

# Iran DOWNS MQ-9 Reaper Drone, US Precision Missiles WIPED OUT | Sharmine Narwani

Sharmine Narwani discusses Trump's mounting crisis for his Iran war as Iran strikes down more US aircraft and the US military loses its capacity to fight further. Sharmine Narwani is Editor of The Cradle. <https://thecradle.co/> FOLLOW AND SUPPORT THE CRADLE PATREON.COM /DANNYHAIPHONG Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhai...> Substack: [chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com](https://chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com) Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho> Follow me on Telegram: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> #iran #iranwar #trump

## #Danny

Welcome back to the show, everyone. It's Danny Haiphong. As you can see, I'm joined by Sharmin Narwani of The Cradle, where we begin breaking down the news. First, Iran did shoot down overnight an MQ-9 Reaper drone. This would mark at least two dozen MQ-9 Reaper drones downed by Iran since the war began. In other news, Iran also struck a cargo ship in the Strait of Hormuz, which marks, again, another component of this. Usually the United States responds by bombing Iran.

But now we know that the United States is having a really difficult time continuing the war against Iran. According to Reuters, this is republished by i24 News. According to Reuters, the U.S.'s attack and precision strike stockpiles have been exhausted entirely. And we see reports now that the United States is actually shipping air defenses and other munitions as well from South Korea and Israel, Asia, marking a total depletion in the United States' munitions. Now, Donald Trump has threatened, despite all of this, Iran with decapitation. Here's what he said at the Oval Office yesterday.

## #Donald Trump

Well, you don't know. I don't know. I think we're going to maybe get something, but I want to give them every last chance before decapitation.

## #Danny

So there's Donald Trump once again threatening major strikes on Iran, Sharmin. Yet the situation appears to be very bleak, with these attack guns and precision-strike missiles being all but wiped out, and Iran appearing to have seized the initiative. But maybe you can help us understand what's going on here.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

That would be nice. Look, I think one of the things that has surprised me, and probably a lot of viewers this week, is how much U.S. officials—or how many times U.S. officials—have conceded things that one shouldn't concede during an ongoing war. For instance, I think the head of U.S. European Command said that we're not going to be able to defend Israel, you know, if it gets dragged into the war, that we need more destroyers in the region. Others, of course, we're hearing these statements about how their weapons systems are, you know, being depleted. And then there was that—was it from the Pentagon?

Or no, it was some official, military official who, you know, sent out a call saying, "Give us suggestions on how we could punish Iran," suggesting that the Pentagon, the war room of the United States, is out of ideas. And I'm just wondering what those narratives are meant to do. Are they meant to make Iran complacent and put it on the back foot and allow the U.S. to escalate in a surprise way? I don't know. I don't know. But, you know, empire is not doing well. And when companies don't do well, leaks abound. So right now we're coming off the back of the U.S. threatening and suggesting overwhelming military strikes across Iran with the Israelis. And then, you know, we had another taco moment on Sunday, and Trump said he'd been talked out of it by his Gulf allies.

And now we're hearing Bessent say that we could have a deal on Hormuz as early as tomorrow. I mean... It's hard to say until the news breaks, but clearly there is some momentum in the Iranian-Omani negotiations. That's not Iranian-U.S. negotiations. The Iranians still absolutely deny that they're in negotiations with the Americans. And I have long suggested that, you know, with an unreliable adversary like the United States, where Trump's signature doesn't count for anything, not just for the Iranians, but I think around the world pretty much now, that the Iranians should forge ahead striking deals with West Asian actors, circumventing altogether the Americans.

And that's what essentially an Omani-Iranian deal would be. It would be regional actors deciding on how they were going to administer the waterway. And it looks like Trump's threat to bomb Iran came after the Iranians had sent along a draft proposal to the Omanis suggesting that they control inward-bound ships into Hormuz, and the Omanis could more or less control the outward-bound ships, but Iran would have to okay each and every one of those that transited the Strait. And then the Americans, that was terrible for them.

No, we're not going to allow this. And so, massive threats of bombing, and then, of course, we hear very publicly that the Gulf allies stopped the Americans from bombing Iran. And now, it looks like the Iranians are going to get the deal they want in Hormuz, right? The Americans tried to undermine their discussions with the Omanis and force the Omanis, under incredible pressure, to try to help ships bypass the strait without going through Iranian waters. And Iran wouldn't allow that. It started hitting ships and wore back on. But in the end, at least on the MOU point about Hormuz, Iran is

going to, in our view, be able to, you know, be the main administrative state as far as Hormuz is concerned.

And I do think, in fact, Iran will be charging fees. And I think the Americans will, you know, narrate the story in such a way that it doesn't look like transit fees. It doesn't have to look like transit fees because, you know, transit fees create a bit of a legal issue for Iran. There are many other fees Iran can charge for ships transiting the strait for services, right? I mean, even insurance. You know, most of the ships traversing the strait could be persuaded to switch their insurance carriers to Iranian ones because then they can guarantee they will get through the strait and out safely, because obviously these are Iranian insurance companies.

So there's a lot of ways for that point to be managed. And once this is done, it's not over because there's other things that Iran demanded in the MOU that are essential. And, you know, top of the list, item number one was for the Israelis to withdraw from Lebanon. And now that's going to be—I think that's—the Iranians are going to double down on that. I mean, look, I hope they do, but I think they will as well. And the Israelis are talking about—just yesterday we were discussing—a point by an Israeli minister who had said essentially that we have deterred Iran from striking Israel.

