

# Iran's Missile Barrage SMASHES Tel Aviv, US-Israeli Defenses FAIL | Narwani

Renowned journalist Sharmine Narwani of The Cradle joins the show to break down Iran's historic 21st wave of retaliation against US and Israel dubbed Operation True Promise 4, and what the strikes tell us about the state of the ongoing war. Support the Cradle: <https://thecradle.co/> 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](https://chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com) Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho> Follow me on Telegram: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> #iran #trump #israel

## #Danny

Welcome, everyone. Welcome back to the show. It's your host, Danny Haiphong. I'm joined by Sharmine Narwani, editor and columnist at The Cradle. Sharmine, thanks so much for joining.

## #Sharmine Narwani

I'm so happy to be here to discuss this stuff—who would've ever thought?

## #Danny

Yeah, now we have to get right to it, everyone. So hit the like button as you come on, because that helps boost the show. Let's start with Iran's escalating strikes on Israel. There were a lot of reports early on, Sharmine, when this began on February 28th, that Iran was taking a more diverse approach—which it has—mostly hitting the Gulf country assets of the U.S. military. But Israel has received a pounding response. In the last several days, especially overnight, I believe the very reserved count of about 60 missiles went over Tel Aviv, central Israel, and surrounding areas. I'm just going to play some of the videos as you react.

Iran has unveiled cluster munitions, which were seen flying over Israel. Essentially, this missile cannot be intercepted at all. And Israel has, of course, been crying about this because the damage has been devastating. These are the scenes after the missiles hit. Israelis themselves have broken the censors. A lot of people—some may not know this—Israel heavily censors its citizens and so-called journalists from recording such footage, and Western journalists as well. I'll just show one of these reports, or maybe we can play both before you react. Here's one.

## #Speaker 01

This is what's left of a civilian building here in Tel Aviv after a ballistic missile—an Iranian missile—hit it. This was a barrage of about 20 ballistic missiles, all targeting different civilian neighborhoods in Israel. Thankfully, the Israeli population is resilient and is following the Home Front Command guidelines. And thankfully, as far as we know now...

## **#Danny**

They say there are no casualties, but we know Israel isn't very good at keeping those numbers, Sharmine. And here's another one.

## **#Speaker 02**

This is the wreckage from a ballistic missile launched by the Iranian regime. What you can see is a civilian apartment building in Bat Yam—or what's left of it—after a ballistic missile directly hit it. Numerous people were killed, hundreds were injured, and there are now soldiers behind me digging through the rubble, trying to find the bodies. They are launching rockets at civilian buildings.

## **#Danny**

So, karma, Sharmine, but this is showing increasingly—and I'll just show—they're hitting deep. Iran is striking even into the occupied territories of the West Bank. I'll show that here. This is one impact that was shown hitting very deep. The air defenses in Israel appear to be depleting very fast. The Iron Dome is not built for this. So, Sharmine, what have you made over the last day of Iran's retaliation? What has been significant for you as we move into over a week now of this war?

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

I mean, the U.S. narrative, as we heard from Secretary Hagstaff and the CENTCOM chief and others yesterday, was that we are doing severe damage to Iran. We've taken out a majority of their launchers—their rocket launchers and their drone launchers. I mean, first of all, how would they know? How would they even know that number? You know, Iran's 1.6 million square kilometers—huge chunks of mountainous regions, desert, other difficult terrain. How would they even know? I'm sorry, Danny, can you put the split screen on? It makes it easier for me to focus. You have to see YouTube—not like I'm just talking to the screen. Thank you.

I just want to point out something, though, before we get into this. People are saying the Israelis have broken through their censors. I don't believe that to be true. One of the women who was explaining what the damage and destruction were behind her looked to be wearing a military uniform. I think—and this is what's kind of crazy—I think they're letting people show the civilian damage in the expectation that people will think the Iranians are evil, evil child killers. You know, I don't know what universe their brains inhabit, but all I see on social media, where these are being posted, is “karma's a bitch,” or “ha ha ha, you think we're going to cry over this.”

In terms of the larger picture, I mean, I have naysayers around me too, who are worried that Iran's getting hit because we're seeing, of course, videos of the massive civilian and infrastructural destruction in Tehran in particular. And, you know, it seems quite horrible and pervasive. I saw an exchange—excuse me—on social media where somebody was saying, "How long can Iran possibly take this? How long can we stomach it?" And one of our writers at \*The Cradle\* actually wrote back, "Have you heard of the eight-year Iran–Iraq war?" And it put things into context. We're talking—we're seven days in. Iranians dealt with this for a very, very long time. That was a time when the Iraqis had missiles and every bit of Western-provided and Gulf-provided equipment you could imagine, from 1980 onwards, for eight years.

And Iran didn't have a single missile. For them, that moment was "never again." They said, "We're going to seek out missile technology. If nobody will sell us aircraft, we'll build these things ourselves. We'll build an aerospace program, a drone program, and so on." So I think—I hate to say this—but I think they can. They've lived through that eight-year war. I remember that everyone in the cities, every single night, had to turn off their lights so the city would be completely dark, so the Iraqis wouldn't have targets. It was awful. They lived like that for years.

The population of Iran doubled during that time. Obviously, no lights at night—you know, people would make jokes about that: "Are you an Iran–Iraq war baby?" But they lived through much worse than this. So here's the thing, from my perspective, for those who are worried that Iran can't last—that's not the case in my mind, certainly not from what I saw during the eight-year war. But the other thing I'm hearing a lot is, "Why isn't Iran hitting Israel? Oh my God, it's just a few missiles, it's not this massive salvo of a hundred missiles—it's two." Of course, two extremely devastating ones, each of them having sort of cluster-like munitions of eighty. But my view was, well, Israel can't survive without the United States, right? So first, you destroy the U.S.'s eyes and ears.

You destroy their military bases. You destroy how they bring supplies into countries. If you have to hit ports, if you have to hit airfields—right?—where U.S. military planes arrive regularly, if you have to hit places where U.S. military personnel stay, even things like hotels where troops spend their nights. Iran is systematically hitting the entire range of U.S. military assets, and even shared assets with Gulf countries. They've taken down the biggest drones. I mean, somebody today was cheering that they'd taken down a massive—sorry, not drones—a massive radar in Jordan, which has been watching Syria and Lebanon for so long. So people in Lebanon were cheering that. And you know, what the U.S. has to do to counter that, what the Israelis have to do to counter that, is find the launchers in Iran.

They're not even looking to take out missiles or missile production facilities anymore. They're going after the launchers, which makes perfect sense. But how are they going to find them, Danny? How? You know, just to read something that came across my desk a few minutes ago—it's by Alan Mizrahi, an Israeli journalist—and if I could just read the first few lines, he says: "We are witnessing history. Iran is, to the surprise of everyone, messing up U.S. bases so thoroughly, so extensively, and so

decisively that the world isn't ready to see it. In four days, Iran has managed to expand its scope of military domination in the region and has destroyed the most precious, most expensive military bases, assets, and equipment in the whole world."

U.S. bases in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia—these are assets that took trillions to build over several decades. We're talking about a major chunk of military expenditure for more than 30 years going up in smoke in just a few days. And that's the picture. Despite what Secretary Hegseth says, despite what the head of Central Command or the president of the United States says, it's very clear to everyone what's happening. The military play aside, there's a whole other thing happening—the economic, financial, and supply-line impact of this.

I was just reading something saying nobody's writing about this, but Dubai has only ten days of food supplies left. That's not something the Iranian government wants to happen. But it's kind of like how the Americans have besieged country after country after country, right? Yemen—the poorest country—besieged for years. Cuba now. What's your problem with Cuba, you know? There's no imminent threat from Cuba. Starving them out, trying to do that to Venezuela, to any adversary. And it's not just food—it's water. It's obviously their ability to make money, because oil and gas, petrochemicals, fertilizers—this is the bread and butter of many of these states.

And we've seen, obviously, prices for these commodities skyrocket globally. Then we heard Japan saying, just a few days ago, that they might have to sell over 600 billion dollars of U.S. ETFs in order to get the cash they need for their populations. But today, yesterday, and the day before, we've been hearing from Persian Gulf states this idea that they might have to pull their investments—you know, the investments that Trump wanted—and force them to provide for the United States. Just the cash cows that these Gulf countries are, they might have to pull trillions of dollars out of the U.S. economy.

Will he let them? That's another question. If he doesn't, nobody will trust anything in the United States—anything connected to the U.S. dollar anymore. Right now, the entire ecosystem of the U.S.-led financial order, or disorder, is crumbling in front of our eyes. And it just comes back to the fact that Iran closed the Strait of Hormuz and enforced it very lightly—it hit a few ships that tried, right? If you like, Iran is now in control of the world's energy resources. It's tap on, tap off, tap on, tap off—you know, like a spigot. But that connects to the global financial markets and the global economy. Again, it's not just oil and gas going through there. It's food. It's commodities for living, right?

Tap on, tap off. And this in itself is a reason for many countries to push the U.S. to stop the war, right? The Americans have another pressure lever, which is the destruction of all their military infrastructure in this region. But not just that, Danny—sorry, I'm talking so much. There's a third element to this, too. How has the U.S. remained a hegemon? Because a lot of it is just thumping and power projecting through nonstop headlines, threats, you know, coercion and punishment, right? Like sanctions, etc. One could argue that Iran has, overnight, destroyed the U.S. secondary

sanctions regime. The United States Department of the Treasury was forced today to give India a 30-day extension on buying Russian gas.

That's going to have to be the case for everybody. Russia tried for four years to get this done; Iran did it in six days. You know, in six days—what's anyone going to do about secondary sanctions? Now they don't care. They have to have fuel to keep their economies running. But the most important thing—and here's a fourth element, sorry—is what this does to U.S. power: the sense that only the U.S. can protect you. And I'm not just talking about the Persian Gulf countries, but East Asian allies like South Korea and Japan. I mean, in one fell swoop, not only is all of the U.S. military infrastructure being destroyed in its allied states in the Persian Gulf, but the U.S. is unable to stop any of it.

Oh, we intercepted some things. Well, guess what? Your house is still burning, you know. But it's also made the Persian Gulf consider whether it's even worth having U.S. bases there ever, ever, ever again. And they've noticed that the Americans, when they're trying to grab more interceptors and radars from further afield to use in this war, are directing them to Israel, right? I mean, it's such a humiliation for the Arab countries that have stood up against Gaza—or not even just kept mum about the genocide, everything Israel and the U.S. have done in this region—only to have the U.S. kick them in the backside.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, no, I mean, this is extensive. And Charmaine, people do belittle it. You see it all over social media, and of course in the Western mainstream media—Iran, especially its retaliation toward Israel—because Iran sees Israel, I think rightfully so, as one big military base, one big forward operating center. And Israel, being a colony, does use what they claim are human shields. Their entire settler population is basically sitting on top of the Israeli military infrastructure. So people belittle this kind of response, where they're basically firing into Tel Aviv and causing pretty significant damage.

But there's that economic element you mentioned, Charmaine, that people don't appreciate as much. There are reports saying Israel's economy is hemorrhaging something like \$2.9 billion a day because, you know, when you see things like this, Charmaine, that's significant damage—and it's happening more than once per day. It's happening now 50, 60 times, with massive missile launches coming into Israel. And even if Israel intercepts a third of those, it's getting less and less every day. This kind of damage causes real problems—and this is just Israel. And you mentioned, I can show a graphic, Iran is hitting everywhere.

Iran has hit everywhere. It's basically struck every single country that has a U.S. military installation. Here we go—okay, it's not letting me—here we go. Every single country with a U.S. military base has seen those installations hit, and that has an economic impact. Qatar has shut off the gas—Qatar has shut off the gas. How long can that really last before Qatar ends up in a massive crisis? Not to mention Europe, which relies on Qatari gas to such a huge degree. Anyway, back to you, Charmaine.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

I'm not so worried about Israel being completely obliterated right now. As I was saying earlier, I contended that the U.S. military is what basically backs Israel. Israel does nothing without the U.S. military aiding or supporting it—meaning alongside it or behind it. You have to take out the U.S. military assets. Israeli planes can't get to Iran without refueling in the air. You take out the hardware as much as you can, and then Israel basically becomes a sitting duck, and you do to it what you will. So I think that comes down to, you know, which is the bigger goal? Which is the bigger get? I don't know—removing U.S. bases from the region forever.

Don't forget, many people in this region see Israel as the largest U.S. forward operating base in the world, okay? Save the best for last—I don't know. So, Iranians have this thing called tahdig, Danny. It's like when they cook rice in a rice cooker and there's that thick, crispy layer at the bottom. I don't know if you've ever had that, but children in Iran fight over it, okay? And there are people—we say you're the tahdig-first type, you know, the kind of person who eats your tahdig first on your plate, or the one who saves it for last. I've always thought the better people are the ones who save it for last. Israel's the tahdig, you know, in this case. I think also consider what's happening with Israel opening up a war front against Lebanon now, just out of nowhere.

And no, it turns out Hezbollah didn't instigate this attack. I think yesterday the IDF chief said they were going to do a full-scale attack just a few days later, which is what Hezbollah claims—they knew about it and decided to preempt it. I think what's happening there is insane. If you were being pummeled like this, would you open another war front? I don't know how their brains work. You know, I was talking to young people who were saying, "That makes no sense militarily," and they know nothing about military strategy. Literally opening up a new war front—of course, they believed Hezbollah was so depleted and weakened that they bought their own spin.

## **#Danny**

They really did. And there are admissions about this. Keep going—I'm going to pull up the admission too.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Okay, because what happens? All of a sudden, to their absolute amazement—other than Hezbollah sending missiles, drones, and rockets over the border willy-nilly—you have Hezbollah troops back south of the Litani River, not letting Israelis move an inch. And I say this because, I don't know if you remember, a year and a bit ago, before the ceasefire was declared, you had that awful Pager terrorist attack, followed by the walkie-talkie attack the next day. You had the assassination of Hassan Nasrallah, the Secretary General of Hezbollah. And, you know, the Israelis and others assumed their entire command structure would collapse.

