

USS Ford Mutiny HUMILIATES Trump, Iran Vows Strike on US Troops | Rania Khalek

Full-scale war with Iran appears imminent, but a major crisis on the USS Gerald Ford reveals key problems for the Trump administration in succeeding in its unclear objectives. Rania Khalek joined to discuss the soft mutiny occurring on USS Ford and whether Iran will make good on its promise of full-scale war on US personnel in the event of a US strike. FOLLOW ME ON RUMBLE: <https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong> FOLLOW ME ON TELEGRAM: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> SUPPORT THE CHANNEL ON PATREON: <https://www.patreon.com/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> Follow me on Telegram: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> #iran #trump #usnavy #israel

#Danny

Trump spoke at the State of the Union address. He said he's more interested in diplomacy than war, but war is definitely on the table. But there have been some hiccups. This war is really going down the toilet, so to speak—and somewhat literally—because the USS Gerald Ford is racked with plumbing problems. There are about 600 toilets, and a bunch of them are down for 4,600 sailors. They actually had to dock in Crete just to get a break. But I wanted to ask you about this because it's not being talked about.

The Maritime Executive wrote about these issues. There have been reports of foreign material getting into the system over the course of this 11-month-plus deployment, including T-shirts and mop heads that were flushed down the toilets. The Western mainstream media—from NPR to The Wall Street Journal—are saying there are morale issues. But that seems like a very purposeful thing to do. So I'm thinking there may be some unhappy sailors who don't want to be on a ship that's going to war with Iran today.

#Rania Khalek

I mean, I think it's really interesting. All we can really do is speculate, right? Like, I'm not talking to people on this ship, but yeah, that is definitely purposeful. It's one thing to flush toilet paper and have that cause problems; it's another thing for T-shirts to be clogging toilet pipes. Um, and that would speak to some sort of intentional kind of sabotage on a collective level, given what, you know, has caused this problem of, like, American shit, if you will. But all that's to say, I mean, look, I'd like to think—the optimist in me would like to think—that there are people on this ship who recognize that this is a very stupid, purposeless war in many ways, because America cannot achieve its objectives.

It's also criminal to carry out an act of aggression from this ship. I mean, this is the biggest military buildup we've seen from the United States since the 2003 Iraq War days, with all these aircraft, all these aircraft carriers, and everything that goes along with them just surrounding Iran. I think you said something like 30 percent—I've seen numbers as high as 40 to 50 percent of U.S. naval assets surrounding Iran. Regardless of the exact number, it's just completely insane to be going into or attempting to carry out yet another disastrous war in the Middle East. We've seen how Libya turned out, how Syria turned out, how Iraq turned out—and they completely destabilized the region.

And also, you could argue the entire world in many ways. You know, you wouldn't have ISIS without the U.S. war in Iraq and then the U.S. regime-change war in Syria. Iran is a country of 90 million people. It's a lot larger than Syria and Iraq. It has a pretty powerful military—it's a regional power, and it has its own assets across the region. So it's not just a matter of, like, this being a criminal act. It's also like, OK, if you're in the U.S. military and you're not an idiot, you see that this actually poses a potential, real, material threat to U.S. personnel across the region, because Iran has the ability to hit those U.S. bases in various Gulf states—from the Emirates to Qatar to Saudi Arabia.

They have the ability to—you know—they have partners across the region like Ansar Allah, and partners in Iraq and Lebanon who are basically on their team as part of the axis of resistance. That could also cause problems for the Americans across the region. So this wouldn't be some sort of cakewalk, and it would cause destruction to the U.S. on some level. And so, yeah, if you're on an aircraft carrier and you're not an idiot, you'd see the writing on the wall and maybe want to put whatever delay or stop to this that you could. I mean, that's the optimist in me. But also, we have to recognize—these people have been on this aircraft carrier for, like, what, 11 months, you said?