The Israelis believe, Danny, that Iran is not striking Israel because it's deterred, not because Iran currently, at the moment, has other fish to fry, right, and that it will come back to Israel. And you know it will because when it went after Jordan, Jordan is essentially Israel's buffer state, right? And it is where the U.S. have moved a lot of their heavy military equipment, where there are a lot of U.S. interception systems and other military hardware. And in fact, the U.S.—we've heard now—the U.S. has largely withdrawn from Iraq, Erbil, right, northern Iraq, the Kurdistan region, and Kuwait and Bahrain. So where have they gone? They're going close to Israel because they know that's going to come next.

So the Israeli minister had said, look, Iran's been completely deterred from striking Israel. We now have bandwidth to expand our expansions into other regional states, meaning going deeper into Lebanon and deeper into Syria and doing what they will in Gaza. Let me just sort of circle to a point that is really important, I think, to be made. Today is the sixth anniversary of the port explosion in Beirut, right? The second largest, I guess, explosion the world has ever seen since the nuclear bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And this same week, we've had so much Israeli destruction in the south. I mean, again, an MOU was agreed upon and a ceasefire was reached here by the Lebanese government and the Israeli government. And we are getting statistics today, like Israel has destroyed 18,000 buildings across 19 villages in south Lebanon.

Israel has burned—this is a Cradle report, too—more than 120 hectares of centuries-old olive groves in southern Lebanon. 120 hectares. These are like ancient olive trees that have been there forever and continue to be fruitful season after season, decade after decade. Many of these are well over 100 years old, and most are at least 50 years old. So the Israelis, despite what's happening today, are meeting with the Lebanese government to negotiate further points. In Rome, it will be a three-

day meeting. You have Israeli military officials there too. And what the Lebanese would like is more zones in which Israel will completely remove its troops from these areas. And nothing's happening in the south that benefits Lebanon right now.

A hundred percent. So, you know, I think after the Strait of Hormuz issue is put to rest and the waterways open up—by the way, don't think just because there's a deal between Oman and Iran that these waterways will be opened up. There will be absolutely—Iran is administering those waters, and there is a hot war, okay, or hostilities taking place. Iran can close the straits for those reasons as well. And we're now hearing that it will take, if you add two million more barrels of oil per day to normal demand that existed before the war, it will take 18 months of completely open shipping for national strategic reserves and all the countries that used up their strategic reserves to be replenished. So there's a lot ahead, no matter what happens in the next day or two.

### **#Danny**

Yeah, and to your point about Israel feeling very good about having stood back on the Iran front, Netanyahu said the exact same thing as who you were citing, Charmaine, about why Iran has not fired back. Netanyahu is in Israeli media saying it's because they've been deterred. That's what Netanyahu thinks about Iranian capabilities, even though it appears, as you said, that the future of this conflict is moving closer and closer to Israel, just by way of the United States retreating that way.

### **#Sharmine Narwani**

Yeah, I mean, it's really interesting with that. You know, we're using this word debasement, right, as in de-basing. They're de-basing the region from U.S. bases. And obviously, U.S. withdrawals from Iraq, or northern Iraq, and Kuwait and Bahrain are significant. These are three countries that have been hit hard by Iran. Of course, Jordan is now another one, but I think it'll be one of the last countries to be debased simply because Israel relies so heavily on it.

But what apparently happened in this last week with this withdrawal from Erbil—don't forget, Erbil is the capital of the Iraqi Kurdistan region—and this is, of course, where we have, you know, Iran has attacked and targeted Mossad agents and Mossad headquarters from time to time since the killing of Qasem Soleimani by the Americans in 2020. It is, like most Kurdish regions, unfortunately, in this area, because they're U.S.-backed, you will always find secessionist Kurds to arm and use against the state in which they live, and that's primarily Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria. And I don't know why the Kurds fail to understand that the Americans will always let them down. They did in Syria. They will with Iran.

They are now leaving northern Iraq, leaving the Kurds to their own devices. And, of course, northern Iraq is—Iranians have been striking specific targets there, secessionist Kurds or oppositionists, Iranian Kurdish oppositionists, armed ones, militants who are based in Iraqi territory. But in this

move by the U.S. military out of Erbil, apparently the U.S., France, and Germany also have withdrawn hundreds of personnel and military hardware from Iraq during, like, a three-day period now, right, we've just passed. The British apparently transferred all their remaining systems to Cyprus. The British have these two military bases in Cyprus that are considered sovereign British territory, not Cypriot, okay? And the Cypriots are up in arms about this.

Like, you know, you have these military bases in our country that are outside our jurisdiction. They're not even considered Cyprus, even though they're on our soil. And they can launch wars from here. And what do you think is going to happen to us then? The Americans transferred all their remaining Patriot systems to Jordan. We have seen now there's no red lines for Iran. We're not going to allow you to regroup elsewhere, right? Iran hitting Jordan means we're not going to let you regroup or move your systems out of the Gulf because you're afraid of being hit, or maybe your host countries don't want you lingering around anymore. We don't know the details of that, and move just further down in West Asia to another country.

So Jordan's going to continue to be hit, especially if Western, you know, NATO states are moving their systems to Jordan, because it is entirely in defense of Israel. Let's be clear here. I think there's some German and French forces. There's, you know, symbolic ones that remain visible in Iraq. And, you know, a lot is happening, and it's hard to frame these things, but increasingly it looks like Iran is setting the pace for everything that's happening in this region, because it has some very interesting levers that nobody's contended with before, at least in modern times, and, you know, certainly not a Global South country against empire, which has been around for centuries now. So this is a real game changer.

And of course, this kind of thing happening emboldens a lot of other middle states and powers. And I cannot emphasize enough to your viewers that it is not just in Iran and the Persian Gulf region where things are happening. You know, Morocco has become another hotspot. The Cradle has covered this week and will next week two important geostrategic developments in Morocco, which essentially, from my point of view, has become the UAE of North Africa, absolutely affixed to the Israelis, same strategic goals and interests, same willingness to deploy all kinds of malign acts and maneuvers to get what they want.