But in fact, on the border with Israel, Hezbollah special forces—specifically the Radwan forces—were stopping Israelis from taking even an inch of territory. It was only the ceasefire that allowed Israeli troops to come in. Before that, they couldn't enter except for short ambushes and then run back across their borders. This was after all those atrocities wreaked on Lebanon and on the resistance. So right now, again, we're seeing Hezbollah troops south of the Litani, doing the same thing. This is extraordinary. At the same time, the entire population of the south and the southern suburb of Beirut has been displaced. I think today one of the Lebanese ministries said it was 500,000 people—and this happened literally overnight.

I was traveling outside the country, and I got a call from a friend of mine who'd stayed there before. When trouble happens, he just said, "It's 4 a.m., we've got to move now. Do you have a bedroom?" And it was literally all of the south. For some people, it took 16 hours to drive—the traffic was so dense. And the Lebanese government—we're hearing that they're sheltering people, they're providing shelter—but the kinds of shenanigans going on in Lebanon right now, Danny, it's disgusting. You have people, you have the head—okay, so the Lebanese Forces, they're a Christian, right-wing Christian militia and political party.

## **#Danny**

The Maronites—is that what they're called?

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Yeah, but not all Maronites are like that. I know Maronites who like Hezbollah, you know. When I first went to Lebanon in 2009, I was staying with a family that was part Syrian and part Shia in the southern suburb, and they hated Hezbollah. And the person taking me around the Palestinian refugee camps was a Maronite Christian woman who loved Hassan Nasrallah. So, you know, I understood that Lebanon is not simple. You can never quite wrap your head around it. But this guy, who's the head of basically the largest pro-U.S.—or pro-West—TV channel in Lebanon, said on national television, "I have reports that Hezbollah are hiding weapons in this hospital in Bint Jbeil." It's a very pro-resistance southern Lebanese town. He said that on national television as though to give the Israelis, you know, the freedom to blow up a hospital.

You know, I mean, the treachery of these people—they should literally be strung up. I just don't understand why. You know, when Hassan Nasrallah was alive in 2006, that happened—he came out after the victory and said to all Lebanese, "You are not allowed, even people who wanted vengeance for family members who were killed." A lot of Lebanese were killed in that war, and a lot were—sorry, I mean in the civil war, not 2006. A lot of them were killed by Lebanese collaborators who then fled over the border to Israel. And he said, "You're not allowed to touch a hair on the head of the family members of collaborators. We have a system of justice. You turn them over to the authorities, and that's it." And it was so noble. But sometimes I think a lot of people feel frustrated by this kind of well-behaved axis.

So right now we're seeing a great deal of treachery. The Israelis haven't launched the big strikes yet, in the sense that I think they've been taken aback by the resistance troops and their determination. So we'll see. Anyway, the point is, the Lebanese are asking, why isn't Iran hitting Israel harder? I think Israel is the tactic saved for last—or for next, rather—and it could happen any time. And I think it will be absolutely brutal. I think Iran gave signs of what they would do from the get-go, which is civilian targets, civilian infrastructure—everything was on the table. And that was the most important thing. It has resisted through three previous major operations against Israel. It has restrained itself to military targets only, and very few. But it's existential now.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, yeah, it is indeed existential. And, you know, the situation—I think the strategy is quite clear. Iran isn't even hiding it. They're saying they're exhausting all of their very old missiles, the ones they didn't even use during the 12-day war, some of them dating back more than ten years. They're going to launch all of those. I believe they said they're nearly done launching them, and in the coming days they'll start using more advanced weapons that will be completely uninterceptable. But I think the big problem Israel now faces—and really the entire region faces—is that their defense interceptors are going to go bye-bye. Iran has already hit two. You mentioned the radar, and I'll pull that up.

They hit the THAAD radar, which is an immense development that you at The Cradle reported on. They destroyed this advanced THAAD radar in Jordan. Now, I believe there are only about eleven THAAD missile interceptor systems in the entire world for the United States, and Iran, I believe, has already destroyed two of those in the region. Israel, I think, has one, and it keeps getting hit. So there's a big problem here, Sharmeen. In the coming days, with these "eyes" gone, it's going to be very hard to intercept. We saw during the 12-day war what happened—Israel had to say, "We need this to stop." What exactly could be different now, Sharmeen? It's the same situation, except worse, because now these layers of defenses that Israel and the United States thought they had are being taken out by Iranian missile fire. Yeah.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

I think this is the reason—for many years now, not just since Israel saw Iran's capabilities in Operation True Promise 1—that Israel has really not cared much about the nuclear issue. They wanted to go after Iran using the popular PR strategy of framing it around nuclear weapons, but actually, its missile program was the real priority. Because there are just no interceptors in the world for the Khorramshahr missile, for instance, or for Iran's hypersonics and whatever else—the things we haven't even seen yet, right? Yeah, I mean, I don't know how the U.S. is posturing so confidently about this. You know, I was watching and thinking, wow, this is how spin works. In the fog of war,

when you speak confidently, that's almost enough to make everyone say, "Okay, we're good, we're good." You know? It's not good. It's not good. The Israelis—if you want to know what's really happening, folks, okay, Americans watching this—go to the Hebrew media.

