



ISRAEL NEWS
A collection of the week's news from Israel
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation

Commentary...

The Miracle of Jewish Independence By Rabbi Steven Burg

There is a word that has been weaponized, twisted and deliberately stripped of its meaning. That word is Zionism.

Let me tell you what Zionism actually is. It is the belief that the Jewish people, like every other people on earth, have the right to self-determination in their ancestral homeland. That is it. Nothing more. It contains no hatred of Arabs, no contempt for Palestinians, no designs on the rights of anyone else. Zionism is the simple, uncontroversial idea that Jews deserve what every other nation takes for granted: a place to call home.

Those who call Zionism racist have it precisely backwards. The Jewish people are among the most persecuted in human history. We did not arrive in Israel to oppress anyone. We arrived because the world spent 2,000 years making clear that without a homeland of our own, we were always one demagogue away from disaster. The Holocaust did not happen in a vacuum. It happened because there was nowhere to run.

That is what Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day, is really about. Not the fireworks. Not the barbecues. It is about the end of a 2,000-year prayer finally being answered. Am Yisrael Chai: The Jewish people live. And now, they live on their own terms.

Jewish independence does not come at the expense of any other people's dignity. It comes as the culmination of millennia of persecution, turning into deliverance. When God made a covenant with Abraham, He did not promise us land so that we could subjugate others. He promised us a place where we could be who we are, live by our values and bring light to the world. Israel, at 78 years old, is doing exactly that. It is imperfect, embattled and extraordinary, but more than anything, it is alive, and it is vibrant.

What we are seeing in our own lifetimes, right now, should shake every person out of complacency and into wonder.

For the first time in the history of the modern State of Israel, it did not stand alone in open conflict. When the United States and Israel struck together against Iran in a coordinated military operation, something shifted in the world. A regime that has spent decades financing terror—arming every proxy militia from Lebanon to Yemen, murdering its own citizens by the tens of thousands in the streets when they dared to protest—faced a reckoning. Israel stood shoulder to shoulder with the greatest military power on earth to bring an end to an existential threat to democracy and freedom.

Since the Hamas-led terrorist attacks in southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, the worst slaughter of Jewish life since the Holocaust, something has been unfolding that defies conventional military logic.

One by one, Israel's enemies have been severely diminished. Hamas leadership—the architects of that murderous day and who have been attacking Israel since the day the terror group was founded—have been eliminated with surgical precision. Hezbollah, which once commanded more than 150,000 rockets pointed at Israel and was considered the most powerful non-state military force in the world—has been brought to its knees, with the Lebanese government in conversations about making peace with Jerusalem. The Iranian command structure that funded and directed these terrorist groups and others has been struck at its heart. The Assad regime in Syria—a declared enemy and aggressor to Israel since its creation, and which for decades served as Iran's corridor to Hezbollah—has fallen. That is prophecy fulfilled in real time.

None of this was supposed to be possible. Military analysts around the world would have said three years ago that eliminating Hezbollah was a generational project. That the Iranian axis was too deeply entrenched to be dismantled. That Israel, surrounded by enemies,

would continue to spend decades in a grinding war of attrition.

Instead, we are witnessing miracles.

I do not use that word lightly. I use it the way the late Rabbi Jonathan Sacks would have used it: with awe, with

precision and with the knowledge that the Jewish people have a long history of confusing luck with God's hand in history. What is happening right now is not luck. Missiles that should have killed thousands were intercepted. Operations that should have taken years happened in weeks or even days. Enemies that seemed invincible crumbled.

Those who stand with Israel have found themselves on the right side of history. Those who stood against her have been destroyed or have found their power collapsing.

God told Abraham: "I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse." We are watching that promise play out on the world stage in our lifetimes.

For Jews in the Diaspora, this Israel Independence Day—Yom Ha'atzmaut—carries a meaning that goes beyond Israeli patriotism. It is the reason we can walk taller. It is the reason antisemites think twice. It is the reason that a Jewish student on a hostile campus, a Jewish employee facing discrimination and a Jewish family in a neighborhood where hatred has reared its head know there is somewhere in the world where Jewish sovereignty is non-negotiable.

Zionism gave us that. The State of Israel gave us that. And everything that has happened since Oct. 7 has reminded us, at enormous cost and with enormous pain, that the miracle is ongoing.