I find it astounding that two countries like this, the UAE and Morocco, at a time where it's so obvious the global balance of power is shifting eastward, that they would ally themselves so strongly with the players that are going to go down, right? And Israel in particular, because nobody wants to be standing next to Israel now. It's the genocidal state, right? And these are two Muslim countries, two Arab Muslim countries, doing so. And one of the stories at The Cradle this week was the naming, or the inauguration, of the Donald J. Trump Highway through Western Sahara, okay, which is disputed territory that Trump recognized as Morocco's to get them to join the Abraham Accords in 2020, right? But this highway runs through an area where, I think, is it phosphate mines?

Okay, all of this is going directly to New Orleans. It's going to the United States tax-free, and it's done within a system of companies that are owned largely by the King of Morocco and his right-hand man. I mean, it's so ugly what's happening there. And then our story next week will be covering why exactly the events of last week, the Moroccans storming into the two Spanish territories, why that happened, and why the U.S. Congress had been talking about these two territories prior to any of this happening. You know, it is, again, strategic. The American empire, as it's collapsing, is trying to grab onto resource-rich countries and strategically located geographically, right, states and areas. And this is another one of those grabs.

Like Greenland, like Canada, right? Like Venezuela, like Iran, these two areas are in the American plans. And as they move further away from West Asia, because they're being forced militarily, they will be looking to set up bases elsewhere. And Africa is one area, but now Africa is pushing back too, you know. Panama, for instance, they did a coup in Panama. They kicked out the Chinese from a port that the Chinese owned, right, and ran. And now China's done a very clever thing. I don't know, have you seen this in the media this week? They basically sanctioned Panama-flagged ships, not just sanctioned them, held them as well. You get to do that when a ship is passing through your waterways. You get to hold them if you suspect this or that.

They're doing that, which has caused more and more shipping companies to decide to not use the Panama flag for their shipments, which has caused economic repercussions for Panama, etc. And this is going to be a case study, because if the Chinese don't get on top of this one and sort of make international law prevail in this instance where the Americans got Panama to kick out the Chinese with no due process, then this can happen in other areas of the world. So the multipolar world is pushing back in very interesting ways right now. And I think, for me, the next thing to watch is, I'm waiting for this: when is Russia going to address the fact that Ukraine and its NATO backers have moved the war inside Russian territory, which is being struck every single day?

## **#Danny**

Yeah, it's a very good question, Charmaine. And I believe actually also China and Panama have once again struck a deal because of the pressure of exactly what you said, the Panama-flagged vessels that were being sanctioned by China. I think they've reopened talks, and China's gotten quite a lot from Panama back. Exactly, exactly.

## **#Danny**

Eventually, the reality sets in, and the country that can actually do business will be the one that wins out. But, Charmaine, I want to actually, you know, show some more data on the U.S. You were talking about the U.S. being pushed back militarily, and the data is even worse than what we opened with, because the CSIS, which is a State Department- and Defense Department-funded think tank, has come out with massive data showing that now there's fewer than 827 Patriot interceptors left

and 278 THAAD interceptors left. These are the things that will be protecting Jordan and Israel, by extension, down from 2,200 Patriots and 452 THAADs.

This is just since the war began, so 60% gone. And I guess that's going to explain a little bit why we're going to see a lot more of this probably in the future. There's already been seven times since this war began, and since the initial strikes by the United States, that Trump has said that there will be devastating strikes, like massive strikes, not just, oh, we're going to, you know, restart operations. No, these are devastating strikes: power grid, energy, all of this. And then they didn't come to pass. This is according to ABC News. So how do you see this then, the weakening U.S. military posture, not just in the region, the world, impacting both this region and the world as well?

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

I'm not interested in the U.S. military being weakened. I'm interested in them being destroyed. I mean, it's not me sitting in West Asia saying this, but Europeans in repeated polls over the last decade have said that the U.S. is the biggest threat to peace and security in the world today. I mean, this is not new, right? But we have to start thinking differently about this. More importantly, we have to start talking differently about this. Okay, you get U.S. troops out of the region. Actually, let me just rewind and go back to something I was saying on the Cradle's podcast just recently. And I was lamenting the fact that they're never losers in any wars anymore, in the sense that in the old days, if your enemy breached your moat, you would wave a white flag and surrender.

Or in Latin American countries, if the rebels reached the radio station, you would hand over the keys to the presidential palace. It was over. Wars were over. It was understood. It's not just because of a treaty. It was just accepted. And now there isn't that thinking. So even if there is a peace agreement, it doesn't mean that the Americans will not fall back on their old proxy tools, right? Because I've argued, I think on your show as well, that this is the first peer adversary war we've had since World War II, okay? Because otherwise it was usually through proxies, right? So even—well, anyways—the Americans can fall back on sabotage, on proxy wars, on pure terrorism, okay?

And that's a continuation of war. That's not a joke. This is what we live with here in the region, and have done so for decades: these proxy wars, these dirty wars, sanctions, and other tools. Why should we put up with this anymore? Why? Right? They have to definitively be defeated. And so, for me, to have the Iranians and Americans sign a deal right now doesn't stop anything. One of Iran's interests is to make sure that the Americans cannot launch strikes on Iran at any time they want, the way the Israelis do with Lebanon, with Gaza, with Syria, et cetera. Right? That's not going to be tolerated. But then that may be the case.

You know, that term may be—you know, the Americans may abide by that term, but it doesn't mean they wouldn't arm Kurds and train Kurds, you know, inside Iran or on its borders, or they wouldn't fund Pakistani militant groups in Balochistan, or that they wouldn't try to create, like, Azeri separatism inside Iran or Arab separatism inside southern Iran. Why should we put up with this? We

need the Americans to lose. And for me, the direct continuation of this war by the United States is important—an overt one, okay—so that Iran can keep punishing, can keep escalating its punishments. Now, it doesn't mean the hot war will continue in the way it is now, but it could move into other areas. The war shouldn't be over until the Americans are defeated.

And one way to do that is to hit a destroyer, to hit a major American warship or aircraft carrier, and disable it completely. Because if the Americans can't use ground facilities in neighboring countries—countries neighboring Iran—to launch missiles and aircraft and drones from, they'll have to do it from aircraft carriers. And excuse me, my mouth's getting so dry. And so what you need to do before you let the Americans leave is to destroy one of their, you know, these billion-dollar projects of theirs so they know they can never use that again, right? If you can't bring destroyers in the region, you don't have bases, how are you going to work? Are you going to work from neighboring countries and training whatever?

Oh, no, no, no. Iran is now going to work hyper-effectively with Pakistan, with the Iraqis, et cetera, to make sure this doesn't happen. You can't end a war when one party will never, never accept its defeat, all right, or being outclassed, right, and prepared to leave. The Americans will never be prepared to leave. The Israelis will never allow them to leave this region. We have to end this war decisively. So I do want to see more Iranian proactive actions. I do want to see escalations in, you know, very, very smart, calculating ways by the Iranians. I want to see them trump the Americans in various theaters.

I want to see them get a major concession from Iraq, because the Iraqis have played too closely with Washington. I mean, right now, how can any country in this region argue for being allied with the Americans or the Israelis? These are the most destructive forces in our region. That can't be allowed anymore. I think we have to take this to the wall. It has to stop. We have to be able to grow economically, develop, thrive. None of that will be allowed if there's just an MOU, because it will continue in the way it did before. And look what's—this region's been in a mess for decades because of the Americans and Israelis. You have to end it now.

Which also entails Israel being hit very decisively by the Iranians. And so, does it benefit Iran or this part of the world for the war to end next week in a, you know, weak MOU? Because the Americans forget also what they signed, right? And there's another American president that will come in in two and a half years. And what will that mean? I think there needs to be something very definitive happening here. And to me, it could just be collapsing the petrodollar. Like, that's a smart weapon, right, where people aren't getting killed. You collapse the petrodollar because now, let's say, everything that moves through Hormuz and the Persian Gulf has to be priced in non-dollar currencies, right?

Petrodollar collapses, and the Americans cannot afford to wage wars anymore. So I definitely want to see more. I'm not war hungry, Danny. I know it's not over. It's not going to be over if the Strait of Hormuz gets opened on deals favorable to the Iranians. What about Lebanon? What about Syria?

What about Iran's borders? You know, there are attacks on Iran's borders all the time. Oh, another thing for your viewers to know, and this is also a piece of The Cradle. We're not seeing this in English, really. Iran ratified the Caspian Convention, which basically divvies up the Caspian Sea between, I think, five littoral states, which weakens Iran's position in the north, right?

This is at the same time that the Americans are working with the Azerbaijanis, who were Mossad agents in the region, to bring themselves and build roadways right on Iran's border. Another Trump initiative to build out the Zangezur Corridor and cut out Iran's northern geography. And now Iran's ratified this Caspian Convention. It makes zero sense. And that's how Iran was getting a lot of its product out, not just through the new Pakistani routes that were opened during the war, but through the International North-South Transportation Corridor run by the Iranians, Russians, and Indians, right, that goes to the north of Iran. So there's a lot of other games that empire can continue to play with Iran. Iran cannot leave this without defeating the enemy so decisively that the enemy doesn't ever want to contemplate a rerun. Okay.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, and a big part of that point, or in those series of points you made, Jarmin, is that the United States—and I'm sure Iranians, especially those who are in the military, perhaps understand—that a big function of U.S. wars is not really winning anymore, or if it really ever was. A lot of it is about the chaos, and it's about how to build and build out control and dominance via that chaos. Oftentimes it has downsides also for the United States, but it tends to be, at the very least, very effective in stopping or making, as you call that, a mess out of a particular region, a series of countries, and then that disallows them from being able to build out independent institutions, sovereignty, economic, military, what have you. So that's going to be the aim, regardless of whether the U.S. feels it can attack Iran just a little bit, not at all, go all out.

Those kind of calculations won't really change the aim necessarily that the United States has for the region. And I think that it seems pretty clear that even when the U.S. finds itself, as it has under the Trump administration, needing to shift focus a little bit here, a little bit there, there tends to still be a pretty continuous trend all across the world of how the U.S. behaves. It doesn't necessarily leave anything alone. It just shifts resources, limited resources, finite resources, to areas where it feels like it can try to push things further for its own objectives, whether they meet them or not. But nevertheless, a big part of it is just disallowing the multipolar world, disallowing countries, people who are trying to build out their own destinies free from the United States' interests. That feels like a big aim, regardless of the consequences.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

But if people—and this is important—perception is 100% of politics. This is an old adage, and I really have come to understand why it makes so much sense. Perception is everything. And if Iran is perceived as having won this decisively, there is no country in the region that will not jump up to

deal with Iran. Iran will become unsanctionable, all right? And this is important. It can be done. You know, it breaks the psychological barriers of Global South countries challenging empire, et cetera, right, without going through hell. But again, I say this: the easiest way to defeat the Americans is for the dollar to just lose its position as the global reserve currency.

