

The Indiependent

We're providing budding journalists with experience & YOU with incredible articles

War is Peace: How Trump Exposes The Double-Think Of American Foreign Policy

By **Rhys Clarke** - March 8, 2026



[American Foreign Policy](#) [Iran](#) [Venezuela](#) [Greenland](#)

Image: mana5280 / Unsplash

Karl Marx once claimed that history repeats itself “[the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce](#).” In this political era, we must invert this adage. These days, history manifests first as a farce, then as a tragedy.

First, the farce. In 2009, then-President Barack Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. For anyone with even a rudimentary understanding of U.S. foreign policy in the aftershock of 9/11, this was enough to raise an eyebrow at least. Even as the President was shaking hands and modestly posing for the press, his regime was entangled with two wars, a fact acknowledged by Obama himself during his [acceptance speech](#). Indeed, just nine days before accepting the award, Obama had announced his decision to dispatch a [further 30,000 troops to Afghanistan](#).

Perhaps in an attempt to ward off accusations that he might be lacking in self-awareness, the President dropped his usual charismatic grin in favour of a more sombre, suitably world-wary expression, President Obama offered a paradoxical defence of his militaristic escalation by insisting that, sometimes, peace can only be attained through war – a contradiction that, even by 2009, had been so [tediously overused](#), especially in the run-up to the Iraq War. The President even had the banal temerity to trot out the Hitler Justification, insisting that “A nonviolent movement could not have halted Hitler’s armies. Negotiations cannot convince al-Qaeda’s leaders to lay down their arms.”

This was not President Obama’s only farcical defence of actions taken by the American military in the Middle East. By 2014, the “[targeted killings](#)” conducted through the use of American drones had resulted in the deaths of numerous innocent civilians. In one analysis carried out by the human rights group, Reprieve, it was revealed that U.S. attempts to target 41 men with drone strikes had resulted in the deaths of approximately 1,147 people. To describe such clumsy and

imprecise methods of waging war as being somehow “targeted” truly highlights the tone of farce that dominated the Obama presidency.



Then, we have the tragedy. In December 2025, President Trump was named the first winner of the newly created FIFA Peace Prize. This prize was bestowed upon the former reality-TV star by FIFA's president, Gianni Infantino, in recognition of Trump's “[exceptional and extraordinary actions to promote peace and unity around the world.](#)”

President Trump has been seeking international validation for years now. Undoubtedly, he is exhilarated by his efforts to bring peace and stability to the world: his ineffectual and heavy-handed attempts to orchestrate a lopsided peace in Ukraine, his failed attempts to end the conflict in Gaza, as well as his bombing of alleged “[narco terrorists](#)” in the Caribbean.

Less than one month later, on 3rd January, the United States carried out a military raid on the Venezuelan capital, Caracas, that resulted in the capture of President Nicolás Maduro. At a subsequent press conference, whilst praising the American military as “[the strongest and most fearsome military on the planet,](#)” Trump announced that “We’re going to run the country until such a time as we can do a safe, proper, and judicious transition.” Right now, Venezuela is under the official control of Maduro's former Vice-President, Delcy Rodríguez. She is running the show... with President Trump's permission, though he has warned her that if she does not comply with U.S. demands, then she would “[pay a very big price, probably bigger than Maduro.](#)” Comments such as these make it clear to everyone who is really pulling the strings... not so much behind the scenes but out in the very centre of the stage, preening and posing for all to see.

Now, the “[no new wars](#)” President decided to once again bare his fangs on the global stage. On Saturday 28th February, President Trump announced the beginning of a new military campaign in Iran, beginning with a joint US-Israeli strike that has been modestly christened Operation Epic Fury. The stated purpose behind this campaign is to [impose regime change in Tehran](#), Iran's capital city, and the destruction of Iran's nuclear programme.

Already, the assault on Iran has [claimed the life of Ali Khamenei](#), the supreme leader of Iran. On Truth Social, President Trump vowed that the Iranian regime would soon learn that “[no one should challenge the strength and might of the United States Armed Forces.](#)” This proclamation was followed by a prophetic admission that “the lives of courageous American heroes may be lost, and we may have casualties.” Indeed, the absurdly named Operation Epic Fury has already resulted in [the deaths of three U.S. servicemen](#), and the reported deaths of over a [hundred Iranian schoolgirls](#)

This regime-fiddling and militarism is precisely what makes FIFA's decision to drape the neck of President Trump with such a gaudy and meaningless trinket a clear example of political tragedy. No lessons have been learned since Obama. Under Trump's leadership, the curious double-think that once dominated American foreign policy has been truly shattered. The era of reserved and dignified speeches in defence of so-called ‘just wars’ being fought in cases of self-defence, or to protect civilians from being slaughtered by their own government, has passed.

Indeed, this habit of disturbing contradiction is an American tradition that warmongering nostalgists, such as John Bolton, who has long been a committed believer in the need for America to achieve “[peace through strength,](#)” might be sad to see go. However, with Trump as the Commander-in-Chief of the world's most powerful military, it is time to drop all pretences at clinging to this fairytale of American benevolence. The inherent paradox of the American government, acting as a global imperialist in the name of defending freedom and democracy, long predates the moral and strategic disaster of Afghanistan and the “[forward strategy of freedom in the Middle East.](#)” Just take a cursory look at the bloodbaths of Vietnam and Jakarta. For most of the twentieth century, the assertion that peace and democracy can be achieved through militarism



and clumsy geopolitical meddling has served as a half-hearted obfuscation of American imperialism.



This is no longer possible. Perhaps the kindest word that one can offer in Trump's defence is his lack of tact; his politics and behaviour while in office have all the subtlety of a nuclear explosion. When asked about his New Year's Resolutions for 2026, Trump declared that his resolution was "[Peace on Earth](#)." Days later, the American military was carrying out its raid in Venezuela. Weeks later, Trump was openly seeking negotiations to acquire Greenland for reasons of alleged national security, whilst offering the least reassuring reassurance that he would not use military force to take Greenland by force, stating that: "[We probably won't get anything unless I decide to use excessive strength and force, where we would be frankly unstoppable. But I won't do that](#)." The people of Greenland likely feel about as reassured by this promise as Delcy Rodríguez.

And so, the farce at the very centre of this moral and political tragedy has been uncovered. Trump's brash honesty about his desire to control other nations through the use of force has completely shattered the previous double-think that enabled America to (perhaps not always convincingly) hide its intentions beneath a virtuous mask.

Words by [Rhys Clarke](#)

Support The Independent

We're trying to raise £200 a month to help cover our operational costs. This includes our 'Writer of the Month' awards, where we recognise the amazing work produced by our contributor team. If you've enjoyed reading our site, we'd really appreciate it if you could [donate to The Independent](#). Whether you can give £1 or £10, you'd be making a huge difference to our small team.

Rhys Clarke