

## FOREIGN RELATIONS, especially regarding IRAN—Is US headed towards war against Iran?

### Timeline (history between the countries that might be helpful)



**1953**--Iran's democratically elected PM, ousted by American and British forces who restored the autocratic king, Shah of Iran, to power. Why? The PM nationalized Iran's oil industry, taking Power away from U.S. and Great Britain. Shah much more Western-friendly  
Few years later U.S. helped Iran set up its first nuclear technology

**1979**—Iran's US-backed Shah overthrown by unhappy Iranians and country becomes an Islamic Republic, ruled by Islamic Law. Ayatollah Khomeini supreme leader of Iran, 1979-1989. He promotes anti-American and very conservative social values.

**1979, Oct.**—Ousted Shah was allowed entry into U.S. for medical treatment, angering Iran.

**1979, Nov. 4-Jan. 20. 1981**—Iranian college students took over U.S. Embassy in Tehran, take 52 U.S. hostages

**1980**—Beginning of 8-year war between Iran and Iraq. U.S. supported Iraq.

**1983**—President Reagan said Iran a state sponsor of terrorism after suicide bomber targeted U.S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, killing 241 American troops

**1986**—Reagan admin. sells weapons to Iran to fund rebels in Nicaragua where U.S. hostages held by Hezbollah militants, violating U.S. agreement of no negotiation with terrorists. Called the Iran-Contra scandal.

**1988**—Iran flight 655 shot down by U.S. naval ship, killing all 290 on board. U.S. said it was an accident.

**2002**—U.S. terrorism fears and hatred at all-time high after 9/11, President Bush calls Iran a part of "axis of evil" with Iraq and North Korea.

**2003**—US invades Iraq, bringing a rise of Shia extremism and terrorist groups in Sunni-dominated Iraq, influenced by Iran, a Shia country. Isis was one of those groups.

**2005**—A new leader in Iran has increased interest in nuclear activity, fears int'l community. Harsh sanctions imposed, crippling Iran's economy.

**2013**—Iran elects a more moderate leader who promised to revive Iran's economy. He negotiates w/President Obama in a historic phone call, leads to Iran Nuclear Deal.

**2015**--Iran Nuclear Deal signed. Iran agreed to limit nuclear activities and allow international inspections in exchange for the lifting of sanctions. Signed by U.S., Iran, UK, France, China, Russia, Germany

**2016**—President Trump pulls out of Iran Nuclear Deal and reinstates sanctions on Iran

**2019, May**—President Trump applies secondary sanctions to countries that continue to buy oil from Iran

**2019, Dec.29**—U.S. contractor killed in Iraq by rocket attack, possibly launched by Iraqi militia Hezbollah, a terrorist group which is backed by Iran.

**2019, Dec.29**—In retaliation, U.S. bombed bases w/Iranian militia in Iraq and Syria, killing 25

**2020, Jan. 1-2**--Protestors attack US embassy in Iraq

**2020, January 3**—Qasem Soleimani killed by U.S. drone strike

**2020, January 8**—Iranian ballistic missile attack on bases in Iraq that house U.S. troops. 34 troops diagnosed with concussions or traumatic brain injuries. President Trump later downplayed injuries as "headaches."

### What to consider:

Was Trump authorized to kill Soleimani since he did not go to Congress first?

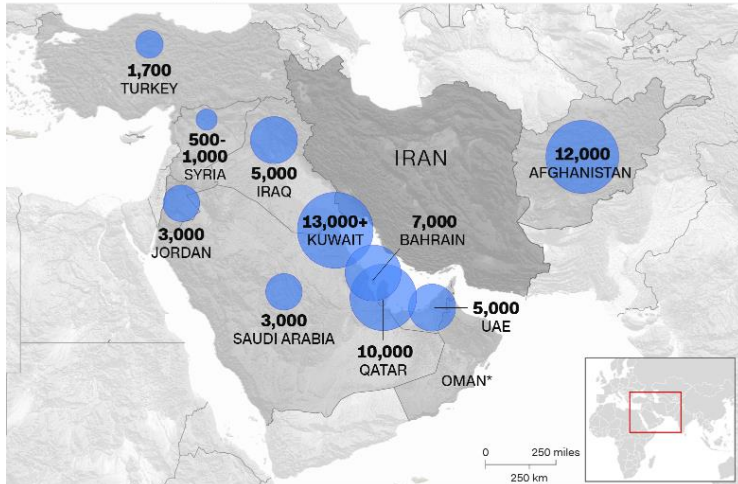
Was Soleimani's death an assassination?

Is Iran a threat to world peace?

Why is the U.S. in the Middle East?

How can U.S./Iran relations improve? Will they improve?

## Where US troops are in the Middle East



## War Powers Resolution, a law enacted in Congress in 1973

- Presidents may only introduce forces into hostilities after Congress has authorized using force of if nation has been attacked
- Presidents must consult with Congress before deploying troops into actual or imminent “hostilities.”
- If a president deploys combat troops without authorization, the deployment must end after 60 days unless lawmakers approve it in the interim. Congress can direct the president to terminate the operation before the 60 days.

## Two sects within Islam, Sunni and Shia

85% of 1.6 billion Muslims in the world are Sunni

15% are Shia

The 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran produced a radical brand of Shia Islam that clashes with Sunni conservatives in Saudi Arabia and other countries

**Syrian Civil War**—common thread is ongoing battle between Sunni Saudi Arabia (backed by US) and Shia Iran over oil

**Role of Religion** in current conflicts...Iran is 90% Shia vs. Iraq is mostly Sunni, since US supports Iraq (mostly), U.S. continues to “fight” Iran through proxy wars throughout the middle east.

## Qasem Soleimani (b. 1957-d. 2020)

- An Iranian major general in Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps
- Commander of the IRGC Quds Force, primarily responsible for military operations
- Considered second most powerful person in Iran government, behind Ayatollah Khamenei
- Chief leader of protection strategies for President al-Assad of Syria since start of Syrian Civil War
- According to President Trump, planning many more imminent attacks on U.S. troops
- A different type of killing from Osama bin Laden, leader of al Qaeda and Abu Bakr, ISIS leader b/c Soleimani was a leader of the government of Iran, not a leader of a terrorist group