It is the most painless way for the world to stop American wars and American overextension and U.S. bases in your region or in your country. When the U.S. dollar is no longer the reserve currency, the U.S. is unable to move the world the way it wants to. The dollar loses its meaning. The U.S. will have to just print with no end because, of course, we're at \$39 trillion national debt, which doesn't include the over \$70 trillion of private debt in the United States. It is a broke-ass country. Remove it as the reserve currency, the dollar collapses, and the United States' ability to move the dial on everything everywhere absolutely disappears. And this is really important. I mean, I think everyone should strive for this right away. You know, empty your bank accounts, buy gold, silver, or whatever.

You know, but... And... I mean, the point is, if you're living in the West, you're transacting through these systems, right? SWIFT or whatever. And this too... Well, you know, I'll tell you something that's really important, is another thing. What happened with the yen last week, right? Everyone jumped in to try to save the yen. Japan, you know, lost a lot of money in this war situation and started to—what is it? What did it do? Did it sell its yen? Did it sell its bonds? I can't remember. But the U.S. jumped—they said they would do everything to save the yen. And, you know, those countries in the U.S. orbit are going to have a more and more difficult time. Having said that, U.S. stock market hit new heights today, you know? And you're thinking, like, nothing is attached to reality. How did oil prices, when the Strait of Hormuz was not open, how are they at \$76 a barrel? They should be over \$200 a barrel.

## **#Danny**

Everything is artificial. I was going to ask you next about that, but it is also bottlenecked when it comes to Saudi oil. So, yeah, the reality is not really being reflected.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

No, it isn't. And don't forget, at the same time that the U.S. was going to launch this, or relaunch, a massive military attack on Iran, the Saudis were going to do the same against Yemen. And that hasn't materialized. In fact, the Yemenis hit a Saudi airport. I think it was in Najran, but a very important site in the airport, because Saudi drones overflew Yemeni airspace, not even hit anything, just overflew. And, of course, I think an Indian-flag tanker was just hit today, yeah, coming through those waterways by the Yemenis, I guess. But it was a Saudi.

It was a Saudi tanker. So, you know, this is another theater. The Americans waited too long. By violating the MOU, they gave birth to the Bab al-Mandab situation. And so they can fix Hormuz, let's say, through a deal. But what happens to the Bab al-Mandab now? You know, the axis, the

resistance axis in the region, has just way too many interesting levers right now. And if they don't use them now, they may lose the opportunity to do so. And I, for one, am very pleased that they're stepping up in these various theaters and doing so, because we have to end this. We have to end this. We don't want to just weaken the Americans and Israelis; we want to absolutely wipe them out, you know.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, and that's how I wanted your reaction on this broader, you know, blockade situation, because as you've noticed, Sharmeen, the United States has been relying a lot on blockades under the Trump administration. It has blockaded Cuba, it's blockaded Iran, it's attempted some kind of creatively, I don't know, ineffective but also targeted campaign against Russia in the Black Sea. So there's multiple points where the U.S. is trying to blockade.

But Yemen has kind of flipped the script and engaged in a counter-siege against Saudi Arabia, which, again, is a pretty big deal because now we're seeing the Saudi economy falter. We're seeing their tankers have to, you know, go around the Cape of Good Hope, the African continent, just to get their oil out. It's a big deal. So I'm wondering, you know, how do you see the axis of resistance as a whole attacking these various points that you made earlier in terms of not just weakening the American empire, but wiping it out, or at the very least getting to the point where it is pushed back and it cannot, you know, wage this campaign of terror that we see all across the region?

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

You know, it's a very difficult question to answer. It's been my view for a really long time that the axis of resistance is way too well-behaved. They've been groomed and tamed into that position. It's one of the most frustrating things I've observed since kind of quasi-moving to this region 14 years ago, realizing that what's the point of a well-behaved native when the aggressor is so completely violent and has no leashes on them whatsoever now because international law doesn't mean anything anymore, right? Meanwhile, the Axis tries to cleave to international law so nobody can point fingers at them. But I don't see the point of that because they're going to be blamed for things they never did anyway. They talk about the IRGC setting up bombs in countries around the world or Hezbollah doing that. It's absolute rubbish, right?

So even if you do try to follow the law and be a good boy, you're going to get ridiculous claims like this thrown at you. I have seen a too well-behaved resistance axis, and I need to see evidence that they're willing to throw off those psychological shackles that they've been groomed into accepting and do the unthinkable. You know, I hate to say this out loud because we've all been trained not to, but if American soldiers don't die, if Israeli soldiers don't die en masse, they're never going to stop. They have to be killed. I mean, why do they kill us? Because they figure at some point they will

exhaust us. But that doesn't happen because people here, people in Gaza, have nowhere else to go. People in Lebanon have nowhere else to go. People in Syria have nowhere else to go. They have to stay there and put up with it.

But what we have to do for the Americans and Israelis who don't belong in this region is to—if they feel pain, they will go. The majority of Israelis have second passports. And during this war, they've been lining up, those who don't have second passports, to get second passports to countries their mom and dad came from or their grandparents came from. They don't belong here. The most sort of clear example of this is when that first ceasefire happened in late 2024 between Lebanon and Israel. I mean, let's just say, I don't remember what time it was, maybe 10 a.m. in the morning. From midnight, Lebanese were lined up in their cars waiting for the army to let them go through to the south. They didn't care. They were going to believe in the ceasefire even if Israel continued to lob missiles into southern Lebanon.

They didn't know if it would hold or not. They were going there with their kids, with their grandparents, their aunties and uncles, in cars with, like, luggage strapped to the top of their cars. They were going home. In Israel, they couldn't pay Jewish settlers money to go back to their lands in the north because they were worried about future Hezbollah attacks, right? There is a connection with the land here. We will never leave, all right? But the invaders, the aggressors, they will leave because they don't have that connection to the land. They never did. That includes the Israelis and, of course, the Americans, who have no connection to this area. And that needs to happen, Danny. And I don't know if the resistance axis has what it takes because it's been tamed into good behavior for decades.

