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## How Will President Trump Respond to Iranian Retaliation for the Killing of Qasem Soleimani?

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# How Will President Donald Trump Respond to Iranian Retaliation for the Killing of Quds Force Commander Qasem Soleimani?



The two guiding principles of behavioral forecasting based on psychological profiling are:

1. Personality directs — and therefore predicts — behavior.
2. The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior.

Based on (1) empirical studies of Donald Trump’s [personality profile](#) and [leadership style](#) conducted at the Unit for the Study of Personality in Politics and (2) rational-intuitive inference derived from President Trump’s observed behavior in office, the following general expectancies present themselves with reference to Trump’s likely response to Iran’s anticipated retaliation for the targeted killing of Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Quds Force commander Gen. Qasem Soleimani.

## **Key personality traits driving President Trump’s behavior**

Donald Trump is bold, self-assured, and levelheaded under pressure and in the face of adversity; is a dramatic attention-getter more inclined to precipitous action than to indecision; enjoys the power to take charge, evoke respect, and seeing that the job gets done; is tough, competitive, and unsentimental; and is willing to flout tradition, acting autonomously in accordance with his personal goals and preferences.

## **Relevant indicators from President Trump’s past behavior**

Donald Trump prides himself on “promises made, promises kept” and completing projects on- or ahead of schedule; is motivated to extricate the United States from “endless wars”; is

driven to project military power to buttress U.S. prestige and national security; and is generally explicit in stating his intent.

## General expectancies for President Trump's response to Iranian reprisal

- President Trump is highly unlikely to order a full-scale war such as George H.W. Bush's [Gulf War](#) (1991) or George W. Bush's invasions of [Afghanistan](#) (2001) and [Iraq](#) (2003).
- President Trump is unlikely to escalate the current standoff with Iran in the absence of revenge operations by the Iranian regime or its proxies.
- President Trump is likely to respond proportionately to Iranian retaliation outside the United States, provided no U.S. nationals are harmed (but may incrementally escalate counterattacks if revenge attacks persist).
- President Trump is likely to respond disproportionately to Iranian retaliation outside the United States if U.S. nationals are killed or injured.
- President Trump is likely to respond with overwhelming force to attacks by Iran or its proxies within the United States or its territories.



**Donald J. Trump** ✓  
@realDonaldTrump

The United States just spent Two Trillion Dollars on Military Equipment. We are the biggest and by far the BEST in the World! If Iran attacks an American Base, or any American, we will be sending some of that brand new beautiful equipment their way...and without hesitation!

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