The men and women of the Israel Defense Forces, the hostage families who never stopped fighting, the rabbis and teachers and volunteers who kept Jewish life burning through the darkest two years in recent memory, are all part of the same story that began with Abraham, continued through the Exodus and found its modern chapter being written since 1948.

On this Yom Ha'atzmaut, we do not celebrate because everything is perfect. We celebrate because we are here. We celebrate because we are not alone in this world. We celebrate because the Almighty, who has never abandoned His people, is making that fact clearly visible and impossible to ignore. (JNS Apr 21)

The writer is CEO of Aish.

How Bad does it have to Get Before Jews Finally Leave?

By Cookie Schwaeber-Issan

If you're a parent of a British six-year-old Jewish student who is called a "baby killer" by her classmates, shouldn't that be enough evidence that your child has no future in that school or, for that matter, in a country where such outrageous bigotry is clearly expressed in the home?

Or what about a Jewish New York City resident who must confront the deeply troubling statistic that 55% of confirmed hate crimes in their city are antisemitic?

Perhaps, you're a Jewish Canadian business owner. What happens when your Toronto restaurant is shot up for the second time? Would that be enough to make you realize that it's too dangerous to continue your livelihood there?

Then there's Europe, where thousands of antisemitic incidents have been recorded, sometimes several times a day, in cities such as Berlin, London, Manchester, Amsterdam, and Antwerp – necessitating the need for armed soldiers to be deployed, just to guarantee the safety of their Jewish communities.

Does the thought of living with vandalism, arson, bomb threats, and the general anti-Jewish atmosphere serve as a loud and clear message that Jews are no longer wanted in these continents?

Of course, it wasn't that long ago that Sydney became Ground Zero for a mass attack against 1,000 Jews, trying to observe a Hanukkah lighting ceremony at Bondi Beach. In the end, two Islamic

State-inspired gunmen successfully killed 15 people – 11 men, 3 women, and a 10-year-old girl. Would that be the final nail in the coffin for you to conclude that Down Under is not a safe place for a Jew?

All of these disturbing and deadly incidents, which have been systematically perpetrated on the Jewish community after the most horrific of all attacks since the Holocaust, should alert every Jew living outside of Israel that a threshold has been reached, causing them to realize that their departure should be imminent.

Sadly, the tipoff came pretty quickly. Because the moment that the response to a gruesome and barbaric attack was to blame Jews for having instigated what took place, that was the time to figure out that moral clarity was no longer at work.

Whether temporarily or permanently, it had taken a leave of absence from individuals who should have normally felt compassion, disbelief, horror, disgust, and all of the other human emotions that distinguish demons from those whose hearts were created in the image of God.

But, instead, as the cruel and unimaginable details were revealed, none of them made any difference to a public that either needed very little to be convinced that Jews are the villains, or who always felt that way, but now had their opportune moment to freely express those hidden, shocking sentiments.

Although there was continued hope that the eyes of people would be opened, to see how they were being cleverly manipulated by a well-coordinated media that was doing the bidding for bloodthirsty terrorists, with every fresh attack or angry shout, those hopes were instantly dashed.

Nonetheless, Jews throughout the world persisted in believing that this was a passing phase that would disappear as mysteriously as it had emerged. All they needed was to wait it out, and everything would return to the way things were. Not only didn't that happen, but the intensity has actually escalated, providing all the proof that is needed to understand that the world has gone mad, yet again.

Perhaps the last great hope was to believe that honest and sincere leaders would rise to the forefront to challenge their followers as to how widespread the depravity has become, invading every crevice of society.

And while there are those few voices, such as Douglas Murray, Mosab Hassan Yousef, Yoseph Hadad, John Fetterman, Patricia Heaton, Dr. Phil, and several other prominent individuals, there are not enough of them to hold back the floodgates of Jewish hatred that are trying to overtake the planet.

For anyone who thinks that an Israel at war with Iran and Hezbollah is even riskier than remaining in their dangerous cities, they should know that fighting a distant enemy is not the same as battling a pervasive, toxic atmosphere that surrounds them day and night.

It is not the same as having your neighbors and societal institutions turn bitterly against you, wondering whether or not your family or business will remain safe, simply because of your ethnic identity.

Israel is the one place where a Jew can freely express their culture, holidays, and peoplehood, without fear of persecution or backlash. It is the home meant to absorb us as we are. And as sad as it is to think that the nations are no longer the safe havens that were always taken for granted, it did serve the purpose of providing prosperity and upward mobility in many cases.