## **#Danny**

Yes. Literally. Israelis know how to panic, that's for sure.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

They know how to panic. They're not happy, and they're bashing each other—it's pretty awful. So yeah, that's all I have to say about that. I mean, take out radars, take out interceptors—it doesn't even matter, you know? The radar stuff matters a lot because you want to blind them. You want to blind your enemy, and that's a very, very important thing to do in the early days of any war. How much of this was detected through foreign help behind Iran, I don't know.

I don't even know that I buy the argument that Iran's getting great satellite or visual intel from the Chinese, because why do we even think Iran couldn't have built that capability itself? The Chinese may have allowed them, since Iran has an aerospace program and launches satellites into space—ostensibly to watch everything—but I'm sure, like with anything Iran does, there's sabotage and blocks on what they can actually do with it. So yeah, I think so far it's going along. I mean, Danny, where were we last Friday?

## **#Danny**

Yeah, yeah.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

The world has changed. But what we're looking at today—because we're in West Asia and we're pissed at the cradle, okay, about what's going on—I mean, we've been pissed since October 7, 2023, all right—is a tweet we put out today. I sent it to you, the U.S. stealth pilot.

## **#Danny**

Oh, right. Yeah, I'll pull that up.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

A U.S. stealth pilot who took off from Israel's Ovda Air Base forgot to turn off his transmitter on the way to Iran and was detected over Saudi Arabia. This was reported by Kan correspondent Itay Blumenthal. Israeli media is reporting it, and he cites Flightradar24. This came right after the Iranians publicly thanked Saudi Arabia for pledging not to allow its territory or airspace to be used in

attacks during the war. Now, here's the thing—he's citing Flightradar. That means everyone can see it. That's crazy. That's crazy. You know, in the world of regional diplomacy, you don't want to be caught in a dishonorable lie. The language of diplomacy in this region is, "my brother, my brother." You're virtual enemies, but you still talk that way—"my brother."

The Iranians thanked their brothers in Saudi Arabia—just yesterday. And don't forget, all these countries, all these Gulf countries, before any actual kinetic conflict, had said things like, "We're not going to allow people to use our territory or airspace." And then we saw U.S. missiles being launched from a ground launcher in the Gulf. So, you know, this "my brother, my brother" thing isn't going to work for long with the Iranians. This is going to have to be nipped in the bud right now, and we might see some Saudi targets in the next 24 hours as a result of this. This is completely amoral.

### **#Danny**

And it shows who's really in the driver's seat when it comes to these Gulf countries. It's not the so-called sovereign governments of the monarchies—it's the United States. And we're seeing that very, very clearly as this war goes on, Charmaine.

### **#Sharmine Narwani**

Yeah, but as this kind of thing comes out, I'm sure the Americans are twisting arms there. At some point, though, these rulers are going to say no to the Americans, very clearly.

### **#Danny**

They'll have to, or they won't survive.

### **#Sharmine Narwani**

Yeah, they'll have full support from their citizens for saying no to the Americans. I can't remember which war it was—was it Iraq I?—when there was so much animosity in Saudi Arabia toward U.S. troops and, I think, American women in uniform, you know, just traipsing around Saudi Arabia in the open like that, that the Saudis had to eject U.S. bases from the country. And then they crept back in a bit later. So it's not like there isn't a precedent. But right now, the Saudis can't make the argument that they need U.S. protection against Iran, because it's the opposite—the U.S. is drawing Iran into Saudi territory.

### **#Danny**

Yeah. Well, I wanted Charmaine to talk to you about this contrast between how the U.S. says it's going versus what we're seeing as clear evidence that there's a lot of confidence in Iran—not only

about the retaliation, but about where this war is going. Now, this isn't to belittle, of course, the fact that there are civilian casualties. The U.S. and Israel are doing what they do, which is targeting schools, hospitals—targeting civilian infrastructure—because they hope, both the U.S. and Israel, that Iran will break. Now, I want to play first this very unhinged White House video, essentially promoting the conflict in Iran, and you'll see exactly why I call it unhinged. Wake up, Danny.

### **#Speaker 03**

Welcome home, sir. Strength and honor. Strength and honor.

### **#Speaker 04**

What will you do without freedom?

### **#Speaker 03**

Mavericks in battle.

### **#Speaker 04**

You can't imagine what I'm capable of.

### **#Speaker 03**

Finishing this fight.

### **#Speaker 04**

Yeah, I'm thinking I'm back.

### **#Speaker 03**

I'm here to fight for truth and justice in the American way. I am the danger. Time to find out—maximum effort. Here it comes.

