

White House discussed plans to attack Iran before elections

Andre Damon
8 October 2026

The Trump administration is preparing a major new bombing campaign against Iran, according to reports published Wednesday and Thursday by *The Atlantic*, *Axios*, *NBC News*, the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*.

While reports published in the last two weeks indicated that Trump was making plans to attack after the November 3 midterm elections, the latest reports indicate Trump could launch the attacks even sooner. “The White House has asked the Pentagon to develop strike options against Iranian targets that could be exercised ahead of the midterms,” *The Atlantic* magazine reported Wednesday afternoon, citing two administration officials.

Next month’s election takes place amid broad popular opposition to the war. Trump said in his September 22 address to the United Nations that Iran was “waiting to see how I do in the midterm election.” He added: “I gave absolutely no credence and will not give credence to the election when it comes to Iran. It doesn’t even enter my mind.”

Axios reported Wednesday evening that, according to US officials, the Pentagon had instructed the military command in charge of the war “several days ago to conclude preparations for resuming major combat operations in Iran.” If combat resumes, *Axios* wrote, it is “expected to include massive bombing of Iranian energy, infrastructure and nuclear targets” and would most likely involve the Israeli military.

Trump said of a deal with Iran at a rally in San Antonio, Texas, on Wednesday night: “I think the deal isn’t really something that I want to do, but they’re willing to offer us anything to stop.”

The new bombing would intensify the war of aggression that the United States and Israel opened against Iran on February 28. According to official

figures cited by *Al Jazeera*, the US and Israeli militaries had killed 3,527 people inside Iran by August 28 without bringing down the government in Tehran or forcing it to accept Washington’s terms. Washington has answered each failure by preparing a larger assault.

The *New York Times* wrote Thursday that the Pentagon, “on Mr. Trump’s orders,” had developed plans to strike “Iran’s drone and missile arsenal, energy facilities and other military sites.” The plans “center on a short, intense campaign lasting about three days,” the *Times* reported.

“U.S. military commanders are ready to begin larger operations in the coming days, in case the president shifts again,” according to the *Times*.

Axios reported Thursday that US officials had briefed the chief of staff of the Israeli military, Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir, on Tuesday about preparations “for the possibility of resuming major combat operations against Iran within the next three weeks.”

“A fresh aircraft-carrier strike group and Marine expeditionary unit are steaming toward the Middle East, and the Pentagon is weighing sending additional air-defense equipment and munitions to bases in the region,” the *Journal* reported Thursday, citing officials familiar with the planning. The Associated Press reported October 1 that the United States was “dispatching roughly 9,000 troops aboard a group of ships.”

The assault on Iran is part of a worldwide offensive by American imperialism, aimed above all at Russia and China. Since the 1979 revolution that overthrew the US-backed Shah, Democratic and Republican administrations alike have sought to restore American control over Iran. The war is the latest in more than three decades of US wars, from the 1991 Persian Gulf War through the invasions of Afghanistan in 2001 and

Iraq in 2003.

Vice President JD Vance led a discussion of the plans at the Camp David presidential retreat on October 2, the *Times* reported.

US forces have not struck inside Iran since September 1, but they have kept up the blockade of Iran's ports. The US military said October 5 that it had turned back 130 commercial ships since reimposing the blockade on July 14, and that it had "destroyed 13 commercial vessels" over the previous 12 weeks.

The war has killed 19 US service members and wounded more than 800, the Associated Press reported Tuesday.

In an AP-NORC poll conducted September 24-28, 69 percent of Americans said the war in Iran "has not been worth fighting."

All factions of the US political establishment support the aim of subjugating Iran to US domination. The Democratic Party has criticized Trump's conduct of the war on the grounds that he has failed to secure the interests of American imperialism. Senator Mark Kelly, an Arizona Democrat, declared on ABC's "This Week" on September 27: "We can't leave the Strait in the hands of the Iranians."

Senator Ruben Gallego, another Arizona Democrat, said Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth "is one of the most important reasons why we're losing this war in Iran," in a CNN interview his office released October 1.

These criticisms are accompanied by accusations that Trump has been insufficiently aggressive toward Russia and China. House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries said on the House floor on September 16, referring to Russian President Vladimir Putin: "Many of us wonder why the President has been so reluctant to aggressively confront the bully of Eastern Europe." Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and seven other Democratic senators said in a September 22 statement, ahead of a state visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping: "We can't let President Xi leave stronger than when he arrived. That is not diplomacy, it's weakness."

Jeffries and 114 other House Democrats voted for the National Defense Authorization Act on December 10, 2025, and 149 House Democrats voted on January 22, five weeks before the war began, for an \$839 billion military appropriations bill. On September 16, 58

House Democrats, including former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, voted with the Republicans for a bill giving Trump new powers to impose tariffs aimed at Russia and extending sanctions on Iran through 2031.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact