

Facing debacle in Iran, Trump threatens to attack Iranian power plants and bridges

Andre Damon
14 July 2026

US President Donald Trump threatened Tuesday to destroy Iran's power plants and bridges, as the United States reimposed its naval blockade of Iranian ports and bombed the country for a fourth day.

"We're going to hit them very hard tomorrow night. We're going to hit them very hard the night after, and then next week it gets really bad for them, because next week comes the power plants. Next week comes the bridges," Trump told Fox News. "We're going to knock out all their power plants. We're going to knock out all their bridges unless they get to the table and negotiate."

The deliberate destruction of civilian infrastructure is a war crime under international law. In April, Trump threatened to bomb Iran "back to the Stone Ages." In June he posted that the United States might be "forced to militarily complete the job," and that if that happened, "the Islamic Republic of Iran will no longer exist!"

Trump's genocidal threats to destroy Iranian civilization, and his renewed attacks, are a testament to the deepening crisis of the war. Trump has achieved none of the war's objectives, from overthrowing the Iranian government to controlling the Strait of Hormuz.

Underscoring the degree of the crisis, Trump backed off Tuesday from the 20 percent toll on the Strait of Hormuz that he had proclaimed only a day earlier. On Monday he had declared the United States "THE GUARDIAN OF THE HORMUZ STRAIT," to be "reimbursed, at the rate of 20 percent on all cargo shipped" through the waterway.

On Tuesday, citing "highly productive conversations with Middle East leadership," he announced that he would "replace the 20 percent United States Reimbursement Fee with Trade and Investment Deals that the various Gulf States will be making into the

United States."

The renewed blockade took effect at 4 p.m. Eastern time, one hour after US forces opened a new round of airstrikes across southern Iran.

Ship traffic through the strait, which normally carries about one-fifth of the world's oil, has nearly stopped. The maritime data firm Kpler counted 10 transits Monday, against more than 130 a day before the war.

US forces began Tuesday's strikes at 3 p.m., the military said. Iranian officials and news agencies reported strikes on the city of Bushehr, home of Iran's only operating nuclear power plant, on the Abadan oil refinery, Mahshahr, the islands of Qeshm and Kish, Sirik and Bandar Abbas.

Over three nights beginning Saturday, US warplanes and warships had already hit more than 300 sites, by the military's own count.

Iran has declared the strait "closed until further notice" and is enforcing the closure with missiles.

Early Tuesday, Iranian cruise missiles struck two tankers of the Emirati state oil company, the Mombasa and the Al Bahiyah, in Omani waters, killing an Indian crew member and wounding eight others, according to the UAE's defense ministry.

Iran struck back across the Gulf on Tuesday, firing missiles and drones at bases housing US forces. Kuwait's army said it intercepted a ballistic missile, five cruise missiles and 33 drones, and that four of its sailors were wounded; Jordan said it shot down four missiles. Sirens sounded across Bahrain.

The bombing continued into the night. Iranian state media reported new American strikes late Tuesday along the southern coast and said a "US projectile" killed three civilians in a town in Hormozgan province.

Tehran has ruled out talks under fire. "If the US thinks its military attacks and blockade will force us to

request negotiations, it's making a mistake," Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi told Iranian state media Tuesday.

Iran's parliament, meeting Monday night in its first open session in more than four months, took up a bill to require Iranian permits and fees for every ship in the strait, with American and Israeli ships barred outright, under a draft reported by *Al Jazeera*.

On Tuesday, about 180 lawmakers declared the deal with Washington void. "There is no longer any memorandum of understanding," said Ebrahim Rezaei, spokesman of the parliament's national security committee.

The Trump administration claims that it can wage war again because it had a pause. The White House maintains that the June "ceasefire" ended the earlier hostilities and that its July 10 letter to Congress restarted the 60-day clock of the War Powers Resolution.

The response in major pro-war publications demonstrates the degree of the crisis gripping the Trump administration.

"The Trump administration wasn't bargaining for an open-ended conflict when it rolled the dice in late February and joined Israel's military campaign to eliminate Iran's leadership and cripple its arsenal of ballistic missiles and launchers," the *Wall Street Journal's* national security correspondent, Michael Gordon, wrote Tuesday in an analysis titled "The Battle for Hormuz."

"This is going to be a long-term effort," Joseph Votel, the retired Army general who commanded US forces in the Middle East from 2016 to 2019, told the *Journal*. In the *Washington Post*, columnist David Ignatius raised the prospect of a war lasting years, citing an American negotiator's forecast that peace "will come in two weeks, or two months, or two years."

"In retrospect, this was clearly a war based on fatally flawed assumptions," John Hannah, a former national security adviser to Vice President Dick Cheney and now a senior fellow at the Jewish Institute for National Security of America, said in a *New York Times* analysis published Tuesday, "none more damaging than the president's apparent conviction that Iran's revolutionary regime was a flimsy house of cards ready to collapse in a hail of American airstrikes and

bellicose Truth Social posts."

The *Financial Times'* editorial board wrote Tuesday: "The quagmire underlines once again the foolishness of the war launched by Trump against the advice of many of his allies and without much understanding of his enemy. A crisis of Trump's own making has left Tehran with newfound leverage in the strait, which Iran had never before closed in the past."

In a Reuters/Ipsos poll completed Sunday, 79 percent of Americans said they expect US involvement in Iran to "go on for an extended period of time." Only 37 percent approved of the renewed strikes.

Establishing US control over the Strait of Hormuz would require a massive escalation. Holding the strait would take a ground war, military analysts told the Associated Press Tuesday. "It's very difficult to envision any scenario where you could satisfactorily secure the Strait of Hormuz absent ground forces," said Jason Campbell of the Middle East Institute, a former Pentagon official—an operation, he said, that would require tens of thousands of troops, months of preparation and "very high costs."

The forces such an operation would draw on are in place. The Abraham Lincoln and George H.W. Bush carrier groups, the assault ships Tripoli and Boxer with thousands of Marines aboard, and more than 20 warships in all are on station, with more than 50,000 US troops in the Middle East—by the military's own account its largest force in the region since the 2003 invasion of Iraq.



To contact the WSWP and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact