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## Iran's Bluster and Weakness

*Benjamin Friedman, The National Interest*



AP Photo

Iran this week punctuated ten days of naval exercises in the Strait of Hormuz and threats to close it with a warning to U.S. Navy ships to stay out of Persian Gulf, which requires passage through the strait. The tough talk may have temporarily juiced oil prices, but it failed to

impress militarily. Recent news reports have cited U.S. military officials, defense analysts, and even an anonymous Iranian official arguing that Iran likely lacks the will and ability to block shipping in the strait. That argument isn't new: Iran's economy depends on shipments through the strait, and the U.S. Navy can keep it open, if need be. What's more, the Iranians might be deterred by the fear that a skirmish over the strait would give U.S. or Israeli leaders an excuse to attack...

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