to the region last month, **had just completed** a port visit to Oman and had just gone underway today when the incident occurred.* (Fox News, Jun 13, 2019)
- (321) *Some democrats blamed President Trump's decision to kill Soleimani for the crash of the Ukrainian airplane that world officials increasingly believe was **taken down by an Iranian missile.*** (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (322) ***Ten drones travelling this far**, to be able to avoid detection and actually effectively hit its targets, what does this signal to you?* (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)
- (323) ***Ten drones travelling this far, to be able to avoid detection** and actually effectively hit its targets, what does this signal to you?* (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)
- (324) ***Ten drones travelling this far, to be able to avoid detection and actually effectively hit its targets**, what does this signal to you?* (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)
- (325) *The Iranian ground crew that was operating the **Russian-made Tor missile, which US intelligence suggests, was behind the Ukrainian airliner's shooting down.*** (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (326) *The Boeing 737, which the Ukrainian jet was, typically climbs at a speed of about 250 knots and a rate of climb of about 2500 feet per minute, and **that's not a very aggressive behavior by an aircraft.*** (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (327) *Also, **the modern version of this Russian missile, which the Iranians bought from Russia in 2005 should also be able to detect the transponder signal from an aircraft.*** (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)

- (328) *And transponders are the radio beacons which **aircraft use to identify themselves**, that would have been another dead giveaway for the Iranians that they were looking at a civilian plane. (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)*
- (329) *This comes one day after the American Embassy in Baghdad was **attacked by a barrage of rockets** that was said to have caused minor damage and one death. (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)*
- (330) ***The USS Georgia** guided missile submarine armed with 154 Tomahawk cruise missiles has transited the Strait of Hormuz and entered the Persian Gulf. (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)*
- (331) ***The US embassies air defense system fires interception rounds** into the sky over Baghdad. (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)*
- (332) *This comes as the Pentagon orders **the USS Nimitz** back to the Persian Gulf, though claiming it was only deployed as a backup for troops being pulled out of Iraq and Afghanistan. (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (333) *If you accept the objective, that we don't want Iran to have **nuclear weapons with missiles that can deliver them** and I'm one of those who supports that. (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)*

CONFLICT IS A PHYSICAL FORCE

- (334) *You obviously had the – not shoot down – but bring down of an Iranian drone that the president announced yesterday, and this is **high tension** in that region. (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (335) *This is **high tension**, and this is, you know, for all the back and forth we hear about in Washington and “who said what?” (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (336) *The attacks come amidst the **increased tensions between the US and Iran**. (Fox News, Jun 13, 2019)*
- (337) ***Tensions high** in the Middle East. (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)*
- (338) *So, when you look at this assassination that we believe was likely done by the Israelis, what is **the impact of this**? (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (339) ***Tensions** could prompt Iran to wage a cyber-attack against US. (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)*
- (340) *It's been **tense**, those relationships, obviously. (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (341) *But as death comes several days after **tensions** kind of came out into the open in that country last week, if you've been following this you know, an American civilian contractor was killed by militants in Iraq. (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)*

POLITICS IS A JOURNEY

- (342) *So potentially lob a few missiles and say it was revenge and move on to see if they can get a better deal and **move toward a bomb**, which is ultimately what we know they want. (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (343) *So, if they vowed to **ignore this step**, where does it move forward? (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)*
- (344) *So, if they vowed to ignore this step, **where does it move forward**? (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)*
- (345) *So, is this the beginning of a sea change and if it is, **where is it all heading in terms of potential outcome**? (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (346) *So, let me go here, if the protesters are calling for regime change, **is this an on-ramp for the Trump administration** to negotiate a change in Iranian leadership or perhaps squeeze them out? (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (347) *Well, I think **the path that the Trump administration really wants** is for Iran to come to the table and talk about amendments to the nuclear deal – no nuclear weapons, control the missiles and put an end to the terrorism. (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (348) *We want to sit down and discuss without precondition **a new way forward**, a series of steps by which Iran becomes a more normal country. (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (349) *We want to sit down and discuss without precondition **a new way forward, a series of steps** by which Iran becomes a more normal country. (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (350) ***This is their chance for a good offramp**. (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (351) *It was aimed in their own effort to retaliate, which they said they wanted to do, but **to not go a step further back to talk about the killing of an American contractor**, to talk about the*

overrun or the attempted overrun of a US Embassy sovereign territory in Iraq, that was built by the United States. (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)

