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The Jawboner in Chief Is Back and Moving Markets

Trump's social media blasts once again complicate life for investors, traders.

By [Phil Serafino](#)

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- Stocks fell after Donald Trump followed his intervention in Venezuela with moves targeting the US housing and defense industries, signaling further volatility in the second year of his latest term.

Sure, the president roiled markets at times in the past year with his on-again, off-again tariffs and military strike on Iran. But his social media forays yesterday were vintage DJT – a concentrated blast of market-moving screeds that landed out of the blue, with no clear evidence that he can or will follow through on them.

In the space of a few hours he:

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- **Said defense firms must end stock buybacks**, stop issuing dividends and cap executive pay until they invest more in factories and research. Northrop Grumman and Lockheed Martin slumped about 5%. He targeted RTX by name, demanding the company formerly known as Raytheon invest more in production capabilities.
- **After the US market closed, he demanded a \$500 billion increase in annual military spending**, a proposal that then lifted defense contractor shares in after-hours trading and in Europe and Asia on Thursday.

Yet by reinforcing how unpredictable he is, **Trump is likely to give investors pause at a time when US stock market valuations are well above historic norms**.

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