

The Iran War and Tests of Strength

(Translated)

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The war of aggression launched by the United States and the Jewish entity against Iran is not merely a military operation in the Gulf region. Instead, it constitutes a complex test of the limits of American power and of the international order's capacity to navigate new regional conflicts during a transitional phase in which global power dynamics are shifting rapidly.

For military might on its own, despite its undeniable importance, is insufficient to achieve major strategic objectives. Moreover, military conflicts in sensitive regions such as the Arabian Gulf are inextricably linked to the global economy, international energy markets, and global trade, particularly given their proximity to one of the world's most critical waterways, Strait of Hormuz, through which 20 percent of global oil and gas supplies pass.

Initially, the United States assessed that a war with Iran would likely amount to nothing more than a fleeting military skirmish. It failed to anticipate that this conflict would ultimately evolve into the most significant test of the limits of its power, and of its ability to steer the international order through the very course of this war.

From the very first day of the war, President Trump promoted the notion of achieving a swift victory over Iran. However, the unfolding realities of the conflict soon exposed the fallacy of such claims. Consequently, and out of necessity, Trump appealed to his European and NATO allies as well as to China, Australia, and Japan for assistance in securing navigation through the Strait of Hormuz. In doing so, he was effectively asking them to aid in fighting Iran, a request that, in practical terms, directly contradicted his purported narrative of victory.

Iran's ability to easily close the Strait of Hormuz, thereby disrupting maritime traffic, has plunged the global economy into a genuine energy crisis. This situation has underscored the magnitude of global anxiety regarding the war's continuation, confirming that any military confrontation in the Gulf cannot remain a confined regional matter. Instead, it instantly transforms into a global economic issue. Indeed, the ongoing conflict in the Gulf is now impacting the entire world. Through this struggle, Iran seeks to establish new parameters of deterrence designed to safeguard its ruling regime from collapse. Iran refuses to submit and descend from the level of a state that accepts revolving in the orbit of another one to the level of a dependent, agent, subordinate state. Thus, it continues to absorb the violent blows dealt by the United States and the Jewish entity, making sacrifices and enduring the suffering of its people, in the hope of maintaining its standing and preserving the governance model it has upheld for forty years.

As for Europe, its evident hesitation to fully align with the United States in the naval coalition proposed by the Trump administration, aimed at safeguarding navigation in the Gulf, reflects the widening rift that has opened between the two sides, dealing a fatal blow to their historic, traditional alliance. Indeed, German politician Friedrich Merz perhaps best articulated Europe's stance regarding the conflict when he stated, "It has been clear at all times that this war is not a matter for NATO. There was never a joint decision on whether to intervene. That is why the question of how Germany might contribute militarily does not arise. We will not do so." Even those Europeans who share the Trump administration's objective of curbing Iran have begun to speak openly about the absence of a clear, joint strategy to bring the conflict to a swift and decisive conclusion.

Meanwhile, Russia and China are monitoring military developments with caution. They harbor a desire to see the United States become mired in the quagmire of the Gulf region, actively seeking to weaken it by keeping it entangled in protracted, futile wars that drain its

strength, thereby paving the way for them to assert their own economic and political presence in the region.

The persistence of the conflict has resulted in a buildup of oil tankers on both sides of the Strait of Hormuz, effectively halting their passage. To date, this situation has contributed to driving the price of a barrel of oil up to \$120, a figure that could potentially soar to \$200 should the hostilities persist for several more weeks. This scenario has heightened global fears of a looming recession, particularly following the targeting of oil and gas facilities in Gulf states by Iranian missiles, an act carried out in retaliation for attacks on energy infrastructure within Iran's South Pars region.

Undoubtedly, this war will reshape the contours of the international order in the coming years, particularly following the Trump administration's failure to force a form of capitulation upon Iran, as well as its failure to effect a change in the Iranian leadership, or topple the Iranian regime. Consequently, there was a clear retreat from these objectives, accompanied by a reversion to the claim that the United States merely seeks to dismantle Iran's nuclear and missile programs.

Iran's response to the aggression directed against it by the United States and the Jewish entity was existential in nature. It was not merely symbolic and limited, as the Trump administration had anticipated. Moreover, this response was not confined solely to launching missile strikes against the Jewish entity and the Gulf states. It also entailed asserting absolute control over the Strait of Hormuz and leveraging its potential closure to exert influence upon the global economy.

Furthermore, Iran utilized its proxy Hezb in Lebanon with an unexpectedly high degree of efficacy, a move that revived the notion of ensnaring the Jewish entity, within the quagmire of Lebanon, much as occurred in the 1980s. It also signaled its readiness to employ the Houthi card with even greater potency, should the necessity arise.

Indeed, several American reports have corroborated this assessment, stating that the Trump administration miscalculated at least two factors: First, that Iran would respond this time by viewing the conflict as an existential threat, rather than merely a limited, deterrent skirmish akin to the brief war of the previous year. Second, that the repercussions regarding the Strait of Hormuz and energy markets could be swiftly contained. Consequently, the administration was compelled to adjust its plans mid-conflict, shifting from accelerating diplomatic evacuations, to exploring options for lowering fuel prices, and finally to belated discussions regarding the escorting of oil tankers, before it became apparent that the U.S. Navy deemed such escorts unfeasible at the present time due to the elevated risks involved.

It appears that the Trump administration is now seeking face-saving exit strategies particularly in light of intense political opposition, both domestic and international, to prolonging the war and due to fears regarding its potential negative impact on the U.S. midterm elections scheduled for this coming November.

It is highly probable that Trump will falsely declare a crushing victory, claiming that his forces have decimated Iran's military capabilities by over 90%, setting the country back by twenty years, and asserting that the U.S. will continue to isolate Iran, impose sanctions upon it, and launch strikes whenever deemed necessary, until Iran fully accedes to all of America's demands.

On the other hand, this conflict has exposed a critical vulnerability regarding freedom of international navigation through strategic maritime straits, as well as the inability of major global powers to effectively secure these waterways. Furthermore, it has laid bare the fragility of the global economy and its deep-seated dependence on energy sources, developments that underscore the waning of U.S. hegemony over the international order, the failure of the unipolar concept, and the ultimate failure of Trump's attempts to forge a new global order dominated solely by the United States.