The superior education, multiple advantages of every kind, and endless opportunities, which came with living in developed Western societies, are the pluses that Jews are able to take with them when they finally return to their ancestral land of origin.

While they may lack the language and other important assets, they will be looked upon as those who can enhance Israeli society by their know-how and invaluable skills.

Native-born Israelis will warmly welcome them as they help to build the type of free and pluralistic country that we need to be. This will prove to the world that even though Jews are vastly different from one another, they are still able to come together as one, knowing that we are stronger when we pool our resources against the forces of evil who seek to annihilate us.

In time, they will realize that making the move was not the scary

and fearsome experience they thought it would be. Just knowing that they are surrounded by like-minded people who see the world similarly will help to put them at ease, as they transition to a better way of life.

Jews need not wait until things are so bad that they have exhausted all of their options. Better to come while there's still time to bring your assets than be forced to flee in the night, as many had to do.

It's time to come home to your people who are waiting to warmly welcome you! (Jerusalem Post Apr 19)

Why Europe is Wrong to Think Iran is 'Not Our War'

By Mathias Döpfner

Among the pub-table strategists and commentators in Europe talking about Iran you often hear the phrase, "This is not our war."

That's a view as wrong as it is strategically unwise.

Of course it is our war. It is far more our war than America's. The infiltration of European societies by Islamist networks is further advanced and more acute here than in America. (And solidarity with Israel, whose very existence is under threat, ought to be far stronger in Germany than in the United States.) But even if one believed it was not our war, or even if one were disappointed not to have been briefed on the plans, there remains a potent strain of European society where proclaiming hatred of Donald Trump is greater than sound self-interest. In those circles, one can almost sense something like *schadenfreude* whenever something goes wrong for the Americans once again.

No matter whether this formulation — that it is not our war — comes from Germany or Finland or elsewhere in Europe, it harms us. First, because it is objectively wrong. Second, because it encourages the common enemy. Third, because it accelerates an American withdrawal of solidarity. Their logic is as simple as it is understandable. If the war in Iran is not a European matter, then the war in Ukraine is not an American one. Then Europeans should solve it themselves in the future, and alone. Ukraine and the Russian aggressor in Moscow are much farther from Washington — mentally and geographically — than the mullahs and their terror are from Berlin or Paris.

For all the uncertainty about America and Israel's ultimate goals in Iran, I am convinced of one thing: In a situation this critical, in which the Americans are once again pulling Europe's chestnuts out of the fire, it would be better to stand together. Europe shouldn't stab the American government in the back as it pursues these efforts.

Instead of working behind the scenes to find the right course and the best approach — what used to be called diplomacy — we are staging set-piece clashes in public. We will pay a high price for this unnecessary rhetoric of feeling slighted — rhetoric that, in the end, is only chasing applause at home. Future American governments, too, will remember this withdrawal of solidarity. If we have to cope in the future on our own with both the fight against the Islamism directed from Tehran and the imperial aggression emanating from Moscow, Europe will be overwhelmed.

The transatlantic community of shared interests has sustained and protected us for 80 years, no matter how complicated, volatile and difficult a U.S. administration has been. At the truly decisive hour, the "we" always prevailed. Now Europe says: I. Or rather: Not me. Europe's leaders prefer to alienate their partner still further with public lectures. That is not in our interest.

It is naïve to assume that what we see and know is exactly what is happening and being planned in Washington. The only thing we really know is that in situations like this, we know only a fraction of the truth. And that fraction of the truth is that the American government is finally trying to weaken the mullahs' reign of terror by force of arms. And that is long overdue.

For more than four and a half decades, Iran's Revolutionary Guards have terrorized the free world. Their goal is not just the destruction of Israel and all Jews, but the destruction of the open society — the godless, decadent liberal democracy they despise precisely because it is free. Our way of life. Our security. Our

interests.

For decades, the mullahs have killed not only women they deem dishonorable because they are unveiled, but also homosexuals. They systematically murder their own people whenever they speak their minds; they murder dissidents — most recently, apparently more than 30,000 of them in a matter of days. With the same ruthlessness and efficiency, the regime in Tehran organizes violence internationally. Together with its terror networks, from Hamas to Hezbollah to the Houthis, the mullah dictatorship is perhaps the most effective and cruel source of terror in the world. They operate in European societies in particular, deliberately spreading hatred and violence in ways that erode our liberal constitutional order and strengthen extremist movements.

