

Trump's Nuclear Escalation BACKFIRING, Iran Plays DEADLY Card | Daniel Davis

Daniel Davis discusses the catastrophic US-Israeli escalation with Iran and offers his military expertise as to how Iran is fiercely responding to the crisis amid a rapidly shifting global order. Lt. Col. Daniel Davis is a 4x combat veteran and the host of the Daniel Davis Deep Dive YouTube channel. Follow Daniel Davis: <https://www.youtube.com/@UCWDN5zr5ttctoIAhZwW6tcQ> Subscribe for more in-depth geopolitical analysis! Leave your thoughts in the comments below! Support the Channel: Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong> SUBSCRIBE ON RUMBLE: Rumble: <https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong> Follow Me on Social Media: Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DannyHaiphong> Telegram: <https://t.me/DannyHaiphong> Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhaiphong> Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho>

#Danny

Welcome back to the show, everyone. As you see, I'm joined by Daniel Davis of Daniel Davis's Deep Dive. Thank you so much for coming on the show, Daniel. My first question to you: with all of the talks of U.S. buildup to another round of kinetic action with Iran, I wanted your understanding of what actually is the U.S.'s position militarily in the region vis-a-vis Iran? What will its capabilities be like once this carrier strike group gets to the region? And what do you see as the plans and plotting going on by the Trump administration, and I guess Israel as well, with regard to this war right now?

#Daniel Davis

You know, I don't know that anybody in the Trump administration even knows the answer to that question. I'm primarily talking about the president himself. We have all kinds of combat power in the region. Obviously, I mean, it never went completely away. We reduced it for a period of time, especially around the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding. And then it ramped back up. We have replenished all of our magazine stockpiles. They're now back up to something close to what they were before this thing started. Now we have a third aircraft carrier heading into the region.

It's unclear whether it's just supposed to exchange and replace one of them to keep two there, or if they're saying we're surging up combat power and we're going to have three there for a period of time. But the question is, in order to do what? What is it that you're trying to get done? President Trump here of late has used these apocalyptic statements. You know, they're going to be wiped out. They're going to be annihilated. You know, they have to decide if they want a deal and make peace, or if they want to be wiped out, you know, et cetera. And I'm thinking, okay, are you talking about nuclear weapons? Because...

Number one, you're not going to be able to succeed because Iran has—my understanding earlier had been like 30-some-odd of these missile cities buried throughout the course of the country. Well, now additional intelligence is saying it could be more like 50, maybe even more than that, at various levels. But whatever the number is, it's a huge number, and you can't penetrate. You cannot destroy it with conventional weapons. You can't destroy probably most of them, if not all of them, with nuclear weapons. They're designed for that. They are far enough underground that I've been to some of these underground bases here in the United States, for example, that are specifically designed inside of mountains to survive nuclear weapons. That's what they're designed for.

That goes all the way back to the Cold War. Iran has the same kind of technology. They've got, in some respects, even better defensive capacity because of these significant mountain ranges that they have and all these granite mountains and how far down they went. They took literally decades to make some of these things, so they are virtually impenetrable. Therefore, you cannot use nuclear weapons to annihilate the country. You can kill millions of people. Let me not minimize it. You can definitely do that. And you can wipe out virtually anything on the surface. That's true.

But you can't take away the military capacity. And if Iran were to bring to bear the firepower in all of these underground bases at the same time, they could literally burn the Middle East down. And if you go in with nuclear weapons, you remove any kind of even theoretical restraint on their part, which they have exhibited a lot of restraint up to this point. Even with all the rounds of fire that we've had so far, they have still been very restrained. Now, they're signaling here of late that if you come in really heavy-handed, then they're going to be heavy-handed in their response. But even that is graduated.

