

The Utopian

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**Defeat United States/Israeli
Aggression Against Iran!**

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Statement of the Utopian Tendency

Defeat United States/Israeli Aggression against Iran!



We are completely and unequivocally against the joint U.S./Israeli attack on the Islamic Republic of Iran. This, although the Iranian government is a brutal, quasi-fascist regime that despises, oppresses, and represses its own people, up to and including slaughtering 30,000 people who dared to revolt against it this past January. The U.S./Israeli assault is an act of vile aggression and an egregious violation of the most basic of democratic rights, particularly the right to national self-determination, of the Iranian people and even of common decency.

Although U.S. president Donald Trump and Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu claim that their attack is meant, among other things, to liberate the Iranians (both the Persian majority and

ethnic minorities, such as the Azeris, Kurds, and Baluchis) from their tyrannical government, this is nonsense. These would-be fascists have no interest in liberating the Iranian people but instead are concerned only in the establishment of a pliant Iranian regime, one that will meekly follow the dictates of the United States and its colleague/client Israel and defend their political and economic interests. This is demonstrated by Donald Trump's recent intervention in Venezuela, where he kidnapped and arrested Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro but cynically left the Chavist dictatorship intact, bypassing the long-standing democratic opposition, which has loyally (but foolishly) followed U.S. leadership and obeyed its orders only to be cast aside in Trump's maneuver to establish a direct US protectorate over the country. It was also revealed in Trump's failure to come to the aid of the Iranians in revolt against their government in January. At the time, Trump implied that he might provide militarily support to the rebels but left them in the lurch at the crucial moment, allowing them to be gunned down in the streets.



Like all dictators, would-be dictators, and imperialist powers (think Stalin, with the Red Army outside of Warsaw in 1944, refusing to aid the valiant uprising in that German-occupied city, thus allowing Hitler to crush it; think the United States in 1956, failing to help the Hungarians who rose up against the Communists after being urged to do so for years by Radio

Free Europe and other voices of the CIA). Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu are terrified of all independent activity, let alone mass uprisings, of ordinary people. Trump and Netanyahu are definitely not interested in the liberation, or even the elementary rights, of the Iranian peoples.

Donald Trump's overriding goal is to go down in history as the man who single-handedly stopped the decades-long decline of American imperialism and restored "America" to its former greatness. This explains the apparent contradiction between the two parts of his agenda: (1) the isolationist/"America First" stance of his economic and immigration policies; and (2) the aggressive/revanchist thrust of his recent foreign-policy moves, e.g., the intervention in Venezuela, the joint US/Israeli war against Iran, and the likely upcoming attack on Cuba.

For his part, Benjamin Netanyahu's purpose in waging war on Iran is a part of his long-term strategy of establishing Israeli control, either direct or indirect, over the entire region between the Nile and the Euphrates Rivers, in effect, to fill in the space left by the ebbing hegemony of the United States. The Iranian regime constitutes the Israelis' main competitor for control over the area.



Some observers today are looking for another mass revolt against the Islamic regime. However, any repetition of the rebellion of this past

January any time soon is extremely unlikely. Mass uprisings cannot be turned on and off like water out of a tap. Their defeats incur terrible costs: thousands killed, many more thousands wounded, arrested, imprisoned, tortured, thrown out of work, evicted from their homes. Additionally, there is the loss of morale, especially after the betrayal by Donald Trump. It will likely take months for these wounds to heal before another revolt will be ventured. In the meantime, the repression on the part of the regime will be greatly intensified. While we hope to see a mass uprising against the Islamic regime in the future, that time is likely not now.

In these circumstances, the strategic goal of revolutionaries and even of democratically-minded individuals ought to be the decisive defeat of the joint military aggression of the United States and Israel against Iran. Since this seems unlikely, second-best would be the mere survival of the Iranian regime, at least past the point where Trump and Netanyahu can make a convincing claim of victory. If Trump and Netanyahu are allowed to present their action as having been successful, they will only be encouraged to repeat their aggression elsewhere and everywhere, producing an epoch of global chaos.



To put this differently, our present tasks are: (1) to oppose the U.S. Israeli attack on Iran; (2) to support and participate in the construction of an anti-U.S./Israeli anti-imperialist movement, even if this means collaborating with authoritarian (Islamist and Stalinist) forces; (3) to organize support for Iranian victory even if it means the (hopefully temporary) survival of the Islamic theocracy; (4) to expose the reactionary nature of that government. As distasteful as this may seem, in the technical language of our tendency, our position in the current conflict should be one of temporary military-technical support of the reactionary, theocratic, and authoritarian regime in Tehran.

March 2026

Discussion of the U.S./Israeli Attack on Iran

(Note: The following discussion took place around the initial draft of the Statement presented above.)