The aggressor in Iran — one that poses an existential danger to us — has for years been systematically pursuing nuclear weapons. Nothing — no agreement, no appeal for peace, no presidential handshake — has so far been able to stop it.

For four and a half decades, Western politicians have hesitated to take effective action against this terrorist state, which murders its own people and destabilizes open societies. It was in our European and democratic interest that America and Israel have finally taken joint action to weaken the Iranian regime. Whether the goal is regime change, the removal of 400 kilograms of enriched uranium, simply reducing the hydra-like network of the mullah elite, accelerating an overthrow through popular revolt, or a combination of all these elements — I cannot judge. Some say a first important objective has already been achieved. Iran has been set back by years. We have gained at least one thing: time.

Now Europe needs to stand with the U.S. to make use of it.
(Politico Mar 31)

Bernie Sanders and J Street Attempt to Sink the U.S.-Israel Relations Ship By Lenny Ben-David

Progressive Members of Congress, backed by the self-described “pro-Israel” group J Street, are calling to “fundamentally reassess” the U.S.-Israel security relationship. They introduced resolutions to block transfers of heavy munitions and engineering equipment, citing concerns about Israel’s conduct in war. Some go further, proposing a phase-out of U.S. military assistance, including support for missile defense systems such as Iron Dome, which they suggest could be sold to Israel instead.

This argument assumes that Israel is primarily a dependent recipient of American support. That assumption is wrong—and increasingly detached from reality.

The U.S.-Israel security relationship has evolved into a two-way strategic partnership, in which both sides contribute capabilities that the other lacks. In several critical areas, the United States is not the benefactor but the beneficiary.

The recent conflict with Iran makes that clear. American and Israeli forces did not operate as parallel allies. They operated as a combined system—sharing intelligence, coordinating targeting, and integrating air and missile defenses. The extensive deployment of F-35 fighter jets by the United States and Israel underscores Israel’s fleet enhancement and its sharing of specifications with the aircraft’s American engineers and operators.

Israeli-developed systems such as the Iron Dome, Arrow, and David’s Sling missile systems functioned alongside U.S. platforms, intercepting missile barrages that would otherwise have overwhelmed defenses.

This level of integration didn’t emerge overnight. It is the product of decades of cooperation—and of Israeli innovation that has quietly reshaped U.S. military capabilities and doctrines.

Consider armored warfare. For years, the U.S. Army relied on heavier armor to protect its tanks from anti-tank missiles. Israel, facing constant exposure to such threats, took a different approach. It developed the Trophy system, which detects and destroys incoming projectiles before they reach the target.

The U.S. Army now fields Trophy on its M1 Abrams tanks. This is more than an upgrade. It marks a shift from passive to active

defense—the most significant change in tank survivability in decades. Without it, American armored units would remain vulnerable to the very weapons proliferating across modern battlefields.

The pattern repeats elsewhere. Israeli systems, such as the Spike missile, introduced real-time, operator-guided precision strikes at the tactical level for use by attack helicopters or infantry. U.S. forces have adopted versions of this capability, but more importantly, they have absorbed the concept. Small units can now deliver precision effects at ranges of 25 km, once reserved for aircraft or artillery.

Enemy tunnels have plagued U.S. warriors for decades, from Vietnam to Korea. Israel’s defense and combat against Hizbullah and Hamas tunnels are studied today in American military academies, and joint defense systems are being developed. The United States–Israel Anti-Tunnel Cooperation Enhancement Act authorizes \$80 million annually, with the Israeli government matching funding.

In unmanned warfare, Israel again moved first. Long before drones became central to modern conflict, Israeli forces normalized persistent surveillance and rapid “sensor-to-shooter” targeting cycles. Israeli platforms such as the IAI Heron and Elbit Hermes 450 helped define a model that the U.S. military later expanded globally. What transferred was not just hardware, but a doctrine: the battlefield is continuously observed, mapped, and targetable.

The Israel Defense Forces and Israeli defense industries have led the world in the deployment of loitering munitions, such as the IAI Harpy and Harop — “kamikaze drones” that loiter like a drone and strike like a missile.

