



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on April 1, 2026

Trump Shifts Goal to End Iran War. Yesterday: Iran Must Not Have Nukes. Today: Open the Strait of Hormuz.

President Trump seemed to narrow his goal for the Iran War yesterday by declaring that his “one goal” was a non-nuclear Iran. And on that note, he declared, mission accomplished.

But today on Truth Social he wrote that the war had yet another goal: Opening the Strait of Hormuz to western oil shipments, although the strait was open until [Israel goaded](#) the United States into attacking Iran.

And those shifting goals are apart from what Secretary of State Marco Rubio told ABC News’ George Stephanopoulos.



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Iran’s New Regime President, much less Radicalized and far more intelligent than his predecessors, has just asked the United States of America for a CEASEFIRE! We will consider when Hormuz Strait is open, free, and clear. Until then, we are blasting Iran into oblivion or, as they...

— Commentary: Trump Truth Social Posts On X (@TrumpTruthOnX) [April 1, 2026](#)

No Nukes for the Regime

As [The New York Times reported](#) yesterday, Trump declared that “he had already achieved one of the primary objectives of his attack on Iran, the elimination of its ability to build a nuclear weapon.”

“I had one goal,” Trump harrumphed in the Oval Office. “They will have no nuclear weapon, and that goal has been attained.”

Trump’s top officials, including Rubio and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, “have joined him in narrowing the war objectives in recent days, presumably to give the president space to declare victory and pull back from the conflict.”

For instance, Rubio told Stephanopoulos that the war has four “specific objectives.”

“The President laid them out on the first night of the operation,” [he said](#):

I’ll repeat them to you now because I hear a lot of talk about we don’t know what the clear objectives are. Here they are. You should write them down. Number one, the destruction of their air force. Number two, the destruction of their navy. Number three, the severe diminishing of their missile-launching capability. And number four, the destruction of their factories so they can’t make more missiles and more drones to threaten us in the future.



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Rubio failed to mention “regime change,” which was one of the initial goals of this conflict, along with the “unconditional surrender” of Iranian forces. He also didn’t mention the nation’s nuclear weapons potential, which is intact, the *Times* reported.

“Unless something changes over the next two weeks ... he will have left the Iranians with 970 pounds of highly enriched uranium, enough for 10 to a dozen bombs,” the [Times reported](#):

The country will retain control over an even larger inventory of medium-enriched uranium that, with further enrichment, could be turned into bomb fuel, if the Iranians can rebuild that capacity after a month of steady bombing.

The *Times* report comports with an analysis by MIT professor [Theodore Postol](#). The former science advisor to the chief of naval operations says Iran has a nuclear deterrent that could destroy Israel. Iran has uranium that can be easily enriched to weapons-grade levels, and if Israel were to strike Iran first with a nuclear weapon, Iran would retaliate and annihilate Israel easily.

Postol also explained the devastating consequences of an Iranian attack with scientific details, including photographs, about the firestorms that razed Hamburg and Dresden, Germany, during Allied bombing raids during World War II.

Open the Strait

Yet this morning, Trump shifted again. Now, his goal is opening the strait that Iran closed after the U.S.-Israel attack.

“Iran’s New Regime President, much less Radicalized and far more intelligent than his predecessors, has just asked the United States of America for a CEASEFIRE!” he wrote on Truth Social:

We will consider when Hormuz Strait is open, free, and clear. Until then, we are blasting Iran into oblivion or, as they say, back to the Stone Ages!!!

And even on that putative goal, Trump has been wishy-washy.

Iran closed the strait on February 28, the day Trump knuckled under to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s threat [to use](#) nuclear weapons on Iran if the United States did not participate in bombing raids.

On March 22, [Trump warned](#) Iran that it had 48 hours to reopen the strait or face even greater destruction. He extended that deadline to March 27, but then on March 26, told Iran it had until April 6 at 8:00 p.m, “as per Iranian Government request.”

“Talks are ongoing and, despite erroneous statements to the contrary by the Fake News Media, and others, they are going very well,” Trump wrote on Truth Social.

As per Iranian Government request, please let this statement serve to represent that I am pausing the period of Energy Plant destruction by 10 Days to Monday, April 6, 2026, at 8 P.M., Eastern Time. Talks are ongoing and, despite erroneous statements to the contrary by the Fake...

— Commentary: Trump Truth Social Posts On X (@TrumpTruthOnX) [March 26, 2026](#)



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Troops Necessary

While Trump threatened to continue “blasting Iran into oblivion or, as they say, back to the Stone Ages,” the likelihood is increasing that U.S. ground forces will be required to open the strait if Iran continues to resist.

Frank McKenzie, former chief of the U.S. Central Command that is managing the war, told *Face the Nation* that the U.S. military had been planning for an operation to seize Kharg Island, the site of Iran’s oil production, which would prompt Iran to open the strait and deal with the United States on nuclear weapons.

“If you seize Kharg Island, you really can shut down the Iranian oil economy completely,” McKenzie said:

And the beauty of seizing it is, you’re not destroying it. You’re retaining it for further use by the global economy and possibly for return to Iran under certain conditions.

The United States will achieve success, McKenzie said, when the strait is open. But Iran will respond only to force, which the current administration, unlike those in the past, is unafraid to use.

“We get some kind of deal on the ballistic missile program, some kind of deal on the nuclear program,” [he said](#). That would be a victory for the United States, McKenzie said.

Former CENTCOM commander Gen. Frank McKenzie says the U.S. military can call the operation in Iran a success when “the Strait of Hormuz is open” and they “get some kind of deal on the ballistic missile program.”

“But, I think there're very discreet things that, for me, at least...

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— Face The Nation (@FaceTheNation) [March 29, 2026](#)



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