### **#Danny**

So that is an official White House press statement meant to promote what they claim is, as you could see from that mix of famous Hollywood films and TV shows, their effort to finish off Iran—and that everything is going exactly as planned in this so-called fight for freedom. And now CNN—Charmaine is in Iran right now. They were allowed to come in and film, and they had a different interpretation of what's happening there that I think should be noted.

## **#Speaker 05**

Quick break for a coffee along the way. We've been driving for several hours, and there are a couple of things we've noticed. Number one, all the shops are open. They're really well stocked, even with fresh things like fruits and vegetables. Coffee, obviously, is also available. And then the gas stations—there are no long lines. Fuel seems readily available, and you just don't see any sign of panic anywhere.

## **#Danny**

So I think that will come as a shock to U.S. and Israeli warmakers. And I think this one, to end this amalgamation, Charmaine, we also had—of course, there have been rumors about a Kurdish, U.S.-backed incursion or invasion into Iran, a ground offensive with ground troops. The U.S. has even talked back and forth about maybe sending ground troops to Iran. Well, Abbas Araghchi, the foreign minister of Iran, was asked on NBC about this, and here was his response. "Invasion in your country—hold on, sorry about that, let me rewind it. Are you afraid of a U.S. invasion in your country?" "No, we are waiting for them." "You are waiting for the U.S. military to invade with ground troops?"

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Yes, because we are confident we can confront them, and that would be a big disaster for them.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

So you're saying Iran is ready and willing to take on the U.S. military if there were to be ground troops?

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Well, we were more ready for this war than for the previous one.

## **#Danny**

So, there you have it, Charmaine. If confidence were a bluff, then Iran is carrying out the biggest bluff in the history of all wars. But it seems there's a real contrast between how the U.S. is framing this and how Iran is framing or reacting to it.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Do you know that thing? I mean, you've seen pop culture—people have aura, right? It's a big word that Gen Z uses, "aura." I feel like no matter how much high-tech stuff you're putting out there,

propaganda you're putting out there with, you know, your greatest Marvel characters and whatever, the shine has gone from these things. And, you know, so many people—contrast this—it was just a big propaganda video, and then that Araghchi little side smile, you know? And the shock, the shock of the host, is the best part. I mean, that has to be a meme that lasts a very, very long time. Every time the U.S. talks about going to war anywhere else, that one has to come out again because they just simply don't understand. It's like Mizrahi, the Israeli journalist that I quoted, says—you know, he says—we are witnessing history.

Iran is, to the surprise of everyone, messing up U.S. bases so thoroughly, so extensively, and so decisively that the world isn't ready to see it. That host isn't ready to see it, okay? Donald Trump is insisting—you know, we've had accounts now from behind the scenes in the lead-up to the war—that every time Trump was with his generals and they said something he didn't want to hear, he'd lose his mind and say, "No, give me a different answer." And this is what you get. What you have at the end of this is a clunky, rusty old American PR machine that's missed the mark. They come across as boomer-like to Gen Z now. It's like, "Oh, we can see through the cracks. Who are you trying to kid, right?" And then the Iranians are very subtle and to the point.

You know, no razzle-dazzle. I mean, in the propaganda war—well, first of all, honestly, Danny—one of the things that's most shocking about this is that the U.S. has never, never not done this. It's always set the stage for a war. It's always made sure public opinion was bought and paid for, fully propagandized, and that they had the majority of the population supporting a war before they went in. In this case, that was absolutely not true. A majority was against this war, and every day they vacillated on message. And, you know, you're there, you're watching it. So I don't see... I don't know. Sorry. I know there's a second and third part to your question, but it's gone out of my head because I can't get the host out of my head. You know, what do you mean? Yeah, I mean, it's—U.S. troops are coming, goddammit, you know?

## **#Danny**

Yeah, I mean, that's the... that's like the final boss, so to speak—the endgame of any war the U.S. wages, right? It's throwing everything you have short of—boots on the ground! Boots on the ground! And then saying... which is a big crisis, you know. And actually, for whatever you think of him, or of Iran, when he says it's going to be a disaster, that's not a view only Iran shares. That's a view a lot of the U.S. establishment shares. That's a view a lot of Americans share, given how unpopular this war is.

And this isn't to say—of course, here you have the whole CENTCOM page, right? If you go to CENTCOM, all you'll see is them hitting targets. So, you know, we can't verify the validity of these. We know there have been a lot of decoys hit as well. But this is to acknowledge that, yes, the U.S. is bombing Iran and the U.S. is hitting, quote-unquote, targets. But, Charmaine, when we see the

coverage, when we see CNN in Iran saying there isn't panic, that shows a level of preparation—a reaction that must be driving both the U.S. and Israel very, very mad. That's bad, not to mention what Iran can do militarily, which is happening too.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

I mean, I just want to say, I've always thought that if anything like what happens in West Asia happened in Western Europe or the United States, people would fall apart on day one. Because we have—well, we have centuries of invasion and of ousting the invaders, right? We ousted the Crusaders, we ousted everybody. And then they came back in a different formation. The region has been weak and weakened since colonial days, but it's always risen again. Right—Asia was where the global economy was. I mean, you know, global economy, global commerce, global trade—that's where it was born.