We've seen the stories of people not being able to see their kids for over a year at this point, and it just sucks. Imagine being on a ship for 11 months—that sucks. They've been in the Caribbean and now in the Middle East. There's no break. So of course morale would be down. You see your country basically treating you like crap, and you're supposed to go, you know, potentially put your life on the line. And for what? So the U.S. can steal Iran's oil, so the U.S. can have greater hegemony over the region than it already does. The goals here don't even really make sense, because they're also just not achievable.

#Danny

I'm sure that after the Venezuela debacle, many of those thousands of sailors, those thousands of personnel, were thinking, "This is it. We're going to go home. Mission accomplished." That's how the Trump administration painted it. But now they're in the Middle East. I believe they were in Crete, and now they're going to dock off Israel. There are major warnings inside the Trump administration, Rania, from the chief of staff. Trump has said absolutely not—he hasn't been warned by Dan Raising Cane. Every time I hear that, I'm like, "Raising Cane's like the... I don't know, don't ask me." But even he, who was a big chest-thumper around Venezuela, came out and said, "We did it, look at this

great operation." Now he's saying, "No, no, no, Donald Trump, maybe don't attack Iran." And I'm sure this is getting down to the level of the sailors who are there, being like, "Well, what's going to happen to us if there are major risks—if there are risks?"

#Rania Khalek

The U.S. doesn't do well with risk, especially under a short-sighted administration. So even this guy with the ridiculous name—this general who's warning Trump—he's not warning him out of ideology or because he's anti-war. He's warning him because, okay, what are your goals? Let's walk this through. Are your goals to destabilize Iran? To change the government in Iran? Are those things even achievable? What would the outcome actually be? Well, the reality is, as this general is saying, we only have the capacity for about four to five days of sustained aggression against Iran before we start running out of certain pieces of equipment.

Right. And Trump—the thing is, Trump doesn't want to do this over months. He wants a one-and-done sort of situation. But you can't change the government of Iran in a one-and-done kind of situation, even if you take out the entire leadership of the Iranian government. The Iranian government has prepared contingency plans for that. I mean, if you've read any of the pieces about Iran's preparations, part of their planning includes picking up to five different successors for various important positions. So that means the U.S. can just, like, kind of—well, this is something that the Iranians and a lot of resistance groups across the region are very good at.

They're very good at having successors—and then successors to those successors—ready in case of layered assassinations. So Iran has prepared for that. In that situation, it's going to be very difficult to take out this, quote-unquote, regime that you don't want in power so badly. Plus, Iran has a big base of support in the country. Sure, there are Iranians who don't like their government, but there are also plenty who do support it. And they have a strong military that will fight. They also have pretty good weapons. I mean, it doesn't compare to the technological supremacy of the U.S.—I don't think anyone does—because nobody spends a trillion dollars a year on the military the way the U.S. does.

But Iran shouldn't, you know, shouldn't be dismissed. I mean, there's a reason Russia has been using Iranian drones in Ukraine since the war started—because they work really, really well. And Iran has managed to, you know, perfect their technology, and they can do damage with those drones. Iran also has ballistic missiles, right? Those can do a lot of damage. We saw what they could do last year during the 12-day war with Israel, when the Israelis basically started to run out of missiles to intercept the ballistic and other missiles Iran was firing at them.

So this is part of the reason why, in negotiations with Iran, the U.S. keeps trying to put the ballistic missile program on the table. They basically want to disarm Iran. Those ballistic missiles are a really important deterrent because they can do a lot of material damage. So Iran has ballistic missiles. And again, if the U.S. were ever to attempt raids or an invasion of Iran, there's a huge number of people

who've been organized to fight on Iran's behalf. And then also, you know, we keep hearing about the U.S. wanting to help protesters inside Iran. Well, there definitely are people inside Iran who are separatists, who would want to destabilize or even destroy the current government.

But when you have the U.S. unprovoked attacking Iran, you're going to get a rally-around-the-flag effect, like you would in any country. And it could actually, potentially, bring people together. So what I'm saying is, these are the kinds of conversations serious people are having if they're trying to plan out a war, right? This general's not an idiot, and that's why he's putting out these warnings—because he's like, it's one thing to kidnap Nicolás Maduro. Not that that was okay—that was a horrible thing to do, obviously—but Venezuela's not Iran. Venezuela has been an extremely sanctioned country with almost no revenue coming in for a very long time now.

