

Trump is out of ideas

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Donald Trump has never revealed a great ability to think strategically. He can bully. He can brag. He can abuse. But, it has to be said that strategic thinking appears to have been beyond his pay grade.

He provided dramatic evidence in support of that contention yesterday. [As the Financial Times reports](#):

Donald Trump said the US would launch a naval blockade of the Strait of Hormuz following the failure of negotiators to reach a deal with Iranian officials in marathon talks in Pakistan over the weekend.

"Effective immediately, the United States Navy, the Finest in the World, will begin the process of BLOCKADING any and all Ships trying to enter, or leave, the Strait of Hormuz," Trump wrote on Truth Social on Sunday morning.

The reality is that the Strait of Hormuz is already blocked. It is on the basis of its success in achieving that goal that Iran has secured the upper hand in its war with Israel and the USA.

The Strait was, of course, open before the war began. One of Trump's biggest demands of Iran in the peace talks in Islamabad, Pakistan, over the weekend was that the Strait be reopened. That was mildly ironic. The only reason it is shut is because of the action that he and Benjamin Netanyahu have taken.

Now, devoid of any other ideas, Trump is threatening to blockade the waterway that Iran says it will open again, so long as shipping pays a toll to it to assist funding of the reconstruction now required in its country, with the toll payable either in cryptocurrency or yuan, which is the currency of China.

I am, of course, aware that Trump said that the toll he is imposing is designed to block the passage of any ship that has paid a toll, but there are very good questions in international law about whether such action on his part is legal, just as there are questions as to whether the imposition of a toll in the first place is legal. But my point is

that imposing a blockade, from a considerable distance (as will be necessary if US ships are to be safe from Iranian attack whilst trying to impose this blockade), on traffic through the Strait of Hormuz appears to indicate three things.

The first is desperation. The US would appear to be out of ideas when it comes to this war.

The second is a willingness to reinforce Iran's action. The Strait of Hormuz will definitely be shut now, contrary to the interests of the wider world, all of whom are already showing considerable frustration with the actions of the USA and Israel.

Third, there is a willingness on the part of the USA to shoot itself in the foot.

Trump has most definitely lost the plot when it comes to this war. What worries me is that this could lead to a further escalation in the violence, probably at the request and behest of Benjamin Netanyahu, who appears to now recognise no boundaries when it comes to such issues.