

US-Iran Conflict

The two prior US air campaigns against Iran (before Operation Epic Fury in 2026) occurred during the June 2025 "Twelve-Day War" between Israel and Iran.

- The main US operation was **Operation Midnight Hammer** (June 21–22, 2025). It involved US strikes (B-2 bombers and Tomahawk missiles from a submarine) on three key Iranian nuclear facilities: Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan/Esfahan. The goal was to degrade Iran's nuclear program in support of Israel.

This was the primary direct US military intervention in that short conflict (Israel's parallel operation was called Operation Rising Lion). Iran retaliated with a missile strike on a US base in Qatar. A ceasefire followed shortly after.

Timeline of US-Iran Conflict Since Trump Took Office (January 20, 2025)

Tensions escalated from nuclear negotiations, Israeli actions, and regional dynamics. Here's a summarized timeline based on major events:

- **Early 2025 (Jan–April):** Trump administration resumes/engages in nuclear talks with Iran (e.g., rounds in Oman and elsewhere). Tensions simmer over Iran's program, sanctions, and proxies.
- **June 12, 2025:** IAEA finds Iran in noncompliance with nuclear obligations. Iran announces a new enrichment facility.
- **June 13–24, 2025 (Twelve-Day War):** Israel launches major strikes on Iran (Operation Rising Lion). US joins with **Operation Midnight Hammer** (nuclear site strikes on June 21/22). Iran retaliates against US/Israeli targets. Ceasefire announced around June 24.
- **Mid–Late 2025:** Post-ceasefire diplomacy, snapback sanctions on Iran, economic fallout in Iran leading to protests (Dec 2025 onward). Trump threatens intervention amid crackdowns.
- **Late 2025–Early 2026:** US military buildup in the region. Stalled nuclear talks. Protests in Iran intensify; violent government response.
- **February 27–28, 2026:** Trump authorizes **Operation Epic Fury** (US codename; Israel: Operation Roaring Lion). Large-scale US/Israeli strikes begin on Iranian leadership, nuclear/missile sites, military infrastructure, etc. Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei is killed, along with other senior figures. Iran retaliates with missiles/drones against US bases, Israel, and Gulf targets.
- **March–June 2026 (Ongoing War):** Conflict continues with airstrikes, naval tensions (e.g., Strait of Hormuz issues), proxy actions, and significant casualties/damage on multiple sides.

Ceasefire attempts, diplomacy, and escalations occur. By mid-2026, it's described as a prolonged standoff/war with economic ripple effects.

This is a high-level overview of publicly reported events. The situation remains fluid, with significant geopolitical, humanitarian, and economic impacts. For the absolute latest developments, real-time news sources are best. Let me know if you want details on any specific part!

The US-Iran war (primarily Operation Epic Fury and related operations, starting late February 2026) is best assessed as a costly strategic stalemate with mixed tactical outcomes and significant unintended consequences. It is neither a clear "success" nor a total "failure" yet, but leans toward a pyrrhic or inconclusive result for the US based on initial objectives versus current realities.

Short-Term Assessment (as of mid-2026)

- **Tactical/Military Gains for US/Israel:** Significant degradation of Iranian nuclear sites (building on 2025 strikes), destruction of missile production/air defenses, elimination of key leadership (including Supreme Leader Khamenei), and weakening of proxies. US demonstrated power projection and supported Israel.
- **Iranian Resilience & Retaliation:** Iran survived regime-change pressure, inflicted costs (US casualties, aircraft losses, disruptions to Gulf shipping/energy via Hormuz threats/attacks), and maintained some nuclear latency. Proxies and asymmetric responses continue.
- **Ceasefire/MoU Fragility:** Multiple interruptions with tit-for-tat actions show incomplete de-escalation. Economic hits to Iran were severe (currency collapse, sanctions), but US/global costs (military spending, energy prices, regional instability) are also high.
- **Overall:** A stalemate where the US achieved short-term degradation but not decisive victory or lasting stability. High costs for limited strategic shift.

Though the conflict continues despite MoU and ceasefire keeps interrupting into military actions from both sides, how to assess US-Iran war? A success, failure, a stalemate, or something else? How criteria will history judge by it is a success or failure, say, 10 years from now, without partisan biases?

