

# Trump's threats to destroy Iran and the breakdown of American democracy

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6 April 2026

On Sunday, US President Donald Trump issued a profanity-laced rant on Truth Social vowing to destroy Iran's civilian infrastructure in a series of war crimes.

"Tuesday will be Power Plant Day, and Bridge Day, all wrapped up in one, in Iran. There will be nothing like it!!! Open the F\*\*\*\*n' Strait, you crazy b\*\*\*\*\*s, or you'll be living in Hell - JUST WATCH! Praise be to Allah."

A day earlier, Trump wrote: "Time is running out — 48 hours before all Hell will reign down on them. Glory be to GOD!" Trump told Fox News Sunday morning: "If they don't make a deal and fast, I'm considering blowing everything up and taking over the oil."

The invocation of Allah—the name for God used by Muslims—in a message on Easter Sunday threatening to send the population of a predominantly Muslim country to "Hell" is an overtly Christian fascist statement, giving the war the coloration of a crusade.

The president of the United States is threatening to destroy the power grid and bridges of Iran, eliminating the basis of civilized life for 90 million people. These are statements of total criminality, within the framework of an illegal war of aggression.

Trump operates completely outside the framework of international law, of democratic conventions and basic legality. His statements and actions are a testament to the total breakdown of American democracy under the pressure of extreme inequality, endless war and spiraling social, economic and political crisis.

The overwhelming majority of the American population is disgusted by and opposes Trump's illegal war against the people of Iran. They rightly see him as a criminal and a gangster.

But this raises the question: How, amid overwhelming popular opposition, after millions marched against the government on March 28, can this

gangster regime remain in power?

The answer lies in the character of the nominal political opposition. The Democratic Party's response to Trump's statements has focused on the president's personality and mental state. "These are the ravings of a dangerous and mentally unbalanced individual," Senator Bernie Sanders wrote Sunday. Senator Chris Murphy called Trump's remarks "completely, utterly unhinged." Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said Trump is "ranting like an unhinged madman on social media" and threatening "war crimes."

Trump's statements are indeed both criminal and insane. But the Democrats' response is characterized by political impotence. Five weeks into the war, no congressional committee has held a public hearing. No resolution condemning the war has been brought to a vote. No investigation has been opened.

Despite admitting that Trump is both a criminal and mentally unfit, the Democrats have categorically ruled out impeachment. House Democratic Caucus Chairman Pete Aguilar told *Punchbowl News* on March 26: "Literally no Democrats are talking about [impeachment]. This is not something that comes up in our discussions at all." Representative Susie Lee said, "We have bigger priorities to focus on."

Representative Maxine Waters said on March 4, "I think when we take control of the House we will consider" impeaching Trump.

The Democrats have not only effectively ruled out impeaching Trump, they have enabled him. They voted for the \$839 billion defense budget that funds the war. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez echoed the Trump administration's claims that the Iranian government had killed tens of thousands of protesters, backing a regime change operation that, as Trump admitted on Fox News Sunday, was armed by the US

government. “We sent guns to the protesters, a lot of them,” Trump said.

The Democrats’ response is determined by (1) the fact that whatever their tactical differences with Trump, they are a party of Wall Street and the CIA and support the strategic aim of US imperialist domination of the Middle East, and (2) they are terrified by the growth of popular opposition from below.

A genuine popular mobilization would not stop at the war. It would raise the distribution of wealth, the power of the financial oligarchy, and the entire social order both parties exist to defend. This is why, during the “No Kings” protests against Trump, the Democrats and their political affiliates deliberately downplayed the war against Iran, though this was in fact the central issue.

The rise of Trump to the heights of American politics is a reflection of the historical bankruptcy of the entire social and political order. Trump is, as *World Socialist Web Site* International Editorial Board Chairman David North wrote April 2, an embodiment of a criminal underworld that has come to power. His language expresses “the essential character of a social layer that has become habituated to criminality and no longer feels compelled to apologize for it.”

This oligarchy has amassed its wealth not through productive labor, but through fraud, speculation and theft. Its social physiognomy is epitomized by the Epstein scandal, which exposed—if only in part—the integration of high finance, state power and sexual blackmail in the operations of the American ruling class. The same networks of privilege, corruption and impunity that surrounded Epstein uphold a political system in which criminality is not an aberration, but a method of rule.

Trump did not arise out of nowhere. He articulates, in unvarnished form, a broader ruling class policy. His genocidal threats mark a new stage in a decades-long escalation of US imperialist criminality: Bush’s invasion of Iraq on fabricated pretexts; Obama’s global drone assassination program conducted outside democratic or legal restraint; Biden’s arming and funding of Israel’s genocide in Gaza.

The same ruling class is waging all-out war on the working class at home. On Wednesday, Trump told a White House Easter lunch audience that the government could not afford daycare, Medicaid, Medicare or Social Security because it needed the

money to wage war. He called these vital programs on which tens of millions depend “little scams,” and said the federal government had one job: “military protection.” His proposed budget requests \$1.5 trillion for the Pentagon—a 44 percent increase—paid for by gutting domestic spending.

Again, the Democrats oppose any popular mobilization because a movement from below would immediately raise these broader issues. Trump’s profanity-laced threats to obliterate Iran’s civilian infrastructure expose more than his personal depravity. They reveal the breakdown of democratic institutions themselves. There is no mechanism within the existing political institutions to seriously oppose him, and the regime has declared it will not accept any constraints on its actions.

Opposition cannot be entrusted to the Democratic Party. It must be developed as a class movement. Workers and young people must organize independently—in workplaces, across industries and across borders—against the war, against the destruction of social programs, and against the capitalist system that produces war, dictatorship and social inequality.



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