March 8, 2026

Ron and All,

I largely agree with Ron's position/statement (more below.)

I would add that we should not forget that that in 1953, the CIA and the Britain's MI5 overthrew the Prime Minister of Iran, Mohammad Mosaddegh, who had significantly displaced the power of the Shah, instituted a level of democratic reform, and most significantly, from a British/U.S. perspective, nationalized the British and U.S. oil companies. (Israel was not directly involved in the coup but quickly became the major supporter in the region of the Shah's brutally repressive regime.) While I'm not as sure as Martin Luther King, Jr. was that the arc of history

'bends toward justice,' I do agree that it is a long arc. Twenty-six years of the Shah's regime, established and backed by secular, corrupt, fake-democratic Western imperialist governments (governments which, including France at the time, had carved up the Middle East and its oil following the WWI collapse of the Ottoman Empire) led in great measure to the 1979 Islamist Revolution that established a repressive, authoritarian, theocratic state run by the ayatollahs and their Revolutionary Guards. Thus, the U.S., far from being a liberating force, has significant ownership over what Ron aptly describes as a "brutal, quasi-fascist regime that despises, oppresses, and represses its own people..."

I fully agree with Ron that we unequivocally denounce the U.S./Israeli attack on Iran, and on the Iranian people's (long-denied) right to self-determination. I also agree that we favor, in Ron's words, "the decisive defeat of the joint military aggression of the United States and Israel against Iran."

I think Ron is right to be pessimistic about the prospects of a mass uprising by the Iranian people, particularly in light of the slaughter of tens of thousands of protesters little more than a month ago. That said, I think we should make clear that a people's uprising against both the current Iranian regime and US/Israeli imperialism would be an extraordinarily positive development, one that we hope might become a reality. I think it is possible—and necessary—to differentiate this view from a 'call' for immediate steps that might have disastrous consequences in the present moment. That said, I do not rule out the possibility that the forces of Iranian government repression may be weakened, opening the door to a mass uprising, even as we oppose the forces that are weakening the regime. I think this deserves some more discussion.

In addition to the points above, Ron argues that we should support and participate in a broad movement in opposition to U.S./Israeli imperialism. He point out that this may well mean "collaborating with authoritarian (Stalinist and Islamist) forces." I agree with Ron. The anti-Vietnam War movement provides a parallel: many elements of the movement were pro-capitalist liberals who, under other circumstances would have supported US imperialism; there were also many participants in the movement who politically supported Ho Chi Minh and the Vietnamese

Communist party—and, equally significantly, various Stalinist/state capitalist regimes around the world. Perhaps more significantly, the Communist Party and/or the Socialist Workers Party (depending on circumstances) were often the principal organizing forces of major anti-Vietnam War protests (through various coalitions they controlled). Thus, just as we openly criticized the authoritarian/totalitarian nature of the leadership of the National Liberation Front, so we should oppose and seek to expose the thoroughly reactionary, authoritarian nature of the current government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

While making clear that we oppose the regime politically, Ron argues that we should “organize support for the (hopefully temporary) survival of the Islamic theocracy in Iran.” He then refers to the ‘technical language of our tendency’ and in this context states: “our position in the current conflict should be one of temporary military-technical support of the reactionary, theocratic, and authoritarian regime in Tehran.” I would like to find a way to make clear that we support all resistance to the U.S./Israeli invasion, without stating that we support the current Iranian regime. The word ‘support’—regardless of context or modification—appears in both of Ron’s formulations. I prefer to pose it differently: we support all forces that are working to defeat US/Israeli aggression against Iran; we condemn the current Iranian regime and support any all efforts by the Iranian people to overthrow it. I recognize that there is a formal contradiction here: if we support ‘all forces that are working to defeat US/Israeli aggression,’ isn’t the current Iranian government one of the forces? (It is, of course). But I think we can make a choice about our ‘contradiction’ in this situation. If we say, as Ron suggests, that we ‘support’ the current regime, we need to go on to say that we don’t actually support the current regime. If we say we ‘support all forces,’ then we need to acknowledge that this does in fact include the current regime. Given the extraordinarily reactionary (as just one example, women are second-class citizens, often raped or brutalized) and otherwise genocidal nature of the Iranian regime, I prefer the latter contradiction to the former. I would like to see more discussion of this issue.

Rod

March 8, 2026

Everybody:

I thank Rod for his extensive comments. I do think we have a substantial difference.

