



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on March 13, 2026

2,200 Marines Headed for Iran in Apparent Preparation for Boots on the Ground

U.S. President Donald Trump was telling the truth when [he told](#) the *New York Post* he didn't "have the yips" about sending troops to Iran.

Myriad news outlets confirmed that almost 2,500 Marines are headed to the region in what appears to be the beginning of "boots on the ground," and possibly, another endless war on behalf of Israel.

Trump admitted in an interview with Fox Radio today that his early hope that encouraged Iranians would rise up and overthrow the Islamic regime has been dashed. The people don't have weapons, he said, which means they won't overthrow the government, U.S. and Israeli bombing regardless.

Meanwhile, the cost of the war grows by the minute. The first six days of the war cost taxpayers more than \$11 billion.



Derek Fountain/U.S. Navy/Wikimedia Commons
The USS Tripoli



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Multiple Reports

The U.S. Naval Institute (USNI) News confirmed with two defense officials that 2,200 Marines with the [31st Marine Expeditionary Unit](#) (MEU) based in Okinawa, Japan, boarded the [USS Tripoli](#), an amphibious assault ship that resembles an aircraft carrier.

The ship “will join the Gerald R. Ford and Abraham Lincoln carrier strike groups that have been operating in the region,” [USNI News reported](#):

Tripoli was operating in the Philippine Sea earlier this week with USS *San Diego* (LPD-22) and USS *New Orleans* (LPD-18), according to the March 9 [USNI News Fleet and Marine Tracker](#). The three ships make up the Tripoli Amphibious Ready Group. It’s unclear whether all three ships are heading to the Middle East, or if *Tripoli* will go on its own. Ship spotters identified *Tripoli* sailing alone south of Taiwan heading through [the Luzon Strait on Thursday](#).



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The 31st MEU is based in Okinawa. Navy Amphibious Ready Groups and Marine Corps MEUs that deploy with the U.S. Central Command, which is managing Operation Epic Fury, typically come from the east coast of the United States, the website noted.

"It's unclear what missions *Tripoli* and the MEU elements might do in CENTCOM," [USNI News reported](#).

[A source told](#) The Associated Press that the buildup "does not necessarily indicate that a ground operation is imminent or will take place at all."

Trump Retreats

[When he began](#) the bombing, President Trump warned Iran's army, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), to surrender or "face certain death" and urged Iranians to overthrow their regime.

"Your hour of freedom is at hand," he said. And "when we are finished, take over your government":

It will be yours to take. This will be probably your only chance for generations.

That apparently isn't the case, he told Fox Radio today.

"Well, you just mentioned to me a group of people that go around with machine guns and shoot them down, and they say if anybody protests, we're going to kill you in the streets," he told Fox talker Brian Kilmeade:

So, I really think that's a big hurdle to climb for people that don't have weapons. I think that's a very big hurdle. So, it'll happen, but it probably will be, maybe not immediately. Who's going to do that?

They literally have people in the streets with machine guns, machine-gunning people down if they want to protest, OK. So, you know, that's a ... pretty high standard to say I want to go and protest. So I would understand that.

War Cost

If true, that means Trump will likely put troops on the ground to finish a job the Iranian people cannot. And that means the cost of the war will increase dramatically, not including death payouts to families or the cost of caring for future battle-wounded Americans.

As [The New American reported](#) yesterday, *The New York Times* disclosed that the war cost \$11.3 billion in its first six days, some \$1.89 billion per day. If that rate of spending continued until today, then the war has thus far cost \$26.32 billion.



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Pentagon officials told lawmakers in a closed-door briefing on Capitol Hill on Tuesday that they estimated the cost of the war against Iran would exceed \$11.3 billion in the first six days alone.



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[The Washington Post disclosed](#) that U.S. forces burned through \$5.6 billion in munitions in the war's first 48 hours.

But those figures are only the cost in dollars and cents. Other costs, such as lives lost or Americans maimed for life, are higher. The military death toll in the post 9/11 wars in Iraq and Afghanistan was 7,052. And 30,177 veterans committed suicide, the [Brown University's Cost of War project reported](#).

More than 1.8 million are disabled; 40 percent of them will receive lifetime disability benefits. Cost by 2050: \$2.2 trillion to \$2.5 trillion.

But at least the taxpayers are apparently getting some bang for the bucks in Iran.

"Between our Air Force and that of the Israelis, over 15,000 enemy targets have been struck, [Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth told reporters today](#):



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That's well over 1,000 a day. ...

Looking up, the IRGC and Iranian regime sees only two things on the side of aircraft: the Stars and Stripes and the Star of David, the evil regime's worst nightmare.

Iran has no air defenses. Iran has no air force. Iran has no navy. Their missiles, their missile launchers and drones [are] being destroyed or shot out of the sky. Their missile volume is down 90%. Their one-way attack drones yesterday, down 95%. And as the world is seeing, they are exercising sheer desperation in the Strait of Hormuz, something we're dealing with, we have been dealing with it and don't need to worry about it.



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