

Trump says US Navy will escort ships through Strait of Hormuz as Iran war spirals

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US President Donald Trump announced Tuesday that the United States Navy will begin escorting commercial tankers through the Strait of Hormuz, a dramatic escalation that would place American warships directly off the coast of Iran as the illegal and murderous US-Israeli bombing campaign enters its fourth day.

Trump's announcement on Truth Social came just one day after he refused to rule out sending ground troops to Iran. "I don't have the yips with respect to boots on the ground—like every president says, 'There will be no boots on the ground.' I don't say it," he told the *New York Post*.

At a White House press conference with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz Tuesday, Trump spoke about the war in the language of a mob boss—boasting of "hits" on Iranian leaders, referring to assassinations as people being "taken out," tallying the dead like a gangster counting bodies.

"Forty-nine people were taken out in the first hit," he said. "And I guess there was another hit today on the new leadership, and it looks like that was pretty substantial also. So they're getting hit very hard, and we'll see what happens."

Asked who would lead Iran after the war, he replied: "Most of the people we had in mind are dead. Now we have another group—they may be dead also, based on reports. So I guess you have a third wave coming in. Pretty soon we're not going to know anybody."

In a phone call with CNN's Jake Tapper the day before, Trump declared: "We're knocking the crap out of them. We haven't even started hitting them hard. The big wave hasn't even happened. The big one is coming soon."

The deployment of Navy escorts into the Strait of Hormuz—just 21 miles wide at its narrowest point, within range of Iranian anti-ship missiles and drones—raises the prospect of the sinking of American vessels and major US casualties.

Six US service members have already been killed by an

Iranian drone strike on Port Shuaiba in Kuwait on March 1, and at least 18 more were seriously wounded. The Pentagon identified four of the dead: Captain Cody A. Khorak, 35, of Winter Haven, Florida; Sergeant First Class Noah L. Tietjens, 42, of Bellevue, Nebraska; Sergeant First Class Nicole M. Amor, 39, of White Bear Lake, Minnesota; and Sergeant Declan J. Coady, 20, of West Des Moines, Iowa—a college student at Drake University posthumously promoted from Specialist. Three US fighter jets were shot down by "friendly fire" from Kuwaiti air defenses; all six aircrew ejected.

Shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20 percent of the world's oil passes daily, has plunged more than 90 percent. Zero LNG tankers passed through, a first. Over 150 tankers carrying oil or liquefied natural gas are drifting or parked inside the bay. Maersk, MSC, Hapag-Lloyd, and CMA CGM—the four largest container shipping lines in the world—have all suspended operations. Maritime war risk insurers have canceled existing policies and demanded vastly higher rates, creating what Kpler analysts described as "a real supply disruption, not a risk premium event."

Iran has declared the strait closed. IRGC Brigadier General Ebrahim Jabari announced on state television: "The Strait is closed. If anyone tries to pass, the heroes of the Revolutionary Guards and the regular navy will set those ships ablaze." The withdrawal of maritime insurers has reinforced the blockade—doing the work of mines and warships.

The economic fallout is already immense. Brent crude surged past \$84 a barrel, up 15 percent since the strikes began. Gas prices jumped 11 cents overnight to \$3.11 a gallon. European natural gas surged 43 percent after Iranian drone strikes forced QatarEnergy to halt LNG production. Gold hit \$5,418 an ounce.

Administration officials and leading congressmen are openly forecasting weeks or months of bombing.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a statement to the press on Tuesday, “You’re going to really begin to perceive a change in the scope and in the intensity of these attacks” as “the two most powerful air forces in the world take apart this terroristic regime.”

Senator Tom Cotton, Republican chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, told CBS that “we’re probably looking at weeks, not days, of joint efforts by the United States, Israel and our Arab partners.” Democratic Senator Chris Murphy said administration officials described “an open-ended conflict” and told senators the military campaign “hasn’t even really started in earnest yet.”

In a letter sent to Congress on Monday, Trump wrote, “It is not possible at this time to know the full scope and duration of military operations that may be necessary.”

The disaster being unleashed by US imperialism on Iranian society is immense. The Iranian Red Crescent reported 787 people killed across Iran as of March 3. On Saturday, an airstrike hit the Shajareh Tayyebah girls’ elementary school in Minab, killing 165 people — most of them girls aged 7 to 12—and wounding 95 more. The school was struck at 10:45 in the morning during a class change, with 170 students present.

On Tuesday, thousands of mourners filled the streets of Minab for the mass funeral, showering the coffins with rose petals as they were lowered into rows of freshly dug graves.

The US and Israel have bombed multiple hospitals. Khatam-al-Anbia Hospital and Gandhi Hospital in Tehran were struck on March 1, destroying the IVF department at Gandhi Hospital. Iran is under a near-total internet blackout—connectivity has collapsed to 1 percent of normal levels—disrupting hospitals, pharmacies, and banks across the country. The country’s navy, air force, radar, and air defenses have been systematically destroyed.

Iran has retaliated with waves of missiles and drones targeting Israel, US military bases, and Gulf states. The US consulate complex in Dubai was struck by a drone. Hezbollah launched precision missiles and drones at Israeli targets, and Israel responded with strikes on Lebanon killing at least 31 people. Embassies across the region are being evacuated. The State Department has told Americans to leave more than a dozen countries, from Egypt to Iraq, on their own.

The European powers are eager participants in the criminal war against Iran. In his meeting with Trump, Merz declared that Germany and the United States are “on the same page in terms of getting this terrible regime in Tehran away.” He had earlier praised “the dirty work

Israel is doing for all of us” and declared that Tehran’s “days are numbered.”

The assault on Iran takes place within the context of a broader eruption of American militarism across the globe. In a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on the National Defense Strategy the same day, Senator Roger Wicker declared: “President Trump’s actions in the Western Hemisphere, the Middle East and Europe are inextricably linked to our overall struggle against the Chinese Communist Party. Tailored use of military force and support in Venezuela, Iran and Ukraine has thwarted Chinese and Russian objectives and denied their access to resources and technology.”

Elbridge Colby, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, agreed, arguing that degrading Iran would put the US “in a position where our very kind of model ally, Israel, which is willing and able to take a lot more responsibility, our Gulf partners, who are doing a lot ... allow us to enable this focus on the first island chain.”

In other words, the war against Iran is, by the explicit admission of the US government, a stepping stone in the preparation for a far larger war against China. The wars in Venezuela, Iran and Ukraine are interconnected components of an insane plan for global conquest.

The war is rapidly escalating and the dangers are enormous. The American ruling class has set in motion a chain of events it cannot control. A war launched to assert imperialist dominance over the Persian Gulf is spreading across the Middle East, convulsing the global economy, and accelerating the trajectory toward a global military conflagration. The working class in the United States and around the world must be warned: this war will not be stopped by any faction of the political establishment. It can only be halted through the independent mobilization of the international working class against the capitalist system that produces it.



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