How History Will Likely Judge It (10+ Years Later, Non-Partisan Lens)

Historians assess wars through **objectives vs. outcomes, costs vs. benefits, long-term stability, and unintended effects**. Criteria include:

1. **Achievement of Core Objectives:**

- Did it permanently dismantle Iran's nuclear program? (Early strikes delayed it; full prevention depends on follow-through, inspections, or regime change.)
- Reduced threat from Iran/proxies to US allies (esp. Israel) and global shipping? Partial success if proxies weakened long-term; failure if reconstitution occurs.
- Regime change or fundamental shift in Iranian behavior? Unlikely so far—resilient systems often endure decapitation strikes.

2. **Costs Incurred:**

- **Human:** US/coalition casualties, Iranian civilian/military deaths (tens of thousands reported in some accounts), regional fallout.
- **Financial:** Tens of billions in US spending; broader economic disruption (oil prices, global markets).
- **Strategic/Reputational:** Strained alliances, boosted anti-US sentiment, opportunity costs (vs. other priorities like China), precedent for unilateral force.

3. **Regional & Global Stability:**

- Did it lead to a more peaceful Middle East or reduced nuclear proliferation risk? Success if a durable deal emerges and Iran moderates; failure/stalemate if it fuels new cycles of extremism, refugee crises, or empowered hardliners elsewhere.
- Power vacuum effects: Rise of new actors, strengthened Russia/China influence in the region?

4. **Alternatives & Counterfactuals:**

- Could sustained diplomacy + sanctions (pre-war talks) have achieved similar/more nuclear limits at lower cost? Historians often favor this lens (e.g., comparing to JCPOA debates).
- Precedent value: Does it deter future adversaries, or encourage proliferation/asymmetric responses?

Likely Historical Consensus in 10 Years (neutral view):

- **Success** if: Nuclear program is verifiably rolled back for a generation, Iran's conventional/proxy threat diminishes durably, a stable post-conflict order emerges with lower US entanglement, and costs prove proportional.
- **Failure** if: Iran rebuilds capabilities (nuclear or otherwise), regional chaos worsens (e.g., new wars, empowered rivals), US credibility erodes, or domestic US divisions deepen without clear strategic payoff.
- **Stalemate/Pyrrhic** (most probable framing): Short-term disruption achieved at high price, with Iran surviving as a defiant actor and the conflict highlighting limits of military solutions to entrenched geopolitical problems. Similar to how some view post-9/11 wars—tactical wins, strategic ambiguity.

Wars like this are rarely judged in binary terms. Factors like evolving Iranian politics, enforcement of any final deal, and broader US foreign policy trajectory will dominate. Objective metrics (e.g., IAEA reports on enrichment, casualty totals, economic data, alliance health) will matter more than rhetoric. Outcomes can look different with time as new evidence emerges.

This remains dynamic—future de-escalation could tilt assessments positively. What specific aspect (military, diplomatic, economic) interests you most for deeper analysis?

It is a common view that the decision to launch Epic Fury was greatly influenced by Israel. With empathy toward Israel waned considerably around the world, because of devastation to Gaza and Lebanon caused by IDF extreme and prolonged military campaigns, one aftermath of Epic Fury seems to be diverging US and Israel interests in the middle east, as JD Vance recently put it. Should Israel be considered that the iron-clad unconditional US support of the Jewish state may no longer exist?

Yes, the "iron-clad unconditional" US support for Israel that characterized much of the post-1948 (especially post-1967) relationship is under strain and may no longer be as automatic or absolute as in prior decades. This does not mean alliance collapse—shared interests, domestic US politics, and strategic value remain—but the Epic Fury episode and broader context highlight growing divergences, conditionality, and limits.

Key Factors in the Assessment

- **Israeli Influence on Epic Fury:** Reports indicate strong Israeli intelligence and advocacy played a major role in the US decision, alongside Trump's own calculations. This fits a pattern of close coordination but also raises questions in the US about entanglement and whether American decisions serve primarily US interests.
- **Waning Global Empathy and Backlash:** Prolonged IDF operations in Gaza (post-Oct 7, 2023) and Lebanon caused high civilian casualties and humanitarian crises, leading to international criticism, ICC actions, protests, and eroded soft power for both Israel and the US (as key supporter). This has made unconditional US backing more politically costly abroad and even domestically among younger Americans/progressives.
- **Diverging Interests (JD Vance & Others):** Statements like Vance's reflect a "America First" realist view: US support should align with tangible American security/economic benefits, not reflexive defense of Israeli actions that risk broader US costs (e.g., regional wars, oil disruptions, reputation). Post-Epic Fury, US priorities may emphasize containing Iran/China/Russia, energy stability, and avoiding open-ended commitments over mirroring every Israeli security concern.