They're not going to do everything all at once unless we do something like a doomsday scenario where you kill millions of people and then you, like, almost shove them into first of all replying conventionally, but then they would be the biggest fools on the planet if they didn't take what they have underground and immediately race to a bomb and then potentially try to use it. So all this time we've been claiming—I go circle back to where I started here—towards what end would you use military power? The claim has always been to prevent them from getting nuclear weapons. This would virtually guarantee that they would get nuclear weapons if they haven't already. They claim they haven't. I'm unconvinced.

We don't know because we've lost all of our international inspectors that we used to have going back to the joint of the JCPOA from 2015. So we don't know. But the bottom line is we cannot militarily defeat Iran because the target set is impossible to defeat with just bombs, whether conventional or nuclear. Nobody's even talking about going in on the ground. In fact, the latest reports are that up to 10,000 additional ground troops are going in. While that seems like a big number in isolation, in terms of the massive size of Iran, bigger than Western Europe, and the mountain ranges, which give every advantage to the defender, it's literally a drop in the water, a drop in a bucket. It means nothing at all.

If you try to do anything—Kharg Island, some of the islands in the Horseshoe Bend of the Strait of Hormuz—you might be able to get some on the ground, and then all it is is a shooting gallery for Iran to slowly destroy them all. It would serve no purpose and no value at all. The bottom line to that, I guess, kind of long-winded answer is we can go in and kill lots of people and blow a bunch of stuff up, but we are, in the process, going to take return fire that we cannot defend adequately against, and it could potentially, if it goes far enough, burn down the Middle East, and that's going to throw the world into a tailspin, economic tailspin, which would almost certainly go into a depression, probably many years in duration.

#Danny

As a military professional, Danny, what do you make of how Iran has been responding to this period of war, which has been about the United States, at least in the current moment, receding in its escalation and now talking about renewing attacks? How do you find Iran in terms of its response and how it's been navigating this war, which in many ways is historically unprecedented in the ways in which these two countries, the United States and Iran, have been fighting each other? What's your take on this? Yeah.

#Daniel Davis

Well, they have been severely harmed. There is no question about it. They've lost—I don't know what the number of actual physical casualties is, whether it's military and civilian altogether. I think it's somewhere around 3,500. Who knows exactly the number, but somewhere in that ballpark. All kinds of their infrastructure on the surface has been hit. They've lost some of their oil infrastructure; it has been damaged. Command and control centers, especially communication towers, radars—certainly their traditional naval forces have been nearly wiped out completely. Damage on a lot of their air power, et cetera. So they have been hurt really bad.

And, of course, now that you add in the economic warfare that we're doing against them with the blockade, with Operation Epic, whatever they call the thing right now—not Fury, but the other one, the Scott Bessent one that he loves to talk about—how he's ruining their currency, trying to destroy their economy to make the whole thing come down. All of these things have caused a tremendous amount of harm and damage to the Iranian government and hardship on the Iranian people. But given the enemy that they're up against, the United States and Israel, they have done more than just hold their own. And like I said, you can actually make a pretty big case that they have been very restrained in what they have done before.

And that's not out of any altruistic inclinations. It's that they realize if they went too far too early, then they could potentially invite a nuclear attack, either from the United States or from Israel. So they have been trying to thread the needle of pushing back hard enough and hurting hard enough, but not going too far that they invite a nuclear weapon, because their objective is to outlast the United States and Israel and to convey that the harm and the damage done to these two adversaries

is such that they willingly end the war, that they withdraw. And, of course, Iran is saying, you know, we want to remain in control of the Strait of Hormuz. We want to stay in control of, you know, the tolling system or whatever—whatever fees, whatever word they want to use. As a matter, that's what they want to do.

But if they get put into a situation to where this existential threat becomes an existential literal crisis, to where they could potentially be destroyed, i.e., with a massive strike that hits at the oil infrastructure, not just around the edges, but at the core and the heart of it—their pumping stations, their refining capacity, everything related to that, energy, electricity—if we go after all those, then now they're going to be commensurate and go back up, and probably a little further than they would hit. And then, of course, they're still going to try to say, "All right, well, we don't want to go so far, even then, in the next round that that spawns, you know, puts us into a situation where we face a catastrophic disaster and that we then launch nuclear weapons." They want to try and thread the needle to keep it from going too far.