I like that the Iranians did an unexpected strike on U.S. military facilities in Jordan the other day. I like that. Why did everyone freak out about it? Because they could predict Iranian behavior so well, they didn't anticipate it. It shocked them, okay? Stop acting so well. Match the aggressor. Make them have to deal with a body count, you know. We have to. Why shouldn't they? I just think the thinking needs to be different. The language needs to be different in this region. Then you're going to unleash such widespread public opinion support for these kinds of actions in the region. Everyone's been tamed in the region. Everybody talks in this colonized language, you know, even the Axis. And that needs to change. And if we don't use this opportunity to change it, I'm afraid, you know, we might have to deal with the slow burn of death and destruction for years yet to come.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, I guess that makes me wonder, Charmaine, with what you're saying, how does this, what seems to be negotiations, Kabuki theater that's happening—because that seems to be part of it—is that there is consistently, you know, Iran gains leverage. Iran obviously is not losing this war, but in each and every step where this war gets worse for the United States, it generally leads to this period of negotiations, or no negotiations, but attempts for mediators to negotiate. Anyway, it just all revolves around talks. But it seems like what you're saying is that these talks aren't really going to

go anywhere because the United States isn't built to come to an agreement that will actually respect the rights of Iran and the rest of the region.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

The one part of the axis I have great hope in is the Yemenis. The Yemenis don't read Western MSM, and so they've not been colonized. I find them the most decolonized people in this region right now. And it's kind of fascinating when you're decolonized, what you're willing to do. I mean, we know the sort of grouping of countries that a year ago were trying to punish Yemen for its blockade of waterways, right, in defense of Gaza. They were saying, "We've never seen anything like this. We've never been attacked so hard." These people don't understand the meaning of, I mean, limited warfare, or just, like, military messaging to each other. They hit to hit, right?

They hit to destroy us. And they're doing it everywhere. They're doing it in the Arabian Sea. They're doing it in the Indian Ocean. They're doing it in the Bab al-Mandab, in the Red Sea, et cetera. And this, to me, is the way to go, okay? Punish your enemy. They're always talking about punishing us, sanctioning us, depriving us, destroying our economies. Even if it's not a hot war, those are severe punishments. They're collective punishment. They're against international law. Let's punish them back. They cracked open the international law, you know, Pandora's box. Let's use it. Let's use it. Who's going to, you know—was it the Wall Street Journal that said Iran may be considering preemptive strikes?

Shut up. Literally, do you remember George W. Bush? His whole doctrine was preemptive strikes against countries or individuals or groupings who may one day think of attacking the United States. And now Iran's in a hot war and it can't blow the hell out of a U.S. base in Jordan? No, they should be blowing up U.S. bases everywhere. I mean, really, for me, one of the most fantastic moments in this region, in Lebanon, where I am right now, was the blowing up of the U.S. Marine barracks. You know, they were there trying to expand a war, and, you know, the U.S. was there with its Marines to help, right? But no, in fact, the U.S. never helps.

They just get a foothold, and it wasn't a permanent thing. It was a temporary thing, which would have become a permanent base. Right now, the U.S. has built the second biggest U.S. embassy in the world. It's ridiculous. If you have a picture of it, it's a sprawling thing that goes way down, like the Pentagon, you know, many, many layers down. It goes many, many layers down. For a country this size, with a population of 5 million, a base like—I mean, sorry, an embassy like that—is basically a precursor to the base. That's what the U.S. Marines back in, was it '83, were doing here, okay?

It was the precursor for another U.S. base in the region. And they got blown up. And guess what, Danny? They left. They left. And as they left, because they're absolutely, you know, genocidal maniacs, they bombed Lebanon from the sea with bombs, each of which—so I read one account of it by American military specialists—saying the biggest single salvo since the Korean War on little Lebanon, all right? Not even the perpetrators of the bombing, all right, of the Marine barracks, but

Shia and Druze populations. They basically killed people. So what is that? What is that? And we want to deal with this country?

We don't want to deal with this country. Honestly, we don't. American goods are more expensive. They're becoming third-rate. You can get better stuff in China. You know, you get better stuff in Iran. You get better stuff in Turkey and India. Like, seriously, the U.S. has—we need the Americans out of this region. And of course, psychologically, there's a long way to go. But actually, kinetically, we can do that now. Will they? I don't know. But hopefully Yemen will teach the Iranians, the Lebanese, the Iraqis, because they just—they just don't know. They just don't know that they're supposed to be well-behaved natives, you know.

### **#Danny**

There is a question here from the audience, from D.C., Hawaii. Do you think some of the leadership in Iran is secretly co-opted by the U.S. and Israel? I, too, wonder why Iran hasn't struck back harder. What are your thoughts on this? Because this is a narrative, actually. A lot of people have these thoughts because I think a lot of the world, even people in the United States and the West, see Iran even just ever talking to the United States on any terms that could be seen as diplomatic as being an affront because of just how Iran has been treated by the U.S. and, of course, the rest of the region.

### **#Sharmine Narwani**

Look, you know, I disagree with that, and I'll tell you why. Because to end wars, you have to settle them, okay? In the worst wars we've ever seen in humanity, they have sat at the end and settled them, okay? So that does have to happen, and you have to keep those avenues open. But every time that Iran has been betrayed, you know, using the cover of negotiations to attack Iran or its friends, Iran should then set more punishments for the United States. So I don't think the MOU that was signed in—you know, so much is happening. I'm forgetting dates all the time. Was it in April? Or June? June.

### **#Danny**

It was June. Oh, the MOU was in June. Yeah.