They don't have the capacity to build up their military and their military technology the way Iran has. So it's much easier for the U.S. to swoop into Venezuela, which is literally in their hemisphere and, you know, psychotically kidnap the president and his wife. It's another thing entirely when you're talking about a country on the other side of the world that's a major regional power. And then also, by the way, I'm not saying Russia and China are going to swoop in to save Iran—they're not. That's not how they operate. But they are very strong Iranian allies who sell Iran military technology as well, and that would play a role in this too. I'm sure this general is also talking about the fact that Iran is a country of 90 million people.

And if you destabilize it, you're literally going to destabilize the entire region. You're going to cause huge damage—like refugee flows this way and that way. It's like you open Pandora's box; you don't even know where it's going to end. And again, I would go back to the cases of Libya, Iraq, and Syria to understand what happened there. So I'm not surprised that you have these warnings. The question is whether Trump will actually care to listen to those warnings. It's really unpredictable, I think. And if you just look at the material situation—why would you surround a country with that much military might if you don't plan to use it on some level?

#Danny

I don't know if you saw the debacle of the State of the Union address, which was supposed to be, some believed, a major indicator of what the Trump administration—and Donald Trump himself—was going to announce or do about Iran. All the mainstream media headlines were like, "OK, what's he going to say about Iran?" Well, it turns out not much. But here's what was said: first, he briefed the Gang of Eight, the top senators and congressmen of both parties. Here's what Chuck Schumer—who never saw a war he didn't like—had to say after that meeting with Trump.

#Speaker 01

This is serious, and the administration has to make its case to the American people.

#Danny

That's all he had to say. And then these are the few remarks Donald Trump made about Iran and what's to come.

#Trump

Some terrible people. They've already developed missiles that can threaten Europe and our bases overseas, and they're working to build missiles that will soon reach the United States of America. After a midnight hammering, they were warned to make no future attempts to rebuild their weapons program, particularly nuclear weapons. Yet they keep starting it all over again. We wiped it out, and they want to start all over again—right now, still pursuing their sinister ambitions. We are in negotiations with them. They want to make a deal, but we haven't heard those simple words: "We will never have a nuclear weapon." My preference.

#Trump

My preference is to solve this problem through diplomacy. But one thing is certain: I will never allow the world's number one sponsor of terror—which they are, by far—to have a nuclear weapon. Can't let that happen.

#Danny

Yeah, a lot of straight-up fabrications there. But as this war continues to go up in flames with the Trump administration, there's still, as you saw, a lot of support in the chambers of Congress. A good majority of them—Republicans and Democrats—stood up for that, which sounded like WMDs on steroids.

#Rania Khalek

Yeah, absolute ghouls. It's a room of absolute, disgusting, barbaric, uncivilized ghouls who have spent the last two-plus years genociding Gaza—happily genociding Gaza—and now are happy to expand that genocide into Iran because they're just imperialist, disgusting, uncivilized, barbaric ghouls. And, you know, it's wild. You said "fabrications." I mean, one of the biggest fabrications—God, I don't even know if you can say the biggest because so many were the biggest—but one of those major fabrications was the idea that Iran still wants a nuclear weapon.

Literally, I'm sure you saw—just hours before the State of the Union—the Iranian foreign minister tweeted that Iran has no interest in building a nuclear weapon. And that's not the first time Iranian officials have said that. There's even a fatwa in Iran against building nuclear weapons. Many people

argue that's one of Iran's biggest mistakes. Perhaps if Iran had, in fact, built a nuclear weapon by this point, it would serve as a deterrent for the U.S.—not to invade Iran, not to try to destroy Iran or overthrow the government. And I mean, I think North Korea is a perfect example of that.