But in the event that we go too far, then we take away any reason for them to have restraint, because that threat of nuclear weapons from us or from Israel is a definite constraint on Iran. If we go to the point, however, to where there's nothing else to live for, and you've used the heavy weapons or caused potentially fatal strikes to their economy with the oil, et cetera, then you also remove their reason to have any kind of restraint, and then they can strike back again in ways conventionally even, which would be just catastrophic—catastrophic for our economy. The global economy would suffer too. So we would take a lot of people down with us, but we won't escape it if it comes to that. So I think that that's the Iranian side right now, is to try to win at the lowest cost and not go too far too fast.

#Danny

Yeah, well, I hope the audience can appreciate what you just said, in particular about threading a nuclear needle, because the fact that we are here should be astonishing. It should be a shock to people that we have gone to the point where, Daniel, you can talk about this as not just something that might come, but as something that has a lot of reality on the ground pushing towards this. Now, I wanted to ask you, Daniel, about this. How much of the United States' current predicament and reaction to that predicament has to do with the Strait of Hormuz right now?

Because the news is all glowing in the mainstream media about how well things are going in the Strait of Hormuz. And I wanted to ask you this about this whole escort situation. They brag—the mainstream media, the New York Times, everybody's bragging about this Trump administration. They talk about this escort. They talk about this operation. What does it mean for the U.S. military? They say the U.S. Navy, even though I believe it's mostly air escorts. But what does it mean to be pouring resources there to push crude out of the Strait of Hormuz militarily like this? And what is the reality versus myths about what's going on there, to your knowledge?

#Daniel Davis

Yeah, first of all, for the myths, when Trump is claiming more oil is coming out now than was before the war, it's just ludicrous and laughable at face value. How is that even possible? Because you've had a lot of physical damage to a lot of the infrastructure, and we certainly know Saudi Arabia, with the attacks by Ansar Allah here in the last several weeks, has further degraded their capacity. So the idea that somehow you're going to get back to more than you were before, with all the damage and all the tankers that still keep getting hit, is just laughable. It's not. There's still a lot, and some of it is due to this—whatever definition of escort you want to have—and it's been intentionally obscure, I think, by the United States.

It's not like we have ships that are going through like during the Reagan era or something like that, but it's more like air escorts, or we're providing air cover, an umbrella, et cetera. But I've had some sources today, and I'll just leave it at that, that say, listen, the primary driver of this are deals made by the Iranians, that they're willing to have—they have a version of a tolling system that's going on right now, not something that they would do later, something that they're doing now. So they're saying, hey, you want to go under the American cover, that's fine. If you do and you follow our rules and pay our fees or tolls, whatever word they want to use of the day, that's fine too. We don't care. If you want to go opposed to this, you don't follow our rules, and you go even through the southern corridor, you're still going to get hit.

We'll see if the Americans can stop you. Obviously, quite a number have been hit lately. Did our air escort, did our umbrella, did it stop them? Doesn't seem that it did. So the question is going to be, what is the driving factor that's getting a lot of this oil out? And from information that I've got—and I'm limited to the information because I don't obviously have any personal direct knowledge—but it makes a lot of sense that if Iran is still hitting some ships, but a whole bunch of others are getting through and going through. And by the way, most of the ones, according to reports that I've read just this morning, that have been hit of late are these that have their AIS turned off, that they're going through so-called dark.