POLITICS IS BUSINESS

- (352) *So they know that the regime elite is cracking down on them, they know that **this is not the regime that they bargained for**, then the revolution, and they want, as Lara said very aptly, they want the regime to be held accountable. (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)*
- (353) *But secondly, you've got to renegotiate a tougher deal with **allied buy-in**. (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)*
- (354) *They don't care what **the cost of war with Iran** is. (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)*
- (355) *They're going to do one of two things: they're going to escalate and conduct another military operation, which I think is most likely to disrupt the flow of oil in the middle east and try to affect the world economy and maybe push it into a world recession is what they're thinking, or they'll come to **the negotiating table**, but I don't think they're ready for that. (Fox News, Nov 27, 2019)*
- (356) *Are Iranian leaders willing to return to **the negotiating table** or is diplomacy dead? (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (357) *Meanwhile, finally, you know, Iran sponsors multiple terror groups, how might they be processing the current uprising of the Iranian people and this olive branch to get back to **the negotiating table** reached out by or, you know, handed over by the US? (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (358) *We need them to come to **the table**, it's the right way to resolve these challenges. (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (359) *So, who's going to come to **the table** first. (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)*
- (360) *Macron tries to set up this back-channel meeting and before Zarif lands, he says ballistic missiles are **off the table**, we're not going to talk about regional behavior, we're not going to talk about ending sunset clauses. (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)*
- (361) *They don't want to walk up the ladder of escalation to that degree with a new administration, and therefore, put any **negotiated deal off the table**. (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)*
- (362) *And you know, the President did a very good thing in **brokering the UAE Israel deal**, because that puts added pressure on Iran to come to the table. (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)*
- (363) *And you know, the President did a very good thing in brokering the UAE Israel deal, because that puts added pressure on Iran to come to **the table**. (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)*
- (364) *Well, I think the path that the Trump administration really wants is for Iran to come to **the table** and talk about amendments to the nuclear deal – no nuclear weapons, control the missiles and put an end to the terrorism. (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (365) *So, it is a great opportunity, clearly the whole US administration trying to point Iran to just coming to **the table**, that's all they want, just come to the table. (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)*
- (366) *So, it is a great opportunity, clearly the whole US administration trying to point Iran to just coming to the table, that's all they want, just come to **the table**. (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)*

CONFLICT IS HEAT

- (367) *That **violence erupting in Baghdad** two days after those US airstrikes against Iranian-backed militias in Iraq and Syria. (Fox News, Dec 31, 2019)*
- (368) ***The situation there heating up very quickly** without any debate here in Washington. (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)*
- (369) *In order to counter Iran, I think the choice is clear, the President should contain Iranian influence in the region, which should **avoid a hot war** which we are barreling towards at all costs. (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)*

POLITICS/WAR IS A GAME

- (370) *So, it is **a game of chicken that Iran is playing** currently, and we will see how far it goes.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (371) *I think **we're going to see their playbook** and a little bit more violence.* (Fox News, Nov 27, 2019)
- (372) *But if you hear from a lot of the – I call them **cheerleaders on Iraq** – they're surprised that Iraq has gotten this bad to the point where Israel is conducting airstrikes on Iraqi militias in Iraq, and Iraqi people aren't protesting.* (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)
- (373) *Do you think we allegedly have other **tricks up our sleeves** to try to set the nuclear program back?* (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)
- (374) *And certainly, cyber activity is **one of our strongest suits**, and also one of the Israelis suits as well.* (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)
- (375) *And certainly, cyber activity is one of our strongest suits, and also **one of the Israelis suits** as well.* (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)
- (376) *Well, like you said, if you liked the Iraq War, Tucker, we're back with **the sequel** – the Iran War.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (377) *So, as **the post-game analysis of Operation Desert Burp continues**, we realize that for Trump's critics, peace means defeat.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (378) *Last night was supposed to be **the first domino**: at the last minute, the president thwarted their plans – for that he's being vilified.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (379) ***We could beat Iran**, but it would not be easy.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (380) *They'd be **the only winners** in that conflict.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)

POLITICS IS A PLAY (THEATRE)

