



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on June 9, 2026

Report: 82nd Airborne Secretly Deployed to Israel, Possibly to Seize Kharg Island

The U.S. Army reportedly secretly deployed part of the 82nd Airborne Division to Israel in April as part of a “contingency plan” to seize Kharg Island, the nerve center of Iran’s petroleum industry.

While the 82nd’s move to the Middle East to fortify the U.S. Central Command in March was widely reported, publicly unknown was that part of the force landed in Israel, independent journalist Ken Klippenstein disclosed on his Substack.

The deployment suggests that any attack on Kharg might be a joint U.S.-Israeli operation.

Klippenstein’s report is based on an Army deployment order.



[jacquesvandinteren/iStock/Getty Images Plus](#)

The US has quietly deployed 82nd Airborne paratroopers to Israel, per deployment order leaked to me.

The deployment is tied to new US-Israel joint contingency plans for seizing Kharg Island and carving out coastal territory inside Iran. <https://t.co/HU5yWUCpCN>

— Ken Klippenstein (@kenklippenstein) [June 8, 2026](#)

Initial Deployment of the 82nd and Marines

As [The New American reported](#) in March, [about 5,000 U.S. Marines](#) went to the Middle East aboard the USS *Tripoli*, USS *Iwo Jima*, and other ships.

Israel-First GOP U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham turned lavender with glee over the deployment, apparently hoping to see bloodshed. Seizing Kharg Island would be, he said, easy peasy lemon squeezy.

“I trust the Marines, not” the author of an article in *The Atlantic* who warned that taking Kharg Island would be a “grinding war of attrition,” Graham said:

I trust [the Department of Defense]. We’ve got two Marine Expeditionary Units sailing to this island. We did Iwo Jima. We can do this. My money is always on the Marines.

Graham forgot to mention that almost 7,000 Marines died on Iwo Jima.

Lindsey Graham on Kharg Island: “We did Iwo Jima. We can do this.”
pic.twitter.com/JQJ5lZdvJ8



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— Aaron Rupar (@atrupar) [March 22, 2026](#)

[Along with the Marines went](#) between 2,000 and 3,000 soldiers from the 82nd, which is based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

“The additional Army soldiers include elements of the 82nd Airborne Division headquarters, some logistics and other support, and one brigade combat team,” the [Military Times reported](#) in March:

No decision has been made to send troops into Iran, but they will build up capacity for potential future operations in the region, one of the sources said.

The soldiers could be used for several purposes in the Iran war, including an attempt to seize Kharg Island, the hub for 90% of Iran’s oil exports.

Earlier this month, Reuters reported there had been discussions within the Trump administration about an operation to take the island. Such a move would be highly risky, since Iran can reach the island with missiles and drones.

But again, Field Marshal Graham — who wants South Carolinians “to send their sons and daughters over to the Mid East” — says taking Kharg Island won’t be a problem even though a [top trade intelligence publication called](#) it “Iran’s most vital — and now most vulnerable — economic asset, situated deep within the Mideast Gulf.”

Lindsey Traitor Graham:

“I’m going to South Carolina, I’m asking them to send their sons and daughters to the Middle East.” pic.twitter.com/Vv7mzjdALR

— Antunes1 (@Antunes1) [March 10, 2026](#)

Geronimo Battalion in Israel

Klippenstein’s report suggests that the United States was, or is, seriously considering an attack on the island.

“A military source involved in war planning tells me the deployment is tied to new U.S.-Israeli joint contingency plans, completed since February, for seizing Kharg Island and carving out coastal territory inside Iran,” he reported.

But the Pentagon kept the move into Israel a secret for a good reason. It “headed off public debate over a joint U.S.-Israeli operation inside Iran — a prospect many considered plausible at the time, amid a fever pitch of mainstream reporting on a potential ground invasion,” [Klippenstein explained](#):

The secrecy also sidestepped what’s euphemistically called “host nation sensitivities.” A joint U.S.-Israeli operation raises thorny questions for America’s Gulf Arab “partners,” especially over logistical support — hence the 82nd, which could launch directly from Israel without any Gulf state’s consent to use its territory.

Issued April 7, the order sent “elements of the 2nd Battalion, 501st Infantry Regiment — the storied



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‘Geronimo’ battalion — to deploy to Israel on ‘temporary duty,’” Klippenstein revealed.

Klippenstein’s disclosure builds on a [report in](#) *The New York Times* about the possible deployment of the 82nd’s Immediate Response Force, “a brigade of roughly 3,000 soldiers able to deploy anywhere in the world within 18 hours.”

The *Times* observed the obvious: The paratroopers might be used to seize Kharg Island.

Speaking at a briefing on May 5, Klippenstein noted, Joint Chiefs Chairman General Dan Caine described “the paratroopers as ‘constantly ready to jump from Air Force aircraft into ground combat [to] seize key terrain if ordered to do so, just like their predecessors did in Sicily and Normandy in World War II, or to secure or enable the follow-on forces to flow into theater as they did in Grenada or Panama.”

Ground Invasion Ahead?

Klippenstein believes Caine’s description of the force was telling Iran that a ground invasion was ahead. The journalist wonders why officials didn’t reveal the 82nd’s deployment to Israel given that they admitted that the U.S. deployed F-22 fighters and air defense there.

“First, the breadth and depth of U.S.-Israeli military cooperation goes far beyond arms sales and ‘deconfliction,’” [he concluded](#):

Second, the two countries are deepening intelligence sharing aimed at making Israel a sixth “eye” in the so-called Five Eyes alliance of the U.S., Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. Third, naming Israel would expose how much of the U.S. assault on Iran is in fact a joint U.S.-Israeli attack — not a Trump-Netanyahu brotherhood, but cooperation at the military-to-military working level, where combined war plans are now reality.

Charlie Company of the 2nd Battalion is still in Israel, from which no dispatches have emerged in two months.

The 501st Infantry Regiment [began in 1942](#) at Camp Toccoa, Georgia, as the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment. It was part of the 101st Airborne Division, which, like the 82nd, jumped into Normandy on D-Day, June 6, 1944.



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