You haven't seen the U.S. try that with North Korea because the nuclear bomb North Korea built is a deterrent. So all that's to say, what he's saying is an absolute lie. Another major lie was the idea that Iran has missiles, or is building missiles, that can hit Europe and the U.S.—which is just an outrageous lie. Essentially, the Americans, and really people across the political spectrum, don't want Iran to have any weapons. They want a completely disarmed Iran. Which is insane. It's insane for any country not to have, or not to try to have, the ability to defend itself—because that's what having an army and weapons means. But they want to disarm Iran because Iran is a country that refuses to follow U.S. edicts.

It refuses to follow or become a U.S. client state. It has since the 1979 Iranian Revolution. It has a massive amount of oil, and, you know, as we've seen with other Global South countries that have huge oil reserves, the imperial countries—led by the U.S.—want to take that oil for almost nothing and make a ton of money off it. They don't want the people of that country to benefit. And that's why the U.S. and the British overthrew the democratically elected Iranian government in 1953 and installed the Shah, a ruthless dictator whose son is now being promoted as a possible alternative to lead Iran.

But all that's to say, I mean, that speech was just completely outrageous. I think it shows you where Trump's head is at. It was neocon talking points to the extreme. And, you know, I don't think he really cares one way or another. Trump is just going in the direction of the yes-men he's put around him. And, yeah, it's a really frightening moment because, you know, again, Iran is a country of 90 million people. The Middle East—West Asia—is a region that has hundreds of millions of people living in it, including me. I'm here in Lebanon. Right?

And the number of people who would be impacted by this in such a dramatically negative way—it doesn't even register in the minds of these disgusting, barbaric, uncivilized ghouls who clap like seals for any war their dear leader wants to launch. Yesterday it was Venezuela and Cuba; now it's Iran. Who knows what it'll be tomorrow? But these people will just keep clapping for war like a bunch of psychos until there's no country left. So, you want to talk about the biggest sponsor of terrorism in the world? That would be the United States of America, not Iran.

#Danny

The justifications for this, Rania, they're just falling apart. I mean, Donald Trump said we haven't heard those secret words that they won't build a nuclear bomb yet. But Iran has said from the very beginning, Rania, that they are not going to build a nuclear weapon—they don't want to build a nuclear weapon. This is for Minister Abbas Araqchi, who said they're not surrendering but have no interest in nuclear weapons. It was literally the same day that the speech happened in public. Forget

the so-called negotiations that have taken place. I mean, the justifications are looking more and more ridiculous as time goes on.

#Rania Khalek

No, it's just completely outrageous. And you know what's even crazier? It's so unpopular among the public—the American public—except for the MAGA base, which I think, no matter what Trump does, the majority of them are just going to support him because it's like a cult of personality, a fascist cult of personality. But you have an opposition party—supposedly an opposition party—called the Democrats, and they're silent about this. All you've heard from Chuck Schumer was that mealy-mouthed statement about how he's going to have to sell it to the American people.

The American people don't want this war. They're completely uninterested in bombing Iran. What he did in Venezuela is incredibly unpopular. But you know what? I think I saw a poll—it was something like 21 percent of Americans support a war with Iran. That's crazy. So you're saying 79 percent of Americans are basically opposed to a war on Iran, and somehow this is still happening? It's like we don't live in a democracy at all. We have no say over foreign policy whatsoever. And you have this pretend opposition party called the Democrats that just doesn't care.

If anything, you know, I think a lot of them probably support a war on Iran. That's one, because they hate Iran. They're also a bunch of imperialist ghouls. But I also think there's another cynical thing at play here, which is that they recognize this is unpopular. They don't want to put their names on opposing it because that could be used against them later. So why not just let Trump do this unpopular war—kill a ton of people, destroy the region, light it on fire—because who cares about those people over there? Let it become even more unpopular, and that'll help us win in the midterms.

#Danny

Thank you very much. So the Democrats, yeah—do nothing and win. They've obviously seen the Xi Jinping meme all over X, right? They think that's what can help them, that it can help them against Donald Trump, since they're not proposing or offering anything else. They even offered a CIA agent as the alternative to the State of the Union—in the governor of Virginia—which was absolutely hilarious. But this is the poll: only 20% of U.S. adults support Trump's war on Iran. And this poll was from the University of Maryland Critical Issues, released in mid-February.