So this idea that they're sneaking through and Iran can't figure anything out is apparently not the case, because the ones with the transponders turned off are the ones that are getting hit, that apparently didn't get the clearance or so. So Iran is still making money, even though President Trump says, you know, our blockade is, you know, like a steel wall. It's a wall of iron and steel, whatever. Nothing gets through. Yeah, everything gets through that the Iranians want to get through. Some of it's their oil, and some of it, even if it's from the GCC countries, they're getting a fee for it. So they actually are making some money, and that's why they have still hit some of these ships and haven't hit some others. That's very plausible. So again, I have to reiterate, I can't personally vouch for it, but it's logical given what we know.

#Danny

Yeah, those are great points. And speaking of the blockade, Danny, the United States, you mentioned, I think it's called Operation Economic Outcast. Yeah, there's "Glowing D-Day," as it was promoted at the beginning. And it's being said that this is going to collapse Iran's economy, and it's going to happen any minute now. I think the two-week period is very close to being up. But I want to ask you this: what function, in terms of the U.S.'s military posture, makes this blockade effective or ineffective? Because I'm thinking about, just first, the escorts. Like, what happened? You know, obviously ships are getting through.

And, you know, I think your conclusion about the Iranian mechanism being at play here is, I think, a very good one people don't think often about. But at the same time, it's like, okay, well, what can an air escort do if Iran hits ships? Obviously not very much, because it's not like we're seeing F-35s or whatever it may be striking Iranian territory after that. And then the blockade line seems to be very, very, very porous in terms of these aircraft carriers keep going further and further away from not only the Strait, but the Persian Gulf in general. What's your thoughts on this? Because U.S. military does do a lot of blockades. They're quite devastating, actually, worldwide. But what do you make of the situation over this blockade now?

#Daniel Davis

Yeah, they certainly have some success. I mean, just ask the Cubans how successful they are right now, and they're really hurting over there. And there's no doubt that there are a lot of ships that have been turned around that have been trying to come out. I forget the number that Central Command claims that they have sent back. I question every number, every statement that comes out, because so many of them have proven to be just completely false. But it's pretty clear that there are some significant number of ships that aren't allowed to come out. So it's not as though the Iranian side can just say, yeah, the blockade is, like, porous as a net or something.

You can just roll stuff right through it. It's not that. But it's also not impervious to things getting through. Or, again, even some stuff that ostensibly comes under our protection is actually under the authorization of the Iranian side so that it doesn't get hit. And when it does, under our protection, it's not protected. It does get hit. So, I mean, that tells you a lot right there. But, you know, we don't have that many ships. It's an enormous expense and difficulty to keep this thing going on. And the question is going to be, how much longer are you going to keep this blockade going on? How much longer are you going to just drain the Navy?

And look, with the Navy, Central Command finally admitted just a few days ago that eight Marines and some number of sailors have been injured. Like 30, I think, were added to the list without much explanation, except that they finally did admit that it was a cruise missile that hit one of the ships that our Marines were on. And they had been very unwilling to give a lot of details on that. But the bottom line is, that tells you, even though we mock Iran all the time, that we've destroyed their Navy, their Air Force, and blah, blah, blah, but yet our own ships still get hit and our people get wounded so far.

And there's been lots of other reports here in the last month or so that other ships, actual Navy warships, were very close to being hit. And Iran actually claimed a month or so ago that they, I think it was a hypersonic missile of some sort, intentionally went over the ship and didn't hit as a signal. According to Rezaei, General Rezaei said that this is a signal that if I want to, we can just turn it and go south and it's going to penetrate through. I don't know if that's true or not. I don't know if that's bluster. But we do know that some cruise missiles have hit ships that our soldiers or Marines were on.

So we have to say that there's a risk there. And how much longer is it going to go on before anything like that happens probably depends on what we do next with this new aircraft carrier strike group coming in, with all the other missiles that we have in the region already, stuff that's ground-launched, et cetera. If we go into another round here, and President Trump, of course, is signaling very strongly that, you know, what did he say yesterday or the day before? Immediately after the midterms, this is going to be over one way or the other, he said. Over. Implying that he's ready to do something. Of course, the fact that all this other combat power is flying in around the same day as the election gives some credence to that he's going to try to do that.