Then, through some aberration of history, it went west for a couple of hundred years. And guess what? The natural, organic way is swinging back to where all the resources are in the world. So there's a sort of—well, in the DNA of a lot of people in this region—it's just, you know, "We have to bear it, and better times will come." And then there's the faith element in Iran, especially the fact that, you know, ninety-something percent of Iranians are Shia Muslims who have a strong element of rejecting injustice, which is core to their Shia value system—rejecting injustice, sacrificing to overthrow those who are, you know, the evil ones, the evildoers, right?

So, sacrifice, martyrdom—look at how the Supreme Leader of Iran spoke in those days, right? I think some of the speeches that went around Western media and were translated—he said things like, "I get my honor and my dignity from you, the people," or "Why would I scurry away to some hiding place when my people can't save themselves?" Right? I mean, it's a whole different way of thinking, and it's civilizational. And when people talk about a country like Iran—2,500-plus years old—compared to the U.S., 250 years old, going, you know, "whoop, whoop, whoop," right? And "boots on the ground," and like, you know, "yippee-ki-yay." It's just—I don't know—it's immature, right? It's just immature.

It's like we've been dazzled by the pyrotechnics of technology and the dazzle of it—and the propagandizing of it—for so long that we bought into it. We bought into this thing, you know, we bought into U.S. hegemony in a big way. But it's unraveling so fast now, it's quite astounding. And I will say, like most people who are anti-imperialist in the world, there's nothing against America—it's your government. I think increasingly we see that Americans have no way to change their government unless they rise up and die for it. OK? But we also have no way of stopping American wars unless Americans die. Either way, you're going to have to die for this calamity that's been wrought upon the world to stop.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, that's a really important point—especially to get across to those living in the United States who don't support this, which is the vast majority. And, you know, I think we have Charmaine, of course, and we can cover this over and over again, right? This is SenseCom. Again, I want to reiterate, this is SenseCom saying that Iran has hit all these targets and a lot of them have been destroyed. These bases are not operating to any degree. And we also have, which I think is a really important point here, an important oil facility in Bahrain—where you have citizens of Bahrain videotaping and cheering.

This is a scene you see all the time—missiles going overhead in Jordan, citizens there cheering. You have people videotaping as if it's something exciting to see, something to share around and show others. And it's that kind of atmosphere, I think, that's causing a lot of concern for the United States. I just want to pull up how Donald Trump has been taking it in particular, because he wrote this—he's doubling down. You said you're surprised at how the U.S. sounds so confident. Well, Donald Trump's very unhinged social media posts here are calling for unconditional surrender, saying it's the only time there will be a deal and that there's going to be a great future for Iran.

We're going to make it great again. That's what we're doing. There's a lot of coping, I think, happening here. In the Time magazine article where he was interviewed, he was asked whether Americans should worry about retaliation. He said, "I guess, but I think they're worried about that all the time. We think about it all the time. We plan for it. But, yeah, we expect some things. Like I said, people will die. When you go to war, people will die." But the message, Charmaine, is very mixed because you have Republicans—his own party—contradicting him all the time. He's calling it a war, and you have Mike Johnson here who doesn't want to call it a war.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

We just had an important series of votes on the House floor. As you know, the War Powers Resolution failed. That's the right result. We are not at war, and we have no intention of being at war. The President and the Department of Defense have made this very clear. The Department of Defense has made it very clear. This is a limited operation—limited in its scope and duration.

## **#Danny**

So it's a limited operation, but then you had Trump, in an unhinged manner, talking about how people die in war—Americans he's talking about. So this is a very... I think there's a big crisis emerging that a lot of people aren't talking about. You had—I believe it was a former Marine, I'm not sure if he was a congressperson—he had his arm broken.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Yeah, I saw that video. He was in a school uniform, and he wasn't yelling or hysterical. I think a congressperson broke his arm. He was like, "You're doing this to a U.S. Marine, you know."

## **#Danny**

Right. I'll find it, but you go ahead and continue.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Yeah. You know, war is unpredictable. There are highs and lows depending on what side you're on, right? There are battles within wars—some you lose, some you win. In this sense, I cannot see an American win at all. I mean, at all. And why is that? Well, they've lost everything they have in this region militarily, right? So far, okay? Iran has shown that the U.S. controls nothing in the Persian Gulf—that it's Iran that controls whether there's movement of vessels, shipping, whether there's economic activity in the Persian Gulf or not. It is, by the way, the biggest littoral state of the Persian Gulf, meaning it has the longest contiguous border on the Persian Gulf of any of the countries in that area.