### **#Sharmine Narwani**

So, you know, I think the MOU...

### **#Danny**

Yes, it was June 17th. So it's almost become such an irrelevant document to the geopolitical situation that...

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

It was a fairly good document. The problem with the document was, I mean, the Americans were so desperate to have it, time was absolutely of the essence for them. So they agreed to Iran's terms, but allowed them to stay as vague as possible. If you read them through an Iranian lens, you'll see that it's a good deal for Iran. Iran kind of gets what it wants, right? If you look at it through a duplicitous American lens, you can find a lot of loopholes in the language that you can, you know, take advantage of. And that's what the Americans did. I believe, and I've been saying this since the MOU, because I believe that the war is going to be back on since the MOU, because the Americans, they're not done.

They're not done. They've lost. And nobody loses these days. That's my whole thing. They just keep going. There's no end to war. There's no white flags waved anymore. I think Iran needs to get many of the June MOU terms before the cessation of violence. Okay, so Iran should receive its frozen assets before the cessation of hostilities. Iran should have control over the Strait of Hormuz and charge service fees before the cessation of hostilities. Iran should get part of its reparations before the cessation of hostilities. And I think what's interesting in the change of Iranian thinking is what you would call hardliners have made a very good argument in Iran, I think, and people just can't argue against it.

Even the reformists can't. And so I think it's going to stick, which is, we negotiate in good faith to prevent further hostilities or hostilities at all. If you attack us, what we would have agreed to in those negotiations, we now move the goalposts because you attacked us. You're not going to get what we were going to offer you yesterday after you attacked us. And so, as the Americans are groomed and tamed to understand that more hostilities means more concessions from Washington, they are less likely to engage in hostilities. I think the Iranians are masters of these kinds of things. They need to make their thousands of years of chess-playing and negotiation tactics very apparent right now.

They have to get an agreement that is so good it'll make neocons cry. But can Trump do that? I mean, Trump's also in this hard position. I think the best-case scenario for Trump is maybe not even getting a deal, saying something like, "You know what? Iran's their problem. It's in West Asia. Let the Saudis, let the Emiratis, let the Israelis deal with them. We're out of there." Right. He could actually win the midterms with that. But if he keeps trying to get a deal, okay, every deal is going to make it look like a loss because his opponents will be like, "Oh my God, you sold out. You're a loser." Right. He should just walk away and leave the Israelis to us. Yeah.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, yeah. I mean, that's the—I think you spelled it out very clearly. And yeah, I a hundred percent agree that what's so interesting too is that the United States, you know, when it comes to this particular issue, Iran, I think that there's such a big double standard, of course, with what Iran and their Axis of Resistance, what they're allowed to do, which is nothing in the eyes of the West, versus what the U.S. is supposedly allowed to do. But I think in this moment, what is so, I think, surprising and shocking is that it appears that Iran understands this is a long war. And to the question from the person in the audience who gave a super chat, D.C.-Hawaii, I mean, negotiations, you said it, are always going to be part of the end of a conflict.

The big question is, are we truly at the end? And it's obvious that we're not. And, yeah, the United States—even Afghanistan, when the Biden administration had to order the complete, chaotic [inaudible] out of the country, even that wasn't necessarily the end of the war. The United States still collects intelligence. It still tries to use humanitarian aid to infiltrate the society. It still attempts at every moment to isolate it and to use it as much as possible as a focal point of chaos in the region. Afghanistan is nowhere near where Iran is in terms of sovereignty, so the United States doesn't really end wars, as you said, unless it is forced to. And Trump, at this moment, yeah, he could win the midterms if he just said, "This is done. We won. It's not our problem anymore. If problems occur..." It seems like they're trying to say, "We won."

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

He said, "I'm just not going to waste myself on this project anymore. This is Israel's problem, Saudi Arabia's problem, whatever, okay?" And we, you know, Trump as the isolationist, you know, stop-never-ending-wars candidate Trump, right, can reinvigorate his base by saying, "I'm pulling every base out of this region because we're just not gonna be distracted by this region anymore. We have bigger fish to fry. China's getting ahead of us," et cetera. He can just unilaterally withdraw the way he unilaterally withdrew from the JCPOA, and he can win. He will struggle if he signs a deal, and he will struggle if he goes back to war. But I think he could whip up a narrative if he just said, "Forget you people, I'm out of here," right? He didn't take any bad hits when he did that with Yemen, when he said, you know, "We're out of here."

Let the Israelis deal with the Yemenis, right? What happened? Nothing. Nothing. I think that's the best option. But I'll tell you what will happen in the American vacuum is Iran will be signing deals with every single country around there and making sure Iraq will, for instance, not be able to do as many contracts with American companies. Iraq will have to probably not use American security contractors for its security work, or British ones. You know, I just think there's... whatever the case is, yeah, if Trump leaves the region, Iran will gain. But, you know, he can move on to China or those two Spanish enclaves in Morocco or Panama or any other thing and distract people. But a deal will kill his midterms, and war will kill his midterms. So... if you're watching.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, yeah. Well, I guess the final point I wanted to make and get your answer to, and then we can close here, is that for the resistance side of it in the region, there's an interesting contradiction in all of this, in that it is possible that, let's say Trump is out in 2028, let's say the midterms don't go too well, that we will see a shift in the policy toward the United States, toward Iran, and maybe even the region, that was more like it was pre-February 28th, which actually may not be beneficial to the resistance. Of course, everyone wants to see less dying and killing and murder and all of this that the U.S. empire, Israel, et cetera, engage in.

