

Trump sets Tuesday night deadline for the massive war crime against Iran

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The United States is on the brink of a moral and political catastrophe. This is the inescapable conclusion to be derived from Donald Trump's press conference on Monday.

The language of the press conference speaks for itself. Trump declared, in the midst of a series of homicidal statements, that the US military would destroy Iran as a country if its leaders did not immediately surrender to US demands. "The entire country can be taken out in one night," he bellowed, "and that night might be tomorrow night."

Before a worldwide television audience, Trump put on display the frenzy that he had previously vented with obscenities on social media Sunday morning. "We have a plan because of the power of our military," he said, "where every bridge in Iran will be decimated by 12:00 tomorrow night, where every power plant in Iran will be out of business, burning, exploding, and never to be used again. I mean, complete demolition by 12:00. It will happen over a period of four hours, if we want it to."

He continued: "It will take them a hundred years to rebuild. Right now, if we left today, it would take them 20 years to rebuild their country, and it would never be as good as it was."

Every word Trump said implicates the government of the United States in a crime of Hitlerian proportions. He says openly what the Nazi leaders discussed behind closed doors. That is a measure of the decay and degradation of world capitalism in the 21st century.

The press conference began with nearly an hour of nonstop celebration of the prowess of the US military and the supposed "courageous leadership and ironclad determination of President Donald J. Trump," as Secretary of War Pete Hegseth declared, in the unctuous flattery that has become mandatory for US

cabinet officials.

Trump then took questions, although he prefaced this by threatening to jail the reporter who first reported that only one of two airmen on an F-15 warplane shot down by Iran had been recovered. This report was based on a leak from the Pentagon, Trump claimed, and an investigation had been launched to identify the leaker. "We will go to the media company that released it and we are going to say, national security, give it up or go to jail."

There were further threats and denunciations of the media, even though the press conference was largely packed with right-wing podcasters and other sycophants, who thanked Trump effusively before they posed their "questions."

Trump declared that he was reviving the principle—dating back to barbarism—that "to the victor go the spoils." Having defeated Iran militarily, he claimed, the United States should charge tolls for the passage of tankers through the Strait of Hormuz. If it was up to him, he said, the US would seize Iran's oil resources.

Asked what Iran had to do to meet the deadline of 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, Trump replied, "We have to have a deal that's acceptable to me. And part of that deal is going to be, we want free traffic of oil and everything else."

Another reporter asked, "You said 'glory be to God' in this conflict. Do you believe God supports the United States' actions?" Trump replied, "Because God is good, and God wants to see people taken care of."

A strain of fascistic Christian fundamentalism ran throughout the utterances of Hegseth and others. In his own remarks to the press conference, Hegseth presented the rescue of the second airman on the F-15 as a Christian parable:

Shot down on a Friday: Good Friday. Hidden in a cave, a crevice, all of Saturday. And rescued on Sunday. Flown out of Iran as the sun was rising on Easter Sunday, a pilot reborn. All home and accounted for, a nation rejoicing. God is good.

The Pentagon chief went on to declare, “Per the president’s direction, today will be the largest volume of strikes since day one of the operation. Tomorrow, even more than today. Then Iran has a choice. Choose wisely. Because this president does not play around. You can ask Soleimani, Maduro, you can ask Khamenei,” referring to leaders murdered or kidnapped on Trump’s orders.

In response to a handful of pointed questions, Trump sputtered in anger. “What is your response to critics?” he was asked. “I don’t care about critics,” he said. “Are you concerned that your threat to bomb power plants and bridges amounts to war crimes?” Trump replied, “No, not at all.”

Trump heads a regime that operates outside of all legal constraint—the criminal underworld in power. The logic of escalation is inexorable: intensified bombing, the invasion of Iran with ground troops, the occupation or destruction of major cities, and, in the face of mounting US casualties, the resort to nuclear weapons, the “hell” which Trump constantly threatens against the Iranian people.

Implicated in a crime of monumental proportions is not just Trump and his administration but the entire ruling class and its political system. Trump can declare publicly his intention to destroy the social infrastructure of a country of 93 million people, sending it “back to the Stone Age,” and there is no serious opposition, either from the other major powers on the planet or from within the ruling class of the United States.

The corporate-controlled political system in the United States is incapable of placing any check on this policy of aggression and mass death. The Democratic Party, after being largely silent for the first month of the war, now declares that Trump is a madman carrying out war crimes. House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries called him “disgusting and unhinged,” while Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer called Trump “an unhinged madman,” adding, “He’s

threatening possible war crimes and alienating allies.”

But no Democrat has proposed any action to halt this criminal war. They treat the narrow Republican majorities in the House and Senate as though they were unassailable, although if conditions were reversed, a Republican minority would easily blockade a Democratic president. Instead, Senator Bernie Sanders pleads impotently, “Congress has got to act NOW. End this war.”

Nor has a single Democrat suggested that Trump and his partners in war crimes should be held accountable before any international tribunal.

Last fall, a group of Democratic senators and representatives issued a video appeal to US military personnel, advising them of their responsibility not to obey illegal orders. But now that illegal orders are raining down from the White House and Pentagon, they have fallen silent. They have not told the military brass that a future Democratic administration will prosecute those responsible for war crimes, because that future administration would be engaged in its own imperialist schemes for which it will require the full services of the armed forces.

If Trump carries out his threats, today—April 7, 2026—will live in infamy. It will be remembered as one of the great crimes of the modern era. Whatever the next turn in the war, a line has been crossed. This war has demolished, for all time, the pretense that the United States is a democracy. It brands the Trump administration as an outlaw regime. It condemns the oligarchy as a ruling class that has outlived any historical justification. It must open up, in short, a period of social revolution.



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