

Report says Trump aides clash over military escalation with Iran



Washington, March 23 (RHC)-- U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Robert C. O'Brien, the national security adviser, are pushing for military escalation with Iran. The New York Times reports that Defense Secretary Mark T. Esper and Gen. Mark A. Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, meanwhile, oppose the increase in tensions

The war hawks blame Iran for a rocket attack last week on U.S.-occupied Camp Taji about 27 kilometers north of the Iraqi Baghdad, in which one British and two American personnel were killed. The report noted that, "the Pentagon and intelligence agencies did not have clear evidence that the attacks... had been ordered by Iran."

President Donald Trump brought the United States and Iran to the brink of war after ordering the assassination of Major General Qassem Soleimani on January 2nd. Trump's escalation of tensions in the region has strained ties between Washington and Baghdad further, making the Iraqi government seek withdrawal of U.S. forces from the Muslim country.

"American officials say there is little appetite among the president and some of his top advisers for a dangerous escalation with Iran," read the report. Tehran has time and again asserted that it stands ready to defend its interests in the region.

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