The Iranian side, for their part, I've talked to Professor Morandi here at Tehran University just yesterday. And he says our full expectation is it's going back to kinetic. We're getting everything. We've mobilized a lot of people. We've got our target list prepared to go. We expect to get hit, and it's just a matter of when. And I don't see any reason to doubt that statement. I mean, it would be illogical for them to do anything else. So I think that they have chosen to say, hey, we're going to sit back and wait for the U.S. to launch the next round. And then they're going to do something commensurate with whatever happens, whether it's a tit for tat or whether it's a massive explosion.

Because I believe it was either this morning or yesterday afternoon, Jack Keane on Fox News said, strongly advocated going back in and, "Let's hit them with the biggest strike in the most concentrated period that we have since the war began, bigger than what the first 40 days was, in a more concentrated way." Makes me wonder if the idea is, okay, let's do something like, say, hit Pickaxe Mountain and maybe some other non-oil-related kinds of things so that we don't destroy that, so that the oil can come back out there, and then walk away and say, "We've won." I guess that's a possibility, but I think that they're making a mistake, because if we think we can go back in for one more round and then leave and there be no repercussions, I think is a grave miscalculation, because I'm arguing, and have been for the whole time, that we should just do the walkaway plan right now.

Just declare victory. And for a while, I don't know if you caught this, but a month and a half or so ago, and for a period of about a month, you had the likes of Senator Kennedy. He actually would several times go on both Fox News and make statements on the Senate floor and say, you know what, I mean, we could just walk away because we've hurt them so hard, it'll take them decades to recover, which was echoed periodically by Trump. And I thought, looks like they're setting it up. And

I hope they'll go back to that because you don't need to go another round. Then the Iranian side doesn't have to launch another round against us or our allies, and we can just pretend, yay, we won, and we set them back, et cetera.

There's no truth to it, but at least President Trump is so good at lying, even to himself, that he could pull that off. And a lot of his supporters are going to buy it. Most people won't, but his supporters will. And that seems to be all he's worried about anyway, because I think he's read the polling, and it's pretty clear. I'm talking his internal private polling. I think that he knows that they're just going to get blasted in the midterms, and probably, it's looking likely that they actually lose the Senate on top of a whitewashing in the House of Representatives. I think he's just kind of made his peace with that, in which case you can do the walkaway plan right now without causing us any more damage. My gut tells me he's not.

My gut tells me he's going to listen to the likes of Jack Keane and so many of these other people who go on Fox News on a regular basis and talk about how we need to go and finish the job. Keith Kellogg is another one of them. I think he's going to end up doing it. Whether they think that's going to be, hit them hard and then walk away, and then, you know, I don't know, that somehow Iran will allow them, or if they actually know we're going to go in and just plaster Iran and hit all these other targets hard, and that'll show them a thing or two. I don't know what's going on because none of this is logical. There's no military rationale here. The war should never have started because there's not any attainable military tasks. You could blow stuff up all over the place, Danny. There's no problem with that.

We could kill people left and right, but it doesn't accomplish anything. And it was self-evident from the start that the political objectives, i.e., regime collapse, or make them do like Venezuela did and just assassinate the leader, and then everybody else would fall into place—that was never going to happen. The two sides, the two situations, were radically different. And so when that didn't happen, now then you have no attainable military objectives. All you can do is have our ships get hit, have our bases get blown up, have our planes get knocked down, have our allies take lots of hits, and have shipping slowed down or gummed up completely in the Persian Gulf and shut down the Strait of Hormuz. All that was as predictable as the day is long. And now then the question is, how much worse are you going to make it? That's what it seems to me we're down to right now.

