

After week of escalation, Trump threatens ground invasion of Iran

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US President Donald Trump threatened Thursday morning to invade Iran and seize its oil, after a week in which the United States bombed the country on two consecutive nights, striking targets within 40 miles of Tehran.

“At some point in the not too distant future, we will be taking Kharg Island, and other oil infrastructure points, and assume total control of their Oil and Gas Markets, much like we have with Venezuela,” Trump wrote Thursday morning on Truth Social. The United States kidnapped Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro in January.

At 1:41 p.m. he reversed himself: “I have, as President of the United States of America, cancelled the scheduled strikes and bombings against Iran this evening.” A potential deal, he wrote, had been “approved by all parties involved.” He listed 11 governments, from Israel and Saudi Arabia to Egypt. Iran was not on the list.

There is, no doubt, a significant element of market manipulation in Thursday’s announcements. The stock market, which had fallen for a week as the war escalated, rose after Trump’s post. SpaceX begins trading on the Nasdaq Friday in the largest initial public offering in history, expected to create thousands of new millionaires and massively expand the wealth of Elon Musk, a key Trump ally.

Regardless, nothing Trump says can be taken at face value. The fascist president has stated at least 38 times since March, by CNN’s count, that a deal with Iran is imminent. Each has been followed by renewed bombing and threats. As Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth declared this week, “If we need to negotiate with bombs, we’ll negotiate with bombs. And we’re very good at it. Nobody better in the world.”

That is, the Trump regime operates on the basis of the

mafia principle: ‘Do as we demand, or we will murder you.’

At the same time, American imperialism confronts a desperate situation. After more than 100 days, the war is a debacle. The Iranian government still stands, the Strait of Hormuz, which Washington vowed to reopen, remains closed, and Iran has not capitulated. If Trump were to carry out his threat to seize Kharg Island, it is assured that the oil-producing infrastructure of the entire Gulf would be set ablaze, with incalculable consequences for the global economy.

Trump may announce the finalization of the “deal,” which would become the framework for preparing the next stage of war, or he may massively and recklessly escalate. Journalist Seymour Hersh reported Wednesday that Trump, at a recent White House staff meeting, raised the use of low-yield nuclear weapons to destroy “some” of Iran’s underground missile factories, asking whether a nuclear strike “was doable.” Hersh wrote that a source with extensive knowledge of nuclear weaponry called it “a very scary and very serious moment” and that the president was “desperate not to lose in Iran.”

Trump’s idea, Hersh wrote, was to warn Iran’s leadership that “we are very seriously” considering such an escalation. At least one aide present was shocked that an American president would talk so casually about initiating a nuclear war in the Middle East.

Dominant sections of the ruling class are demanding that Trump intensify the war. The *Wall Street Journal* published an editorial Wednesday headlined “Trump Needs a New Iran Strategy,” declaring that “the President faces a similar choice to the one George W. Bush faced in Iraq in 2006-07,” and holding up Bush’s surge as the model.

Whatever the immediate course of events, the war is rooted in the determination of American imperialism to control the Middle East, a campaign bound up with its conflict with nuclear-armed China and the escalation of the US global war. The ceasefire Trump announced in June 2025 lasted until February 28, when Washington and Israel resumed the war by assassinating Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. Any new “agreement” will have the same character.

Each stage of the war has followed the failure of the last. Trump began the year with a covert operation to topple the Iranian government. “We sent guns to the protesters, a lot of them,” he told Fox News in April. When that failed, the United States and Israel assassinated Iran’s leaders and began the air war. In April, the United States blockaded Iran’s ports, and on Thursday Trump threatened to invade.

Washington has been preparing some form of invasion for months. The journalist Ken Klippenstein reported Monday that an April 7 order sent paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division to Israel under joint US-Israeli plans “completed since February, for seizing Kharg Island and carving out coastal territory inside Iran.”

For the American ruling class, the stakes are enormous: its global position, the valuation of a massively overvalued stock market, the role of the dollar as world reserve currency, and the solvency of a government that is \$39 trillion in debt all depend on the outcome.

No section of the political establishment opposes the war, and none has called any protest against it.

The Democratic Party’s answer to Trump’s invasion threat is to blame the Republicans for failing to end a war which the Democrats had voted to arm. One hundred and fifteen House Democrats voted for the National Defense Authorization Act in December 2025, and 149 for the \$839 billion appropriation in January. On the war’s 100th day, Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer asked: “How much longer do prices have to rise and families of service members have to wait for Republican senators to grow a spine?”

The Democrats’ appeals to the party waging the war are aimed at disarming mass popular opposition. Neither chamber has held a floor vote on the \$200 billion supplemental to fund the war, and when a resolution to withdraw US forces from Lebanon

reached the House floor June 4, most Democrats joined Republicans to defeat it, 324 to 92.

While American missiles were striking targets around Tehran Wednesday night, Democratic Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York was posting exultantly about the New York Knicks’ victory at Madison Square Garden.

The Democrats are silent because they support the same imperialist policy. Above all, they fear the emergence of opposition from below.

The war is intensifying every element of the capitalist crisis—economic, political and social. Its consequences are being felt in surging prices, falling real wages, cuts to social programs and the escalating assault on democratic rights. This is fueling a growing movement of the working class, expressed in the mounting strike wave across the United States and internationally.

As the *World Socialist Web Site* wrote in its June 8 statement on 100 days of the war:

The contradictions that are driving imperialism to war are also driving the working class into struggle. The growth of the class struggle springs from the same crisis that produces the war. Out of that crisis emerges the only social force capable of putting an end to it. War and social revolution are two sides of the same historical process.

To put an end to war and barbarism, the capitalist system must be abolished. The growing movement of the working class must be armed with this perspective and organized as an independent, international socialist movement against imperialism and the capitalist system.



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