- (381) *Yeah, a lot of attention on Russia lately, but Iran is a **serious cyber-actor**.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (382) *So, they have demonstrated the capability, they have not used destructive attacks against the US, but Iranian cyber-activities are usually a pretty good proxy for US-Iranian relations, which is to say, as relations deteriorate between the US and Iran, as they have over the last weeks significantly, we tend to see an uptick or escalation in Iranian cyber-operations, and that's **playing out** right now.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (383) *How does this work, because this has been happening for a couple of years now, where **bad actors** get into computer systems and say, “we're shutting it down,” – what they do, “unless you pay us”.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (384) *Yeah, **these are non-state actors**, right.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (385) *So, there is a large concentration of hackers coming from Eastern Europe and that part of the world, but these are **non-state actors**; they have one motivation and one motivation only – which is profit.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (386) *OK, Elisabeth Warren, I've got an answer for you, the reason why now is because Soleimani just **orchestrated an attack** on our embassy, killed an American citizen and we had very good intel from the CIA, from the DNI, from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, they said it was some of the best intel they had ever seen, that there was an imminent attack coming within days.* (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (387) *They don't want to look back in history since 1979, they don't want to look, since the JCPOA was signed, since they tested multiple nuclear capable missiles, since they quadrupled funding the Hezbollah, since they more than doubled their own funding to the IRGC, since they instigated multiple civil wars, and the list goes on and again, they killed an American citizen, took down the US drone, boarded US Navy vessels, and **orchestrated an attack against our embassy**.* (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (388) *Because obviously **we did see this reaction play out in markets** and then we saw the quick response to have so much of that oil production come back online when it came to Saudi Arabia.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (389) *So how do you see this **playing out**?* (Fox News, Sep 15, 2019)

- (390) *It's basically where we were **when the show started tonight**.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (391) ***We brought B-52s into the theater** to show the Iranians that... remind them of the huge capability that the United States military has.* (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (392) *One of the things that Iranians have said to me over and over again is that **the funeral of Ruhollah Khomeini was a theatre**, a show, put out on the Western media and they're, sort of, disgusted at how the Western media has treated a man that they see as a monster, who was responsible, who was the main instrument, the IRGC was the main instrument of suppression and oppression on the streets of Iran.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (393) *One of the things that Iranians have said to me over and over again is that the funeral of Ruhollah Khomeini was a theatre, **a show**, put out on the Western media and they're, sort of, disgusted at how the Western media has treated a man that they see as a monster, who was responsible, who was the main instrument, the IRGC was the main instrument of suppression and oppression on the streets of Iran.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)

PEOPLE ARE OBJECTS

- (394) *I don't believe they'll go after a US target yet; I think **the additional troops that we put into the area** have deterred them, but it doesn't mean they would not attack American troops at some point.* (Fox News, Nov 27, 2019)
- (395) *And they warned the Iraqis who ran that base a few hours before the attack that attack was eminent and that gave us plenty of opportunity **to get our troops into bunkers**.* (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (396) *This comes as the Pentagon orders the USS Nimitz back to the Persian Gulf, though claiming it was only deployed as a backup **for troops being pulled out of Iraq and Afghanistan**.* (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (397) *Now the warning about a sneak attack comes as the successor to Quds Force Commander Qasem Soleimani, Esmail Qaani arrived in Baghdad in attempt to unify **Iraq's fractured political leaders** and again assert Iranian influence over the area.* (Fox News, Apr 1, 2020)
- (398) ***A 150 people wiped off the planet** in retaliation for a broken drone.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (399) *We killed hundreds of thousands of people, **lost thousands of our own troops**, spent more than a trillion dollars all to eliminate a W M. D threat, that despite John Bolton's assurances never existed in the first place.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)

METONYMY

- (400) ***This President has no intention of going to war**.* (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (401) *So, they don't want to believe that Iran has this long history of escalations, right, they want to believe that **Trump's started this fight**.* (Fox News, Jan 11, 2020)
- (402) *They say yes, they have resistance units across the country, it's impossible to verify that, but certainly they do see this as a moment for opportunity because, as Khomeini said, **Soleimani was, what he called the soul of the regime**, right, the de facto or number two.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (403) *The question is though **is this a Franz Ferdinand moment?*** (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (404) ***The head of American forces** in the region General Frank McKenzie was recently in the Middle East warning of an unspecified imminent threat from Iran and its proxies.* (Fox News, Jun 13, 2019)
- (405) *And now the US military through the Navy is going to be moving assets and has assets in the region, according to **the head of Centcom**, that essentially is going to be escorting various vessels, and there you have the possibility, at least, of something, you know, ticking off and creating a military incident.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (406) *Iran threatens revenge for **Trump killing of Soleimani**.* (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)

PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS

- (407) *So that's a question, **how does the snake, the head of the snake is dead**, with Soleimani gone, but how does the rest of the terror network react?* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (408) *I know Bolton is a bugbear for you, but in some ways Bolton, because he's so flamboyant and so infamous and notorious, he actually was a bit of a problem for the **Iran Hawk crusade**.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (409) *But as **the idiots squawk**, Trump rolls on, handing out great ideas like gift baskets.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (410) *John Bolton is a kind of **bureaucratic tapeworm**.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (411) *Try as you might, **you can't expel him**.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (412) *He seems to **live forever in the bowels of the federal agencies periodically re-emerging to cause pain and suffering**, but critically somehow never suffering himself.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (413) *That's the **John Bolton life cycle**.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)

WAR IS A DRUG

- (414) ***Ill-advised wars are like doing cocaine**, the initial rush rises your poll numbers, but the crash is inevitable.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (415) ***Ill-advised wars are like doing cocaine, the initial rush** rises your poll numbers, but the crash is inevitable.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (416) ***Ill-advised wars are like doing cocaine, the initial rush** rises your poll numbers, but **the crash** is inevitable.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)
- (417) ***The hangover** from an Iraq war would last years.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)

THE IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL IS A PERSON

- (418) *While addressing **some of the deal's weaknesses** he says, you know, that he wants to go back to that policy that was set in place by his former administration.* (Fox News, Sep 18, 2020)

ECONOMIC INSTABILITY IS PHYSICAL FORCE

- (419) *It didn't have as much of an **impact** because we've become so energy independent.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (420) *This is 12 years later, and these types of attacks are going to have less and less **impact** on the global market.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (421) *What do you make of the situation that you and I have talked about, like this is so broad spread, so widespread, **the economy is being hit**.* (Fox News, Nov 27, 2019)
- (422) *Virtually, **the economy has tanked and it's squeezing the quality of life of everybody but the elites**.* (Fox News, Nov 27, 2019)

CONFLICTS ARE PEOPLE

- (423) *And now the US military through the Navy is going to be moving assets and has assets in the region, according to the head of Centcom, that essentially is going to be escorting various vessels, and there you have the possibility, at least, of something, you know, **ticking off** and creating a military incident.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (424) *And now the US military through the Navy is going to be moving assets and has assets in the region, according to the head of Centcom, that essentially is going to be escorting various vessels, and there you have the possibility, at least, of something, you know, **ticking off and creating a military incident**.* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)
- (425) *Today, Japan's Prime Minister is in Tehran to try **to calm down the escalating rhetoric**.* (Fox News, Jun 13, 2019)

A STATE/NATION IS A HOME

- (426) *All this has happening as the Pentagon reverses the decision to bring home an aircraft carrier after 10 months in the Persian Gulf.* (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (427) *Clearly, we were going to bring an aircraft carrier home, we haven't redeployed that aircraft carrier for this reason.* (Fox News, Jan 4, 2021)
- (428) *We want you to have a future, and a great future, one that you deserve. One of prosperity at home and harmony with the nations of the world.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)

IDEAS ARE OBJECTS

- (429) *I understand there are people in his cabinet that are selling him that Iran is not Iraq.* (Fox News, Jan 3, 2020)
- (430) *But as the idiots squawk, Trump rolls on, handing out great ideas like gift baskets.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)

RESPONSIBILITIES ARE OBJECTS

- (431) *Meanwhile, Mayor Pete tweets that maybe we should share the blame for that downed plane, even though it was Iran who did the shooting, and that guy is running for president.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (432) *But you had Pete Buttigieg tweeting, I think we have the tweet that, you know, it's tit for tat between military powers that led to this, essentially spreading the blame.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)

ESCALATION HAS LEVELS

- (433) *They don't want to walk up the ladder of escalation to that degree with a new administration, and therefore, put any negotiated deal off the table.* (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)
- (434) *And here's why – because it gives you Israelis deniability and what we're not dealing with is airstrikes that are going into these missile sites and nuclear sites, obviously, it would be known that Israelis are delivering that and that would force the Iranians to do what? To escalate up.* (Fox News, Jul 12, 2020)

WAR/CONFLICT IS A NATURAL DISASTER

- (435) *And I was telling you before in the podcast beforehand that the chants on the streets of Iran, out of the 31 provinces, 29 of them erupted in protest.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)
- (436) *Just 24 hours ago, this country stood on the brink of cataclysm.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)

ENERGY MARKET IS A PERSON

- (437) *And so, you saw the market make some corrections, it's headed back up a little bit.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)
- (438) *And so, you saw the market make some corrections, it's headed back up a little bit.* (Fox News, Sep 24, 2019)