#Danny

Yeah. Great points, Daniel. And I wanted your—you know, you mentioned you can't, you're having a hard time, or you can't believe anything that comes out of CENTCOM's mouth these days. I wonder if you could elaborate on this because one thing that I have found so striking—of course, fog of war is just, you know, it's a reality with wars in general. Of course, we know the U.S.'s record. I know you yourself are a whistleblower. So the United States, you know, tends to like to build up a heavy fog of war when engaging in military operations. But this has felt very ineffective in a lot of ways. And I'm curious on your thoughts on what CENTCOM's constant deception about what has gone on

in this war, how that has influenced—because information is part of warfare, right, Daniel? So how has this affected the overall trajectory of the war and the U.S.'s position in it?

#Daniel Davis

Yeah, I mean, information is just one of the realms of every war. It's always this way. I mean, you have the physical realm, the battles, you have the diplomatic realm, you have the economic realm, and you have the information realm. I mean, as far back as antiquity, that's always been a part of it too, because you have to keep the support of your population, and you want to try and sabotage the support of the population of the opponent. And so that's a common, inextricable part of modern warfare. But to be effective, you've got to have some integrity, and you have to have some honesty, especially to your people.

Because when you have situations like we do now, where we just routinely claim everything is going great, we're in total control of the Strait of Hormuz. How many times have you heard Central Command over the last eight months or seven months say, yes, the Strait of Hormuz is completely open. We have complete control of it. And then, like, sometimes while the words are still coming over the internet, here there's all of a sudden flames flying up from a ship that was hit by the Iranian side, implying that, yeah, you're not actually in control of it. Or you look at the actual number of oil coming out. It's still quite limited.

Or you look over at the gas station down the street from your house and you go, wow, diesel is really expensive. Gas, regular gas, is really expensive. Or you look at your farmers down the street from that, and they're saying, hey, I don't have enough fertilizer to plant my crops this year. And, oh, by the way, because diesel is so high, I might not even be able to reap the crops this year. We might not even be able to harvest it because it might cost me more money to use the farm equipment than I can make from selling it. So it might be financially least offensive to just let the crops rot in the field.

That's crazy. All that stuff is directly corresponding to what the decision was to go to war. That's what we're paying. And so when people see that, and then they hear all these flowery statements coming out of either the president or the Central Command or some of these TV generals or some of the other admirals that are still on active duty, and they see it just does not jibe with common sense and logic and what they can physically see and how much they have to physically pay at the gas pump, et cetera, then not only do you not build up support on your side for the war, but you actually destroy it.

You actually start to tear it down. And so even if you had some good reason for it, you're undermining your own information operations campaign. And that's just in the near term. That's in the immediate reaction. But you're also shredding confidence and trust in the government, in the military in particular, for anything in the future. Now then, later on when you make some kind of claims, more and more people are going to be in the boat that I'm in right now, which is disgusting

to me, is that I take nothing at face value, absolutely nothing. Even if it seems like it's true, I question it. And I'm like, let me see.

Let me find this from another source. Let me see if I can corroborate this elsewhere. Even something that seems like it should be true, I'm now skeptical about it. And the more you go down that path, the more you build distrust. And then at some point, people aren't going to trust anything you say. And you can only govern people by the consent of the governed. And if you lose the consent of the governed, you have some real problems. Now, we're not there yet, but this is on the road to getting to a place to where you're not even going to be able to get the consent of the governed for anything. And then you have some real problems.

#Danny

Daniel, now if we could look at the overall world situation, I wanted your reaction to, you know, Vladimir Putin and Russia has felt compelled to warn all of NATO about Kaliningrad, saying that they will use all weapons, including nuclear weapons, to defend it after being, you know, responsive to comments made by certain European countries that, you know, they might take Kaliningrad, and that might be the next area of war for NATO. Your thoughts on, you know, last year, General Donohue, I believe it was, said something very similar. So obviously, both on the U.S. side of NATO and the European side of NATO, as part of this conglomeration, they're thinking about this. What do you make of this, given the state of the Ukraine war and really what we're facing worldwide for the case of the United States in particular, but NATO in general.

