

Pompeo: ‘We are confident that the Iraqi people want the United States to continue to be there’

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Sunday defended the continued U.S. presence in Iraq even as the Iraqi parliament convened a special session to discuss expelling American troops after the U.S. killing of Iranian military commander Gen. Qassem Soleimani in Baghdad.

“The prime minister is the acting prime minister. ... He’s under enormous threats from the very Iranian leadership that it is that we are pushing back against,” Pompeo said on “Fox News Sunday,” adding, “We are confident that the Iraqi people want the United States to continue to be there.”

Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Abd al-Mahdi told the nation’s parliament on Sunday that the Iraqi government must establish a timetable for the exit of all foreign troops “for the sake of our national sovereignty.”

Asked by Fox’s Chris Wallace how the U.S. would respond if the Iraqi government calls for the expulsion of U.S. troops, Pompeo said, “We’ll have to take a look at what we do when the Iraqi leadership and government makes a decision.”

Wallace also pressed Pompeo on unspecified intelligence he and President Trump have cited that allegedly showed an imminent attack the killing of Soleimani was intended to prevent, noting that congressional leadership and sources within intelligence agencies have pushed back against the assertion.

“Don’t the American people have the right to some understanding of what it was, why it was so urgent to take out Soleimani now?” Wallace asked.

Pompeo claimed, “any reasonable person” who saw the intelligence in question would agree with the decision and added, “We’ll do everything we can to share this information with the American people, but I think the American people understand too there are things you just can’t put out in public.”

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo joined FOX News Sunday to discuss breaking news regarding heightened US-Iran tensions in the wake of an attack that killed

Soleimani. The Trump administration says he was planning imminent attacks. Secretary Pompeo reacts. #FNS #foxnews



Iran has vowed retaliation for the killing of Soleimani, one of its top military leaders, while Trump threatened Saturday night to target 52 unspecified Iranian sites, some of cultural significance if Iran strikes back.

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