So it's very unpopular, Rania, and it's going to have massive consequences. I mean, just going back to what—of course, we don't have access to speak to those on the USS Gerald Ford—but when you see things like this, I'm sure they have access to X. I don't know how much access, but I'm sure they do. They might see things like this, where Iran is literally practicing for the targets they want to hit—U.S. assets in places like the UAE, which is just across the Strait of Hormuz.

#Rania Khalek

Yeah, look, Iran is not a non-state actor that just has light rocket technology and guns, you know—and no shade to non-state actors—but a non-state actor is not an army like a state is. They can't access the kinds of things that a functioning, organized state like Iran can. Iran has an organized state. Iran has weapons. Iran makes a lot of its own weapons, despite being under sanctions. Iran buys weapons from Russia, buys technology from China, and has partnerships with those countries. So this is not just some militia you can bomb out of existence.

There will be consequences to a war with Iran. That doesn't mean the consequences are going to happen in the U.S., but the U.S. has bases there—massive bases across the region. You mentioned the UAE. They have a base in Bahrain, they have bases in Saudi Arabia, and they have a base in Qatar. Last year, after the U.S. struck Iran's nuclear facilities in a very calibrated way, Iran's retaliation demonstrated its ability to bomb Qatar. And again, they calibrated it to do minimal damage, but they were also showcasing what they could do—meaning they could cause real damage if they were serious about it and had to act.

And the thing about Iran is, Iran has always been very reserved. Again, this is a criticism of Iran that you hear in this region, at least—that one of the reasons there's all this buildup against Iran is because it's lost some of its deterrent capacity. In the past, when the U.S. has done things—beginning with the murder of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani in early 2020—the Iranian response was very calibrated to do minimal damage, so it wouldn't provoke another U.S. response. Iran does not want a war, right? They call this the "strategic patience" of Iran. And then, all throughout the genocide in Gaza, as you saw escalation against Iran—whether it was the Israelis hitting the Iranian consulate in Damascus, the Israelis continuing to kill nuclear scientists, or the Israelis killing Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran—

And, you know, now a lot of people believe that perhaps the helicopter crash that killed the Iranian president and foreign minister was potentially the work of the Israelis as well. But whether you think it was or not, the point is, over and over you see these acts of aggression against Iran, and Iran responding in a very minimal way in order to avoid a big war. Right? But that's because Iran feels it has something to protect and more to lose than to gain by retaliating in a way that would provoke a major war. However, if things have changed now—especially since the twelve-day war with Israel last year—and Iran's calculations are that it's worth it to actually go to war if they're forced to, then basically what the U.S. is demanding right now is surrender from Iran: zero nuclear enrichment and potentially even disarmament, by not allowing it to have a missile program.

If they were to agree to that, it'd basically be like signing their own death warrant. So, in order to survive, they'd actually have to participate in a war. And there's a belief—especially among the people who took over from the leadership that was killed last year by the Israelis in the twelve-day war—that it actually behooves Iran to just have the big war with the U.S., because the U.S. can't sustain a long-term war in the region. Even that general who advised Trump not to go to war believes that's the case. That's one. And also, it's so unpopular among the U.S. public that public

opinion would make it impossible to proceed with a long war that could actually lead to the outcome the U.S. wants.

So again, you saw that image you showed of Iran firing a missile. They have the capacity to do that, and they have the capacity to do it around the region. And they also have the right, by the way, to defend themselves from an aggressor. You know, if this war does go through and the U.S. starts mass bombing Iran—killing senior leadership, perhaps even the supreme leader of Iran, which, you know, they've threatened to do and Trump is debating doing—let's say all those things actually happen, you'd see the U.S. media probably frame Iran's response as terroristic or criminal. But actually, Iran would have every right to respond to such a massive act of aggression.