#Daniel Davis

Yeah, that by General Donahue, and anything that anybody in Europe and NATO or whatever is saying, is just as stupid as it can be. There's no value in it. Anyone who has some fantasy that, hey, I can say this and that'll be a deterrent to Russia—if they realize how easy it would be for me to take Kaliningrad and I could knock that off the chessboard, boy, that'll make them think twice. That's not—surely, surely none of these people are so stupid, absurd and foolish and just stupid that they believe that. And I can't imagine that they do, to be honest with you. I don't think that they're stupid.

In fact, I think that all these people are very intelligent, which is a big problem, because if you're intelligent and you're saying something like that, that means you have another reason to say it. Now, I don't know if it's something as, "Oh, this is for domestic consumption. I just want people to think at home, yeah, I can bring them Russkies under my control anytime I want to. All I gotta do is give an order. I can take that darn Kaliningrad," you know, I don't know, something like that. But even that is foolish, because all it does is literally feed the fears of the Russian side and helps. This is the crazy part, Danny.

It helps the Russian information operations campaign. Putin is all the time trying to say, "We were forced into this war. This war didn't start on February 24th, 2022. It started in 2014." That's what

he's saying. And when we say stuff like this, that this is everybody against Russia, that, you know, during the Biden administration, you had the Secretary of Defense at the time, Lloyd Austin, who says, you know, bragged about, "We have 50 nations allied against Russia, and we're all funneling aid through Ukraine," basically using them as a proxy to harm and kill Russians, and now to strike deeper.

And so Putin has been telling his people that all the time. We have to fight this. This is an existential struggle for us. This is for our national security. We must do this because they're all coming for us. He sees people saying stuff like, "We have to get ready for war with Russia by 2029," or the French, I think, chief of their general staff, by 2030. UK's routine officials are saying, "We have to get ready for a war with Russia." In fact, you need to start stockpiling food right now and water because, my God, war is coming. All that stuff is fed into the information campaign for the Russians.

And so if anybody had any fantasies about, okay, Zelensky can fire stuff deep into Russia and hit their oil refineries and hit their Wildberries platforms and other kinds of storage facilities and hurt them, et cetera, so that the people will turn against Putin and demand that he end the war, that is totally eviscerated when you're doing and saying all these other things, because now that you— they literally reinforce Putin's communication strategy, which is, it's them trying to destroy us, because that's what they hear. And then you add in this Kaliningrad stuff here, and that's our territory. I mean, it's not unlike the continental United States. If somebody said, from Russia, we're going to go after— we're going to retake part of Alaska, or we're going to get some of the Aleutian Islands. Yeah, we can go and we can get those.

I mean, everybody in America would be up in arms and saying we need to be ready to go to war against Russia if they take American soil. It's the same thing by saying we can take Kaliningrad, because that is Russian territory. And it's, of course, it's very isolated. It's on the other side of the Baltics. And they think that they can take that thing out. But basically all that is is a tripwire into a war, because there's no difference to the Russians, to Moscow, as to hitting Kaliningrad, as to hitting anything else inside of Russia. And if you have a direct attack, not by Ukraine, but by a NATO country against Russian soil, then it's the same result as though if Russia had hit Ukraine—NATO territory, not Ukraine, but NATO territory—and you have Article 5 and all the stuff that might happen off of that.

It's the same thing in reverse. And so all of those kinds of words, it doesn't even matter if you could physically take Kaliningrad because it is so isolated. It would not be hard to take, almost like Bastogne, right? I mean, like the Germans did in the Battle of the Bulge in World War II. You can surround it. But, you know, take a look at a map, if you would, and you can see that Kaliningrad is surrounded. It's on the other side of the Baltics, right? And on the other side of Poland, basically. But you have Belarus right there, and in these three Baltics, I think you have maybe a brigade, a combat brigade in total of actual combat power.

