

Trump's Iran Strategy: Deny the Bomb, End the Threat

A newspaper-style opinion feature on pressure, nuclear denial, and the strategic risks of prolonged conflict



Campaign imagery sets the tone for a hard-power argument about Iran, energy markets, and U.S. political timing.

President Donald Trump possesses a level of courage and decisiveness unmatched by recent American leaders. He is a man of action who does not hesitate when vital U.S. interests are at stake. No president in American history has combined such raw bravery with strategic intelligence in quite the same way. Despite relentless attacks from mainstream media, Trump has proven himself a masterful politician who delivers results where others offer only rhetoric and endless delays. His willingness to confront the Iranian regime directly marks a refreshing break from decades of caution and appeasement.

Trump's strikes on Islamic Republic targets represent a strong start. By taking the fight to the mullahs, he has signaled that America will no longer tolerate a regime racing toward nuclear weapons while funding terrorism across the region. Yet even a bold opening move carries risks. Military campaigns that drag on become political liabilities, especially if they collide with midterm elections. American voters feel pain at the pump and in grocery aisles long before they celebrate abstract strategic victories. Higher energy prices hurt families, and prolonged conflict can erode public support even when the cause is just.

It is true that the United States produces ample domestic oil. However, the price of gasoline in America is still heavily influenced by global oil markets. Disruptions in the Persian Gulf quickly translate into higher costs at home. If Europe faces energy shocks, those ripples reach U.S. shores through integrated markets. A prolonged war that fails to deliver rapid, visible success could therefore hand political ammunition to critics. For this reason, the President needs a clear, time-bound strategy aimed at decisive outcomes rather than open-ended engagement.

America's core mission in this conflict is straightforward: prevent the Islamic Republic from acquiring a nuclear bomb and neutralize its enriched uranium stockpile. Opening the Strait of Hormuz for global shipping, while important, is not the primary U.S. responsibility. The central objective remains denying the regime its ultimate weapon.

Three realistic paths present themselves. The first—diplomacy—has already failed for forty-seven years. Successive U.S. administrations, European partners, and multiple rounds of negotiations have only bought the regime time. The 2015 JCPOA and subsequent diplomatic efforts demonstrated that the mullahs view talks as a tool for delay and sanctions relief, not genuine compromise. Diplomacy without credible military pressure behind it is simply theater.

The second option involves targeted ground operations centered on key nuclear sites, most notably around Isfahan. U.S. or allied forces would need to establish and hold a secure perimeter of roughly 100 kilometers radius for a minimum of three weeks. This window would allow specialized teams to locate, secure, and remove or destroy enriched uranium and related infrastructure. Such an operation demands precise intelligence, overwhelming air support, and rapid insertion of ground elements capable of holding territory against irregular resistance. It is complex and carries risks, but it focuses resources on the nuclear threat without requiring nationwide occupation.

The third and most ambitious path offers the highest potential reward: regime change. U.S. special operations forces, working in close coordination with regional partners, could seize critical nodes in Tehran while simultaneously supporting Iranian opposition groups. Success here requires winning over segments of the Iranian population who are exhausted by economic collapse, repression, and endless adventurism. Arming organized resistance networks inside Iran would amplify pressure on the regime from within. Israel's ground forces and intelligence capabilities should play an expanded role in this scenario. Jerusalem possesses both the motivation and the detailed knowledge of Iranian terrain and regime structures that would prove invaluable. A joint U.S.-Israeli effort, combined with material support to Iranian dissidents, could accelerate the collapse of a brittle theocratic system that already faces deep domestic discontent.

Without a serious ground component, the default outcome favors the Islamic Republic. History shows that regimes like this survive air campaigns and sanctions if their command structure and leadership remain intact. The mullahs have mastered the art of playing for time, using proxies and nuclear ambiguity to deter full confrontation. Between 2016 and 2020, they effectively reset the clock through diplomacy and incremental advances. The question remains whether they can repeat that trick in the current crisis.

EDWARD (ARDESHIR BADKOUBEH)

Absent decisive action that removes their nuclear capability or their grip on power, the smart money says they will try.

A winning strategy therefore combines maximum pressure with a clear end-state. Trump should reject open-ended containment in favor of rapid, high-impact operations focused on nuclear denial or regime decapitation. This requires close integration with Israel, selective arming of Iranian opposition elements, and public messaging that distinguishes between the regime and the Iranian people. Economic pain inside Iran can be leveraged, but only if paired with credible hope for a post-regime future.

The United States does not need to occupy Iran indefinitely or transform it into a democracy at gunpoint. It needs to eliminate the nuclear threat and create conditions where the regime either falls or becomes strategically irrelevant. Half-measures and prolonged stalemates benefit only Tehran. A president known for bold deals and decisive action has the political capital to pursue victory, not mere management of the problem.

Critics will warn of quagmires and unintended consequences. Yet the alternative—allowing a fanatical regime to cross the nuclear threshold—carries far greater risks for the region and the world. Trump's instinct for strength has already shifted the psychological balance. Now is the time to translate that momentum into a coherent plan capable of delivering results before domestic political calendars complicate the mission.

Success demands clarity of purpose: deny the bomb, degrade the regime's coercive power, and support Iranians who want to chart a different course. With the right mix of special operations, allied ground contributions, and internal pressure, the Islamic Republic's nuclear ambitions can be ended—not delayed, but ended. Anything less hands the initiative back to a regime that has repeatedly shown its willingness to wait out American resolve. Trump has the courage to choose the harder, more effective path. The coming months will reveal whether Washington possesses the strategic clarity to follow through.