But in terms of the facts on the ground and what even any kind of direct conflict with Iran is bringing, which is kind of the opposite of what the U.S. really actually wants, again, it might be that a Democrat does shift focus away from the region and says, "Okay, now it's Russia-China time," which is generally how they like to play it. And that leads to maybe, as you said, this slow burn getting maybe even slower, and therefore the prospects of maybe seizing the moment diminish. And it might be—so it's an interesting contradiction.

Nobody who has any kind of conscience and cares about human beings wants to see war in Iran, because it's connected to all these other genocidal and catastrophic wars that are being waged in this region. But also, there is an interesting moment of opportunity that you've outlined here, Charmaine, that I think has to be on the minds of, like, this bloc. A lot of people, like Pepe—I've had Pepe on the show—others who said, you know, Iran's running out the clock. What happens when the political situation in the U.S. changes, though, and there is a shift, even if it is just nominally... Are you talking about the midterms?

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

A shift in the midterms?

## **#Danny**

The midterms are starting. I mean, the midterms will start, but Trump will still be president. And Trump has already said that he'll use executive orders, a la Obama, you know, or Biden, to affect policy directly, which is not surprising. But if things get worse and worse, you know, a Democrat comes in, or even a more... a less Trump-like Republican?

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Danny, I'm not so sure that because people dislike Trump—what is he, his ratings are like in the 30s, low 30s now? I'm surprised they're that high, even. So I'm thinking, like, it's not necessarily the case that because Americans don't like Trump, they'll vote in a Democrat. I used to watch U.S. politics much more closely because it was just entertaining and fun for me, and not as much now. But my sense is that there's no natural Democratic candidates. The Democratic Party has a huge problem. The fact that they could only put up Biden and then Kamala Harris was so pathetic. Oh, yeah. And

then the other thing that's happening in the Democratic Party, other than just no candidates that have any national renown, is that the progressive wing of the Democratic Party is getting more support from Democratic voters, right?

So you have, like, socialist types and, like, anti-Israel types, et cetera. And then you had that crazy vote where a full quarter—more than a quarter, I think—of U.S. Congress voted to cut military aid to Israel. I couldn't believe that. So you have that, but the party establishment that, you know, rigged the election and made sure Bernie was out and Clinton was the candidate, even though she would lose to Trump. Like, it was obvious, right? Bernie is maybe the only one who could have given Trump a run for his money because he was a populist, the way Trump was, but on the other side, right? Here's the thing. The DNC, the establishment, cannot fathom allowing a progressive candidate, you know, into the seat.

They cannot. I mean, the Democratic establishment is as corporate as you can imagine, you know, is as war-inclined as anyone in the GOP. That's how they operate. So the DNC, right, the Democratic elites, will end up sabotaging themselves because they have an opportunity to run a progressive campaign who would be super popular with young voters, right, and win, but they won't do that. And so I think, you know, right now, okay, we're two and a half years away, right? No, two years, yeah, two years and a few months away from the presidential elections. Right now it's Vance versus Rubio, and God forbid Rubio gets in. It's not like Vance is anything, but at least, you know, he pushed against the Iran war and stuff like that.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, Rubio is a nightmare.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Yeah, he's an absolute nightmare. He'd set fire to Latin America. So, I mean, I don't think a Democrat president is a shoo-in by any means because they don't have their act together. Yeah, it's like, look what happened in Turkey. Erdogan had, like, really low ratings, the lowest he's had in a long time. But they had such an awful candidate—his opposition, right, main opposition, the party that's been around longest in Turkey—had such a bad candidate that Erdogan won. So I think that's what we're looking at. Really, like, awful, awful American political scene is just terrible right now.

## **#Danny**

It's a total crisis. And yeah, no, the Democratic Party, because it's such a corporate warmongering entity, it has to rely on the Trump administration, especially Donald Trump himself, to be polling like this and performing like this consistently, never rising, just only staying or falling at this level for the rest of this period. It's not going to be the Democrats that are going to convince people to vote for the Democrats.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

No, and I was interviewing Chris Hedges, and he was saying, "Oh, the Trump administration is going to sabotage these elections." And I'm like, "Oh, how? How?" And, I mean, he listed a myriad of ways that they can and they intend to. And the thing is, everyone's contesting elections. Everyone's rigging elections. We have, like, headlines that the Israelis have rigged elections or worked on rigging elections in a dozen or more countries, and are just excited. Yeah. So nobody's trusting elections anymore. You know, the very people who talk about democracy are undermining it wholly. I mean, these are such interesting times we live in as commentators and journalists covering the world right now. But yeah, I don't know what's coming.

## **#Danny**

Well, you know a little bit about at least what's coming. You know a lot about what's happening right now, Charmaine. That's a great place, I think, to end. I want to thank everyone who gave a Super Chat, who became a new member. Thanks so much. I'm pulling you up on the screen now. Bring the troops home. Yes, thank you. So thanks to all of you who gave Super Chats today. In the video description below, you can find Charmaine's publication, or the publication she edits, The Cradle. You can find that in the video description. Definitely support it, read it, subscribe, all of that good stuff. Also in the video description are all the places to support this channel: Patreon, Substack, and more. Most importantly, this is a very free way to support: hit the like button. That helps boost the show after we are done. Charmaine, any final thoughts before I hit end stream here?

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

No, I think we'll be having this discussion for a long time to come because the Americans don't know how to stop. And so I'm really hoping for some big Iranian plays or Resistance Axis plays that shut them up and make them want to run home.

## **#Danny**

Amen to that. And, yeah, I always say, you know, the U.S. needs a revolution if it's going to change. That's really the reality. But, Charmaine, thanks so much again for joining. We're going to head out of here. I'm pressing end stream now. Hit the like button before you go, and I'll see you tomorrow, 4 p.m. Eastern time. I'll let you know what's going on then. Bye-bye.