And if you ever made any kind of move, conventional or otherwise, against Kaliningrad, Russia could roll a couple of divisions across there, and there's drones or no drones. There's nothing you could do to stop that. You'd lose all of them in a minute. So Russia, and this is not an exaggeration, in a day, could mobilize combat power and just obliterate everything conventionally in the Baltic states. If you started it, they have no reason to stand by it. Now there's no worry about Article 5 because basically you've attacked Russia, so it's off the table. So they'll do whatever they need. So it's not a good move conventionally. It's not a good move in information operations for what we're doing. And it's just yet more unforced errors.

#Danny

Yeah, we've heard this a lot. Take this from Russia by this year. We're going to fight China by 2020. I think the deadline passed for that one. 2026, 2027, 2029, maybe 2030 now. There's...

#Danny

What is driving, do you believe, the United States, its military, toward these kind of disastrous wars right now? I mean, we have the United States supposedly standing off with regard to Yemen and Saudi Arabia, but we also know that what happens to Saudi Arabia is very important to the United States. So what is driving the U.S. right now to continue on this path, which, as you've outlined, has lots and lots and lots of consequences?

#Daniel Davis

There is—and the only polite and accurate way to say this—is that there's a sickness over the entire Western world, and Europe is just as bad as the United States, in that diplomacy has died. There is no diplomatic corps. There is no attempt, not even an attempt, at finding any kind of diplomatic solution to anything. All we want to do, whether it's NATO, whether it's the European Union, whether it's specific European states or the United States, whether at the official level—Secretary of State, Secretary of War, the President, the intellectual class, the elites, the TV generals, all these folks that go on TV all the time—the only language they speak is, is we have to coerce somebody into doing something.

We either take it from them or we threaten them with certain death if they don't do this. I mean, how many times did President Trump use that? Remember the first day? I always remember that phrase, that he threatened the IRGC with certain death if they did not surrender. Well, they didn't surrender, and last I checked, they're still alive, at least as an organization. So we sort of forgot that. But instead of saying, hey, all right, let's have some diplomacy and get this off the table. Instead of having diplomacy and saying, hey, let's prevent the war in Ukraine from even happening in 2021 by just taking NATO off the table. You can still do other stuff, but you've got to take NATO off the table.

That was a deal that Putin made. We didn't do it. We had, of course, Istanbul in 2022. We had the offer that President Putin made in June 2024. I mean, you name it. The Anchorage in 2025, and in the current round right now, all of these things could have ended the war. None of them were taken because we only know the language of violence, and it is suicidal for our interests. It undermines our security. It undermines our economic ability to prosper. It is, it is, it is like a sickness. It might be more like a cancer even than so much as a blindness, is that our minds have been ossified at the elite level.

And the only thing they can do is to bring more harm on ourselves because we will not use intellectual things, the tools of diplomacy, of statecraft, of solving problems at the lowest level, at the lowest cost possible. Sometimes that means you don't get everything you want. Sometimes it means you even have to give some things you don't want to in order to get some things that you need. That used to be a skill. It is now dead. It is not diminished. It is dead. It does not exist. We won't do any negotiations, and until or unless we reverse that, we're going to one day send ourselves into some sort of national suicide. And we may have a crash or war or an economic collapse from which we may never recover to the level that we started off before. And it's all an unforced error because every single thing I just mentioned could have been avoided. The cost could have been avoided with just basic diplomacy and statecraft. And we could have been secure and had economic stability indefinitely. But we're moving in the opposite direction.

#Danny

Yeah, the addiction to war, the aversion to any kind of peace—that's what you really need if you're going to engage in diplomacy—is really at fever pitch right now, Daniel, and you outlined it incredibly well. Everybody, make sure you follow Daniel Davis's Deep Dive. That's in the video description below. Thanks so much, Daniel, for joining me today. I want to make sure everyone hits the like button before you head out. That helps boost the show in YouTube's algorithm. I'll be back again tomorrow. Until next time, everybody.