While watching the news and thinking about the war, I found myself rooting for the survival of the Islamic regime, if only past the point where Trump and Netanyahu can convincingly declare a victory. In the aftermath of the war, I think it is crucial that it be clear that the attack on Iran was defeated, that Trump and Netanyahu's strategy was a failure. Otherwise, they will continue to carry out such blatant aggression elsewhere, leading to a string of assaults on other countries. I think the most important task right now is to defeat Trump and Netanyahu. And I think this means that we want the Iranian government to beat the US and Israelis. Since at this time a decisive military victory for the Iranian regime is not possible, given the imbalance of military might, the next best thing is for the regime to survive, however weakened and mauled, at least for a period after the cessation of hostilities. I think we should say this clearly (and explain why) and not mince words, however horrible it may sound. I also think we need to draw a firm line between our position and those who are vacillating about defending Iran because they believe the U.S./Israeli attacks are somehow helping the Iranian people to overthrow the mullahs or might somehow help the people overthrow the regime. If, somehow, a mass revolt against the regime breaks out, we can and should indicate our support for it. However, as I tried to explain in my comments, I think this is extremely unlikely. In the meantime, I want the (horrible, reactionary, quasi-fascist, authoritarian) Islamic regime to withstand the U.S./Israeli attacks. I believe that many members of the Iranian opposition, both in Iran and in the diaspora, share this basic position or something like it.

Ron

March 8, 2026

Ron,

Thanks for these comments. I am not yet persuaded we have a substantial difference.

I share your desire to see Trump and Netanyahu defeated as soundly and roundly as possible. I need to think further about whether the many ways this can be said: does 'Victory to Iran over U.S./Israeli Imperialism!' or 'Victory to the Iranian People over U.S./Israeli Imperialism!') necessitate the words 'Support the Iranian Theocracy!' (I have framed the last demand this way to draw out what I see as the difference—you did not use this phrase explicitly.)

Rod

March 8, 2026

All,

I support Ron's statement, and, on the disputed point, after rereading Rod's response (which I reacted against initially but wanted in fairness to recheck) I support Ron's formulation. My reaction to Rod's was that it wasn't clearcut; Ron's phrase is that we shouldn't mince words. This statement is clear and can be stated in a few words: "I'm for Iran against the U.S.; I'm for the Iranian people against the regime."

On related points, Trump hasn't repeated his "unconditional surrender" demand, so far. Perhaps someone has clued him in that unconditional surrender requires a land war; perhaps however, if he is really reckless, he is now planning one. Either way, our opposition to Trump's imperialism would mean favoring the resistance of Iran's horrible regime over the intervention of the U.S., in real fact, and so we should say so clearly.

Chris

March 8, 2026

Rod,

I am against any slogan that explicitly equates defense of Iran or defense of the Iranian people with defense of the theocratic government. I am not primarily concerned about slogans but about our attitude. I think it is crucial that in this war, which was actually an unprovoked attack on Iran, I want the Iranians to beat back the U.S./Israeli assault. This means, I think, being in a military-support bloc with the government, even though the government is horrible. It means we are unequivocally against the attacks, that we don't equivocate on this because we think the attacks might lead to a mass uprising or because we think they might cause the government to collapse, or something like that. I'm against the attacks on Iran, which are also attacks on the Iranian people. If we agree on this, we can talk about slogans later.

Ron

March 8, 2026

Ron and All,

I am 100% in agreement with what you have just written.

Rod

March 10, 2026

To All,

Many thanks to Ron for putting forth this statement and Rod, Chris and Jack for their contributions. The statement lays out the main operative facets of the U.S./Israel's attack on Iran and the immediate condition of its people. It is clear, brief, doesn't "mince words" and conveys "attitude." Trump's active run and taste for gun boat diplomacy needs to

be tripped up hopefully with its present Iran adventure. Resistance by and the near-term survival of Iran's clerical reactionary regime is unfortunate as it may be a required ingredient.

Right now, the Strait of Hormuz crisis centered threat to the global economy militates against Trump's proclivity to declare victory and walk away. Will events (this morning three ships are reportedly hit in the Strait) necessitate some form of unwanted land escalation (occupation of Iran's Strait islands or mainland shore) to anticipate one scenario. In short, clerical/Revolutionary Guard regime pushback on Trump is needed. Difficulties exposing Trump and company's shallowness and ineptness perhaps quagmire can foster fresh global and homegrown anti-imperialist developments.

Mike E.

March 11, 2026

Mike,

Thanks—I agree with your comments. I would triple underline the extent to which “Trump and company’s shallowness and ineptness” are being exposed. Quagmire is only getting deeper. Trump would do well (for himself) to withdraw yesterday.

Rod

March 11, 2026

Ron and All,

I would like to see the following changes to Ron’s statement:

- 1) Change second sentence of third paragraph to read: ‘While we hope for a mass uprising against the current regime, a repetition of the...!’
- 2) In the final paragraph, a) change point (3) to read: “to organize support for the Iranian people in their struggle against U.S./Israeli

aggression. This includes military-technical support for the (hopefully temporary) survival of the reactionary, theocratic, and authoritarian regime in Iran.; b) delete the final sentence of point (4).