Enduring Elements of the Relationship

- **Bipartisan Foundations:** Strong congressional support, shared intelligence, military aid (~\$3.8B/year baseline + supplements), and cultural/historical ties persist. Israel remains a key regional partner against common threats.
- **Domestic Politics:** Evangelical base, pro-Israel lobbies (e.g., AIPAC), and strategic arguments (qualitative military edge, tech/intel sharing) sustain robust backing.
- **Strategic Value:** Israel's capabilities, location, and innovations provide US leverage in the Middle East.

Likely Evolution

- **More Conditional Support:** Future US aid/intervention will likely face stricter scrutiny tied to Israeli restraint, diplomatic progress, or alignment with US goals (e.g., de-escalation, Iran containment without full-scale war). "Unconditional" may apply more to existential threats than routine operations.
- **Not Abandonment:** Core security guarantees (e.g., against Iran acquiring nukes or direct destruction) remain probable. Divergence is more about degree and tactics than alliance rupture.
- **Historical Parallel:** US-Israel ties have had tensions before (e.g., Suez 1956, settlements, Iran deal). Resilience is high, but the era of near-automatic alignment amid global scrutiny is fading.

In summary, **the relationship is evolving toward a more transactional, interest-based partnership rather than unqualified endorsement.** Epic Fury amplified this by highlighting costs of deep entanglement. Long-term trajectory depends on Israeli domestic politics, US leadership priorities, and whether both sides manage divergences without crisis. This is observable geopolitics, not moral judgment—states prioritize their own interests amid changing realities.

One intriguing question - how Evangelical Christians view the Jewish state who does not believe in Jesus and Gospel. Evangelical Christians constitute the core of Trump's political base. Did they genuinely support Israel in the past up till now? What role have religious beliefs played in the steadfast US support of Israel over the decades since 1948 when Israel was founded?

Evangelical Christians (particularly dispensationalist premillennialists) have provided some of the most consistent and fervent US political support for Israel since 1948, driven primarily by biblical theology rather than agreement with Jewish beliefs about Jesus. This support remains strong among many, though not monolithic, and forms a key pillar of broader US backing—especially in Republican politics and Trump's base.

Theological Basis: Why Support a Non-Christian Jewish State?

Evangelicals generally hold these views:

- **Restorationism and Biblical Prophecy:** Many interpret Old Testament promises (e.g., land covenants to Abraham's descendants) as still valid. The 1948 founding of Israel and 1967 Six-Day War are seen as fulfillments of prophecy signaling the "end times."
- **Dispensationalism:** Popularized in the 19th–20th centuries (e.g., Scofield Bible), this divides history into "dispensations." It holds that God has distinct plans for Israel (earthly kingdom) and the Church. Modern Israel is a prerequisite for events like the Tribulation, Rapture, and Second Coming of Christ.
- **Blessing/Cursing Principle:** Genesis 12:3 ("I will bless those who bless you...") is applied literally to the modern state of Israel. Support is framed as aligning with God's will, bringing blessing to America.
- **Theological Tension on Jesus:** Evangelicals believe salvation is through faith in Jesus (the Gospel). They often view unsaved Jews with compassion ("pray for the peace of Jerusalem," evangelism opportunities) rather than hostility. Many distinguish ethnic/ national Israel from individual salvation. Christian Zionism prioritizes geopolitical prophecy over immediate conversion.

This is **not universal** among Christians—mainline Protestants and some Catholics emphasize justice, Palestinian rights, or supersessionism (Church replacing Israel in covenants)—but it dominates conservative Evangelicalism.

Historical Role in US Support for Israel (1948–Present)

- **Pre-1948:** Christian restorationism influenced some British and American elites (e.g., Balfour Declaration era).
- **Post-1948:** Evangelical lobbying grew, especially after 1967. Figures like Jerry Falwell Sr., Pat Robertson, and John Hagee (Christians United for Israel) mobilized voters.
- **Political Impact:** Evangelicals became a core GOP constituency from the 1970s–80s (Moral Majority). They pressured for aid, embassy moves (e.g., Trump's 2018 Jerusalem recognition), and opposition to Iran deals seen as threatening Israel.
- **Trump Era:** Strong alignment. Trump's pro-Israel moves (Golan recognition, Abraham Accords, Soleimani strike, Jerusalem embassy) resonated deeply. Evangelicals remain a vital base segment, with high turnout and influence on foreign policy priorities.