Israel’s experience in dense urban environments has produced new breaching tactics, the integration of small UAVs at the squad level, rapid fielding of IED jammers, and the introduction of new weaponry such as “cornershot.”

Even beyond weapons systems, Israeli influence is evident. The so-called Israeli bandage—now standard in U.S. military and civilian trauma kits—reflects a broader emphasis on rapid hemorrhage control. Israeli practice helped accelerate the U.S. military’s adoption of tourniquet use at the individual soldier level, a shift credited with reducing preventable deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan. The bandage even saved the life of a congressional colleague. It is credited with helping save the life of former U.S. Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords after she was shot in the head during a constituent meeting in Tucson, Arizona, in January 2011.

Missile defense cooperation tells a similar story. The U.S. helped fund systems like Iron Dome, but it also co-produces interceptors (in American plants) and incorporates lessons from their use. These are joint programs, not one-way transfers. American forces benefit from technologies and operational experience developed under conditions of constant threat that the U.S. itself rarely faces.

The next phase of this partnership is already taking shape in directed-energy systems such as Iron Beam. Unlike traditional interceptors, lasers offer near-zero cost per shot and the ability to counter large volumes of rockets and drones. The U.S. is pursuing similar technologies, and cooperation with Israel is likely to accelerate their deployment.

Critics who call for scaling back the relationship focus narrowly on what the United States provides Israel. They ignore what the United States receives in return: access to rapidly developed, combat-proven solutions to emerging threats.

Israel operates under conditions that force constant adaptation. It encounters challenges—mass rocket fire, dense urban combat, short-range missile threats—well before they become central concerns for U.S. planners. The solutions it develops are not theoretical. They are tested in real time.

The United States, in turn, can scale those solutions, integrate them across services, and deploy them globally. The relationship works because each side supplies what the other lacks.

Reducing that relationship to a question of aid misses the point. The issue is not whether Israel can afford to purchase American systems. It is whether the United States is willing to weaken a partnership that enhances its own military effectiveness.

Calls to curtail cooperation are framed as moral or political

corrections. In practice, they would amount to a strategic retreat—from a partnership that has consistently delivered operational advantages.

The U.S.-Israel security relationship is not charity. It is a mutually reinforcing alliance, shaped by shared threats and sustained by practical results.

Treating Israel as a client rather than a partner doesn't just misread the relationship; it undermines it. It risks undermining one of the most effective channels through which the United States adapts to the changing character of war. (Substack Apr 17)

Trump Cards By Ruthie Blum

There's something unsettling about watching a winning hand being folded mid-game. But is Washington actually succumbing to Tehran's machinations?

Given U.S. President Donald Trump's statements over the past few days—in off-the-cuff remarks to reporters, in his speech at Turning Point USA and in a slew of declarations on Truth Social—it sure began to seem that way.

The following slew of his posts on April 17 are illustrative:

- "IRAN HAS JUST ANNOUNCED THAT THE STRAIT OF IRAN IS FULLY OPEN AND READY FOR FULL PASSAGE. THANK YOU!"
- "THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ IS COMPLETELY OPEN AND READY FOR BUSINESS AND FULL PASSAGE, BUT THE NAVAL BLOCKADE WILL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT AS IT PERTAINS TO IRAN, ONLY, UNTIL SUCH TIME AS OUR TRANSACTION WITH IRAN IS 100% COMPLETE. THIS PROCESS SHOULD GO VERY QUICKLY IN THAT MOST OF THE POINTS ARE ALREADY NEGOTIATED. THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS MATTER! PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP"
- "The U.S.A. will get all Nuclear 'Dust,' created by our great B2 Bombers - No money will exchange hands in any way, shape, or form. This deal is in no way subject to Lebanon, either, but the USA will, separately, work with Lebanon, and deal with the Hezbollah [sic] situation in an appropriate manner. Israel will not be bombing Lebanon any longer. They are PROHIBITED from doing so by the U.S.A. Enough is enough!!! Thank you! President DJT"
- "Iran, with the help of the U.S.A., has removed, or is removing, all sea mines! Thank you! President DJT"
- "Again! This deal is not tied, in any way, to Lebanon, but we will, MAKE LEBANON GREAT AGAIN!"
- "Iran has agreed to never close the Strait of Hormuz again. It will no longer be used as a weapon against the World!"

Not only did these comments suggest that the Islamic Republic was on the verge of accepting unconditional surrender; they came in the wake of Trump's recent claim that the war was winding down and likely about to end.

