



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on May 14, 2026

CENTCOM Chief: 90 Percent of Iran's Defense Industry Gone. Kent: Attacks on U.S. Had Stopped Before Epic Fury.

Central Command chief Admiral Brad Cooper told the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee that the U.S. attack on Iran destroyed 90 percent of the country's defense industry.

The commander of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf region also testified that Iran's navy has been wrecked for a generation, and its drones and missiles will require years to replace.

But he also inadvertently admitted that Iran's proxies had stopped attacking U.S. assets before Operation Epic Fury began on February 28. Over video of Cooper's testimony, former U.S. counterterrorism chief Joe Kent noted that Iran and its proxies attacked Americans during Joe Biden's administration, but stopped cold when President Donald Trump was reelected because they feared a massive counterattack.

Thus, Kent concluded, Trump attacked Iran not because it had attacked us, but on behalf of Israel, and now is the time for the U.S. to declare victory and quit the war.



AP Images
Brad Cooper



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Joe Kent ✓
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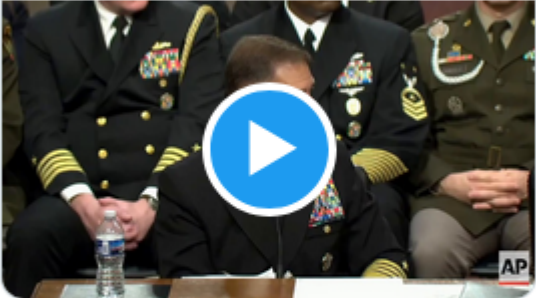
Iran's proxies attacked our troops & diplomats under Biden, NOT under this Trump admin prior to Epic Fury, hence the 30 months time frame. When Trump returned to office in January of 2025 those attacks stopped.

Iran stoped its proxies from attacking us b/c they knew Trump would [Show more](#)



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 CENTCOM commander Adm. Brad Cooper says Iran and its proxies attacked U.S. troops and diplomats roughly 350 times in just 30 months before Operation Epic Fury.

 "That's about every third day," Cooper testified.



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Cooper Testimony

Noting that 90 percent of Iran's defense industry was "destroyed," Cooper said "the drone and missile force will take years to reconstitute." He also claimed that "[Iran's] navy likely will not get back to its previous size for a full generation."

That does not mean Iran cannot attack, but instead "that broad power projection capability no longer exists."

Those concerned about the munitions thus far expended in attacking Iran needn't worry, [he said](#):



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I have all the munitions necessary to both defend our forces as well as conduct a broad range of contingencies. Our partners also have the sufficient munitions necessary for defense.

Cooper does not think [reports that Iran](#) still has 75 percent of its mobile launchers and 70 percent of its missiles are accurate.

He “has studied or been a part of” Iran’s and its proxies’ attacks on America for 30 years, [he testified](#). And “just in the 30 months before Epic Fury commenced, Iran and its proxies had been attacking U.S. service members and diplomats about 350 times, about every third day.”

But not under President Trump, Kent replied over video of Cooper’s statement.

“Iran’s proxies attacked our troops & diplomats under Biden, NOT under this Trump admin prior to Epic Fury, hence the 30 months time frame,” Kent wrote. “When Trump returned to office in January of 2025 those attacks stopped”:

Iran stop[p]ed its proxies from attacking us b/c they knew Trump would hit back & they wanted to reach a deal w/Trump.

A deal was in the works, that deal would have thwarted Israel’s goal of getting us committed to a war against Iran, so Israel did everything they could to get us into a war with Iran.

Kent wrote that Trump’s course of action on Iran had the intended effect, but “tragically this success was squandered by letting the Israelis drive our decision making.”

Going to war on Israel’s behalf was a reason Kent quit his post as director of the U.S. counterterrorism office.

“High-ranking Israeli officials and influential members of the American media deployed a misinformation campaign that wholly undermined your America First platform and sowed pro-war sentiments to encourage a war with Iran,” [Kent wrote](#) in his resignation letter to Trump. He continued:

This echo chamber was used to deceive you into believing that Iran posed an imminent threat to the United States, and that should you strike now, there was a clear path to a swift victory.



The former Green Beret [has since said](#) the United States must stop aid to Israel.

Trump Had a Better Deal Than Obama

Over a video of former President Barack Hussein Obama saying that the nuclear deal he inked with Iran “worked” and that “we didn’t have to kill a whole bunch of people or shut down the Strait of Hormuz,” Kent complimented Trump’s Iran policy before Israel talked him into war.

“Prior to letting the Israelis lead us into this war, President Trump was actually poised to cut a better deal than the [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action] (aka the Obama Iran deal),” Kent wrote:

The Iranians feared and respected Trump in a way they never respected Obama — he took out the terror mastermind Qasem Soleimani, yet was prudent enough not to get sucked into the quicksand of another Middle Eastern quagmire that would only favor Iran and strengthen its hardliners.



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Joe Kent


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Marco Foster


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President Obama on Iran: “We pulled it off without firing a missile. We got 97% of their enriched uranium out. There’s no dispute that it worked and we didn’t have to kill a whole bunch of people or shut down the Strait of Hormuz”



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Thus, Kent continued, when Trump landed in the White House again in January 2025, “the Iranians stopped their proxies from attacking us and were immediately open to negotiations.”

Instead of pursuing that course, though, Trump foolishly swallowed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s claim that war in Iran would be — as Americans were told of war in Iraq — a cakewalk.

“President Trump can still correct course, but he has to break the current stalemate cycle we are in,” Kent concluded:

Get us out of the military standoff. Restrain the Israelis. Leverage the potential of sanctions relief to open the Strait of Hormuz and secure a new deal on the nuclear issue.



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