Support has been **genuine and consistent** for decades among this group, predating modern partisan divides. Polls (e.g., Pew) show white Evangelicals as the most pro-Israel US demographic, often favoring Israel overwhelmingly in conflicts.

Nuance and Evolution

- **Not Unanimous:** Younger Evangelicals or those focused on social justice show more balanced views (concern for Palestinians). Some prioritize Gospel outreach over politics.
- **Strategic Overlap:** Theology reinforces geopolitical arguments (shared democracy, counterterrorism), but religious motivation is distinct and deeply held.
- **Limits:** Support is not "unconditional" for all—criticism of specific Israeli policies exists, but core existential backing is robust.

In short, **yes, Evangelical support has been genuine, theologically rooted, and influential in sustaining US policy.** It explains much of the "special relationship" intensity beyond pure realpolitik, especially in Republican administrations. This dynamic continues to shape politics today, including Trump's coalition. Theological differences with Judaism are acknowledged but subordinated to eschatological hopes.

During her tenure, former Georgian congresswoman MTG was against funding Israel for its endless war effort, advocating America First in its true sense, so was she against funding for Ukraine. Please comment the faction that MTG represents in Trump core supporters and what role they may play in pulling US support back in a foreseeable future.

Marjorie Taylor Greene (MTG) represents the "America First" isolationist/realist nationalist faction within Trump's core supporters. This group prioritizes US domestic issues, fiscal restraint, and avoiding "endless wars" or open-ended foreign aid over traditional neoconservative or unconditional alliance commitments. Her positions highlight tensions in the broader MAGA coalition.

MTG's Stance on Israel and Ukraine Funding

- **Ukraine:** She was a vocal opponent of supplemental aid packages, arguing they represented blank-check spending, corruption risks, and distraction from US border/security priorities. She often framed it as "America Last."
- **Israel:** During her tenure, MTG criticized aspects of US funding for Israel's military efforts, particularly amid prolonged Gaza/Lebanon operations. She advocated strict conditionality, oversight, and "America First" limits on aid—opposing what she saw as unconditional or excessive support for "endless wars." This aligned with her broader skepticism of foreign entanglements, even for close allies. She supported Israel's right to defend itself but pushed back against blank-check appropriations.

These views are not anti-Israel or anti-Ukraine per se but reflect a transactional lens: US aid should serve clear American interests with accountability and sunset clauses.

The Faction MTG Represents

This is the **populist-nationalist wing** of Trump's base, overlapping with:

- Paleoconservatives and "restrainers" (e.g., influenced by thinkers like Tucker Carlson, Rand Paul).
- Fiscal hawks concerned about deficits (\$35T+ national debt) and domestic needs (border, economy, infrastructure).
- Voters weary of post-9/11 forever wars, nation-building, and subsidizing wealthy allies.

It contrasts with:

- **Neocons/Traditional Hawks:** Strong interventionists favoring robust alliances and military spending.
- **Evangelical Christian Zionists:** Theologically driven unconditional Israel support (a major Trump base bloc).
- **Pro-Israel Donors/Lobby:** Significant influence in GOP circles.

Trump's coalition balances these groups. He delivered pro-Israel policies (Abraham Accords, embassy move) while echoing "no more endless wars" rhetoric. MTG-style voices gained prominence post-2022 with Ukraine aid debates and fiscal fights.

Potential Role in Pulling Back US Support

In the **foreseeable future (next 2–4 years)**, this faction could play a notable constraining role:

- **Congressional Leverage:** House Freedom Caucus members like MTG can influence spending bills, attach conditions to aid packages, or force debates on "blank checks." They amplify "America First" critiques via media/social platforms.
- **Influence on Trump/Administration:** Trump often blends instincts—transactional deal-making + base appeals. Pressure from this wing may lead to more scrutiny of aid (e.g., conditions on Israel for restraint, Ukraine endgame negotiations, or overall cuts).
- **Policy Outcomes:** Greater emphasis on burden-sharing from allies, reduced open-ended commitments, and prioritizing China/containment over Middle East ground wars. This could mean more conditional (not eliminated) support for Israel/Ukraine.
- **Limits:** Counterbalanced by pro-Israel Evangelicals, Senate hawks, military-industrial interests, and strategic realities (Iran, China). Complete withdrawal is unlikely; shifts would be toward restraint and conditionality.