Never mind the overly optimistic depiction; this president's penchant for hyperbole is something we've come to expect. It was his uncharacteristically testy tone toward Israel that came as a stinging surprise.

Whether the jab at the Jewish states put smiles on the faces of the remaining powers-that-be in Tehran—whoever they may be in the rubble of the demolished regime—is anyone's guess. What's obvious, however, is that even the so-called "pragmatists" at the shaky helm aren't accepting Trump's version of events.

Take the stance of Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, as a prime example. The Iranian parliament speaker—who led the Islamic Republic's delegation to the failed marathon talks in Pakistan on April 11-12 with U.S. Vice President JD Vance and other officials—didn't hesitate to reject every word uttered by Trump.

In an April 18 thread on X, Ghalibaf wrote: "1 - The president of the United States made seven claims in one hour, all seven of which were false. 2 - They [the Americans] did not win the war with these lies, and they will certainly not get anywhere in negotiations either. 3 - With the continuation of the blockade, the Strait of Hormuz will not

remain open. 4 - Passage through the Strait of Hormuz will be conducted based on the 'designated route' and with 'Iranian authorization.' 5 - Whether the Strait is open or closed and the regulations governing it will be determined by the field, not by social media. 6 - Media warfare and engineering public opinion are an important part of war, and the Iranian nation is not affected by these tricks."

The rebuke of Trump from Tehran didn't end there. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei doubled down on the message.

In an interview with Iranian state TV IRIB—reported by the Islamic Republic News Agency (INRA), among other outlets—Baghaei asserted that any progress toward an agreement with the United States will be recognized only when Iran itself determines that its "national interests, rights and red lines" are fully secured.

The ceasefire framework, he said, is limited in scope and duration; no extension has been discussed. And the Strait of Hormuz? It remains under Iranian supervision, with any continued American blockade to be met with a "firm response."

This clash of narratives would be less troubling if it were merely rhetorical. But it goes to the heart of how the Islamic Republic wages war and, crucially, how it and the rest of the jihadist world try to avoid losing one.

Militarily, the imbalance is obvious. The United States possesses overwhelming superiority in every realm other than that of double-speak and propaganda-spreading.

Tehran's advantage, like that of its proxies, has always existed in the ability to manipulate perception, to blur lines between perpetrator and victim and to exploit the West's chronic susceptibility to wishful thinking. It understands that battles are not fought solely with planes and tanks, but by way of story lines that seep into public consciousness. It's an arena in which jihadists are champions. One need look no further than the halls of Harvard.

While aware of this phenomenon, Trump doesn't grasp the depths of Islamist religious ideology, which is far harder to confront than armies and navies. That's the bad news.

The good news is that nobody, least of all Trump, likes being played for a fool. So, Iran is pushing its luck and not merely through bluster. Indeed, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) fired on two Indian ships in the Strait of Hormuz on April 18.

This is despite the fast-approaching end to the two-week ceasefire. The deadline for Tehran to agree to U.S. conditions for a deal is April 22.

Though Trump's been vague about whether he means to extend the truce, he's not likely to be flexible at this point.

During a joint press conference on April 16 with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Dan Caine, Secretary of Defense/War Pete Hegseth issued a warning to Tehran, referring to the U.S. blockade as the "polite way this can go."

Addressing the Islamic Republic, he said, "You like to say publicly ... that you control the Strait of Hormuz. But you don't have a navy or real domain awareness. You can't control anything. To be clear: Threatening to shoot missiles and drones at commercial ships that are lawfully transiting international waters—that is not control. That's piracy. That's terrorism."

He continued, "The United States Navy controls the traffic going in and out of the strait, because we have real assets and real capabilities. ... The math is clear. We're using 10% of the world's most powerful navy, and you have 0% of your navy. That's real control, and we have a long track record of dealing with pirates and terrorists. But there is an alternative. As our negotiators have said, you, Iran, can choose a prosperous future, a golden bridge. And we hope that you do for the people of Iran. ... But if Iran chooses poorly, then they will have a blockade and bombs dropping on infrastructure, power and energy."

Well, the IRGC certainly hasn't been opting for the outcome desired by Washington, Jerusalem or the Iranian people. Trump, therefore, must stick to his literal and figurative guns.

After all, the last thing he would want is for the United States to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. (JNS Apr 19)