Rod

March 11, 2026

All,

Ron can decide what he likes, but for my money, omitting Ron's last sentence, "As distasteful as this may seem, in the technical language of our tendency, I believe our position should be one [of] temporary military-technical support of the reactionary, theocratic, and authoritarian regime in Iran," makes the statement more muddy. It's one thing to explain "military-technical support," or to avoid the term by saying, "one of supporting the reactionary, theocratic, and authoritarian regime in Iran against the U.S. attack, without any support for the regime's leaders, politics or ideology." It's another thing to omit support for Iran against the U.S. as the final point in our statement.

Chris

March 11, 2026

Everybody:

I agree with Chris, I am not for deleting my last sentence.

Ron

March 11, 2026

I agree with Chris's points. In particular, I would prefer to avoid the term "military-technical support" and instead use something like the alternative that Chris has suggested.

To be clear, I will support the document even if it includes the term "military-technical support", but I would prefer that it didn't. As I said in an earlier email, I think that the term is obscure except to a relatively small group, and even in that group there's disagreement about what it means. Spelling out what we mean would be better, in my opinion.

Jack

March 11, 2026

All,

I continue to think Ron's statement is clearer and sharper than Rod's.

The one point that Rod's original post—in response to Ron's—did *not* make was that we support the current regime in Iran in its struggle against the U.S.; everything else, including opposing the regime politically as reactionary and theocratic, was there. I thought this a muddy statement, obscuring the fact that yes, we want this regime to win against the U.S. or at least withstand its attacks.

Rod's newer formulation does state military-technical support, but (in my view) in a less than fully clear way ("including..."). It also (I presume) leaves Ron's point 4, "to expose the reactionary nature of that government," as the final one—what always seems the major emphasis of a statement. Both aspects result (I think) in a somewhat unclear position. The core of our position should be that anti-imperialists must now support the current fight by the regime and its armed forces against the U.S.-Israeli attacks, while opposing the regime politically, as has always been part of the "military support" position. Ron's document has the virtue of clear political statement; Rod's, in my view, doesn't.

To Jack (and to Rod) I should make clear that I don't insist on the wording "military-technical support"; as Jack noted, I included an alternative formulation in my post this morning. On balance, however, I think it is probably better to include that phrasing, with explanation. I

also do not care particularly about the phrase "as distasteful as this may seem."

Chris

March 12, 2026

Thanks to Ron for writing the original statement, and to Rod, Chris, Jack and Mike for their additional comments. Here are a few of my own:

1. To follow up on the U.S./Israel's horrendous violation of Iran's right to self-determination, I think that a new, mass revolt anytime soon is extremely unlikely not only for the reasons Ron outlines (and the fear of being bombed if one did take to the streets), but that however horrible people may view the theocracy, Iran is still their country and they don't want outsiders to control it, just as the Persians did back to Biblical times. The attitude is similar to many Iraqis pre-2003 who hated Saddam Hussein but even more didn't want foreign invaders to determine their future.
2. And following up on that last sentence, a more modern example of an imperialist power first encouraging an uprising and then leaving it to hang out to dry was when Bush 1 did it in Gulf War 1, preferring to leave Saddam in power rather than having to deal with a mass independent movement.
3. I am for keeping Point 4 in, notwithstanding the problems of explaining military-technical support to a broader audience. (But then we're not issuing a pamphlet).
4. Finally, in the interest of emphasizing the right of self-determination, I suggest rewording Point 3 to read: 'to organize support for Iranian victory even if it means the (hopefully temporary) survival of the Islamic theocracy.'

Bill

March 13, 2026

Bill,

I like your point (4) and appreciate your raising it.

Ron's primary reason for being pessimistic about a new mass uprising was the crushing repression the Iranian regime unleashed just a short while ago. You add the issue of self-determination, i.e. the Iranian people not wanting to ally with, or seem allied with, the attacking U.S. government. I think this is a valid point.

The possibility I see for a mass uprising—and I emphasize possibility, not probability—would be in the space that might exist following US/Israeli withdrawal (hopefully in a resounding defeat), in which the Iranian regime held on to power, but was nonetheless severely weakened. Even in this scenario, Iranians will have suffered enormous death, destruction and hardship as a result of the horrific U.S./Israeli bombing. Yet the resilience of the Iranian people has been remarkable. I guess the bottom line is hope—hope for as swift and as total a defeat of U.S./Israel as possible, a regime that, despite victory, has been weakened, and the overthrow of this abhorrent regime by the Iranian people sooner rather than later.

Rod