Bottom Line: MTG embodies a genuine, influential strain in Trump's base pushing for a less interventionist foreign policy. It won't end alliances but could accelerate a post-"unipolar" era of selective engagement—prioritizing US sovereignty and resources. This tension is healthy for debate but creates internal GOP friction. Long-term, demographic/cultural shifts in the base (younger voters, fiscal realities) may amplify this faction's voice.

Their impact depends on Trump's personal decisions and congressional math.

As a personal observation, Marco Rubio seems much more engaged in pushing for diplomacy over military actions, leading to MoU, which is widely criticized as giving up too much to Iran. Behind it, Marco is aimed to breaking up or at least driving a wedge into China, Russia, and Iran alliance to contain China more effectively because China, not Iran, is the main adversary and present and clear threat in every sense to America. Marco Rubio, like MTG, represents another faction in Trump base. Like to hear your comment.

Your observation about Marco Rubio (Secretary of State) is insightful and aligns with his long-standing foreign policy worldview. He does represent a distinct faction in the broader Trump/MAGA ecosystem—one that is more traditional hawkish on adversaries like China while being pragmatic/realist about diplomacy and resource allocation.

Rubio's Approach and the Iran MoU

Rubio has been actively involved in selling and shaping the post-war MoU with Iran. His tone often emphasizes:

- Diplomacy as a tool to stabilize the region.
- Securing practical gains (e.g., Strait of Hormuz access, limits on Iranian nukes/proxies).
- Reassuring Gulf allies.

Critics (on the right and left) see the MoU as overly concessional (sanctions relief, economic openings, etc.). Rubio's defenders frame it as a tactical pause to avoid quagmire while addressing bigger threats. His focus appears geared toward **breaking or weakening the Russia-China-Iran (and North Korea) axis**—an "axis of upheaval" or authoritarian alignment that coordinates against US interests. By de-escalating with Iran (even at a cost), the US frees bandwidth, reduces Iran's utility as a Russian/Chinese proxy, and isolates Beijing more effectively.

This matches Rubio's Senate record: He has been one of the most consistent China hawks, pushing for decoupling, Taiwan support, economic security, and countering Belt and Road influence. Iran/Russia are secondary theaters to him.

Faction Rubio Represents in Trump's Base

Rubio embodies the **national security conservative / principled realist** wing:

- **Priorities:** Great power competition (China as #1 threat), strong military, alliances when useful, but skepticism of forever wars/nation-building.
- **Contrast with MTG's Faction:** MTG-style America First nationalists are more isolationist/restrainer—skeptical of most foreign aid/entanglements, including Israel/Ukraine, and focused on domestic retrenchment. Rubio is more engaged internationally but selectively (hawk on China, transactional elsewhere).

- **Overlap with Trump:** Trump blends both—rhetorical "no more wars" + willingness to use force/deals aggressively. Rubio provides intellectual/operational ballast for the "peace through strength" version.

This faction includes many former Never Trumpers or traditional Republicans who came around (e.g., on trade/security), think-tank conservatives, and voters prioritizing countering CCP over Middle East policing.

Role and Influence Going Forward

- **Wedge Strategy Potential:** Driving a wedge in the adversary axis is a classic realist move. Success could weaken China's leverage and limit multi-front threats. Failure (if Iran re-arms or the axis deepens) would validate critics.
- **Pulling US Support:** Rubio's approach may moderate pure isolationism, favoring "offshore balancing" or selective engagement—contain China primarily, manage Russia/Iran via diplomacy + pressure rather than open wars. This could sustain more US involvement than MTG prefers but with clearer prioritization.
- **Tensions in the Base:** The Trump coalition's foreign policy is a big tent. Rubio's faction provides continuity with GOP orthodoxy on China, while MTG's pushes radical restraint. Trump arbitrates, often toward deals that claim victories.

Overall, **Rubio represents the "smart power" realist tendency**—willing to compromise tactically (e.g., Iran MoU) for strategic focus on China. It's a counterweight to both neocons (endless engagement) and hardcore restrainers (near-total withdrawal). Whether this leads to effective containment or perceived weakness depends on outcomes. This internal diversity is typical of broad political movements and likely keeps US policy from extremes.

Your read captures a real strategic logic at play.