DIPLOMACY IS A PERSON

- (439) *Are Iran leaders willing to return to the negotiating table or is diplomacy dead? Or at least dormant?* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)
- (440) *Are Iran leaders willing to return to the negotiating table or is diplomacy dead? Or at least dormant?* (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)

STRATEGY IS A SUBSTANCE

- (441) *So does the US have a solid strategy concerning Iran because as you said, you know, by most accounts, people in the know, people with authority and expertise figured that Iran won't really*

escalate or they're going to stand down as they have now, and they don't want a war, President Trump has said he doesn't want a war. (Fox News, Jan 12, 2020)

CONFLICT IS A SUBSTANCE

(442) *Obviously, the United States wants to **tamper things down**, but without our allies, can we do it?* (Fox News, Jul 19, 2019)

ARGUMENT IS A PHYSICAL FORCE

(443) *Watch **CNN's 36-year-old national security analyst attack the President** for not killing enough people yesterday.* (Fox News, Jun 22, 2019)

CONFLICT IS A RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCE

(444) *Gen Keane analyzes **fallout** from killing of top Iranian nuclear scientist.* (Fox News, Nov 29, 2020)

REGIME IS AN INSTRUMENT

(445) *One of the things that Iranians have said to me over and over again is that the funeral of Ruhollah Khomeini was a theatre, a show, put out on the Western media and they're, sort of, disgusted at how the Western media has treated a man that they see as a monster, who was responsible, who was the main instrument, **the IRGC was the main instrument of suppression and oppression on the streets of Iran.*** (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)

PEOPLE ARE MONSTERS

(446) *One of the things that Iranians have said to me over and over again is that the funeral of Ruhollah Khomeini was a theatre, a show, put out on the Western media and they're, sort of, disgusted at how the Western media has treated **a man that they see as a monster**, who was responsible, who was the main instrument, the IRGC was the main instrument of suppression and oppression on the streets of Iran.* (Fox News, Jan 10, 2020)

THE WAR ZONE IS THE WILD WEST

(447) *The USS Georgia guided missile submarine armed with 154 **Tomahawk cruise missiles** has transited the Strait of Hormuz and entered the Persian Gulf.* (Fox News, Dec 22, 2020)

Appendix 3. Conceptual structures with the numbers of metaphorical expressions identified in CNN and Fox News

	Conceptual metaphor structures	Number of metaphorical expressions	
		CNN	Fox News
1	STATE IS A PERSON	330	268
2	POWER IS PHYSICAL FORCE	42	20
3	MACHINES ARE ANIMATE BEINGS	30	26
4	CONFLICT IS A PHYSICAL FORCE	25	8
5	POLITICS IS A JOURNEY	21	10
6	POLITICS IS BUSINESS	8	15
7	CONFLICT IS HEAT	14	3
8	POLITICS/WAR IS A GAME	13	11
9	POLITICS IS A PLAY (THEATRE)	13	13
10	PEOPLE ARE OBJECTS	11	6
11	METONYMY	10	7
12	PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS	4	7
13	ENERGY MARKET IS AN EARTHQUAKE	5	-
14	WAR IS A DRUG	-	4
15	THE IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL IS A PERSON	4	1
16	ECONOMIC INSTABILITY IS A PHYSICAL FORCE	3	4
17	CONFLICTS ARE PEOPLE	-	3
18	A STATE/NATION IS A HOME	2	3
19	IDEAS ARE OBJECTS	-	2
20	RESPONSIBILITIES ARE OBJECTS	-	2
21	ESCALATION HAS LEVELS	2	2
22	CONFLICT IS A NATURAL DISASTER	1	2
23	ENERGY MARKET IS A PERSON	1	2
24	DIPLOMACY IS A PERSON	1	2
25	STATE IS AN ANIMAL	1	-
26	THE IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL IS AN OBJECT	1	-
27	STRATEGY IS A SUBSTANCE	-	1
28	CONFLICT IS A SUBSTANCE	-	1
29	ARGUMENT IS A PHYSICAL FORCE	1	1
30	PEOPLE ARE WAVES	1	-
31	CONFLICT IS A RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCE	1	1
32	REGIME IS AN INSTRUMENT	-	1

33	PEOPLE ARE MONSTERS	-	1
34	CONFLICT IS A PLANT	1	-
35	ECONOMY IS A PERSON	1	-
36	CONFLICT IS MEDICINE	1	-
37	THE WAR ZONE IS THE WILD WEST	-	1