What we're seeing is Israel being hammered. This was never supposed to be an image we'd see, and now Israel's being hit in all its vulnerabilities—and that's only going to increase. I don't see any win scenario for the U.S., unless every speck of Iran is destroyed. And how is that a win for the U.S.? But worse still, as this war is waged by the Americans, Americans themselves are turning on their government—not just the government, but all aspects of it, Democrat or Republican, right? It comes at a time when the discourse in America is about the Epstein elite. Right. It's everywhere. Nobody—I mean, it just hasn't stopped. This is Trump's biggest nightmare.

This is the, you know, Western elite's biggest nightmare—or the global elite's, for that matter. They're all somehow involved, whether they participated in the rape or the eating of babies or, you know, who knows what. It's kind of like what happened with Harvey Weinstein, right? You may not have been raped by him, or you may not have known someone who was, but you knew it was going on. You know what I mean? So they're all complicit. The rot is at the top. And how can a country wage a war like this when it's rotting from within? It has the biggest budget deficit in global history, which is galloping along, right? It's split down the middle, and the sides aren't just Republican and Democrat.

They're pro-Israel and anti-Israel. There are so many things now—it's the color of your skin, whether you're a real American or not. It's kind of like the empire has already rotted. And this war may be the nail in its coffin. So for anyone who thinks I'm being too jubilant—well, we're journalists, okay? When you do this 24/7 and you can't stop reading the news, even in peacetime, and then a war breaks out, the adrenaline is so crazy you literally can't sleep. You've got to laugh at things sometimes, okay? So please excuse me for not being so serious all the time.

## **#Danny**

I mean, the Iranian people—if we look at their leadership—they're putting on, well, if we think it's just a face, which I don't think it is. I don't think we see Iran resorting to bluffs or lies. When Arachi

is on television, he's speaking a very particular kind of message. Whether you want to believe it or not, that's up to you. But I think the results are showing exactly where the panic, the frustration, and the inconsistency lie.

I think that's a big one—where you have literally the same administration, the same political party, saying different things all the time, and then publishing videos claiming, in very, very low resolution, that they're hitting all kinds of targets. But we've already seen, over and over again, how good Iran is. If you want to acknowledge something Iran is doing, they have decoys everywhere, and they've made it a humiliation. I want to play this video, though, of the Marine who was absolutely attacked by a U.S. senator. This was Ryan McGinnis, who was literally just protesting the war. And here's how he was treated. This doesn't look like an administration or a government that's confident about its position. Here we go.

### **#Speaker 04**

No one wants to fight for Israel. His hand—his hand. His hand.

### **#Speaker 03**

Sir, sir.

### **#Speaker 04**

Let go of his hand. The senator broke his hand. The senator broke his hand. A sitting U.S. senator just broke the hand of a Marine. Oh, there you have it.

### **#Danny**

Charming. I mean, your reaction. This is the state of things around this war. There isn't a consensus in the U.S. political establishment about it. Many are trying to double down. Of course, the Democrats are being very feckless about it, allowing this to go on with very little protest. But at the same time, we see there are many holes in this that are only going to get wider as the crises mount.

### **#Sharmine Narwani**

You know, I just—something that might be shocking to people who know me and my politics for many years—I have a real soft spot for veterans, even American ones. I mean, actually, of all wars, these are usually young men and women who have either been brought up in a military culture or, you know, sign up with their armies for various reasons, if not drafted, and then become pawns—absolute pawns—whose lives are completely ruined. I have to say, the number of American and

Israeli soldiers who kill themselves—you do not see that in Iran. You did not see that with the Syrian army under Bashar al-Assad. You do not see that with Hezbollah. You do not see that with the Russian army. You do not see that with the PLA. And the reason is, they don't fight useless wars.

They fight real wars, you know—wars in the old sense. The kings always rode into battle, leading their troops. The king wasn't protected from the war; he would ride into battle, and war would therefore only happen when it was necessary for protection. Well, of course, there were those who tried to—what's it called?—you know, the expansionist wars and the wars of conquest. That's another thing. In this region, a lot of the wars are defensive, and nobody's going to feel bad about what happens during war. But what these young Americans have to experience—they go into a foreign land, the climate is different, everything's different. You know, they complain they're not getting the right shielding and this and that, right, from their multi-trillion-dollar budgets that they have.

And they're pawns, you know. All the American presidents who sanction war—they're not on the front line. They never go unless they're super protected. In my experience, I was not only married to a war veteran, but I also did projects on veterans in college. I have a great deal of sympathy for them. When I was living in Washington, D.C. for many years, I always found the U.S. military guys much more sage than the civilian sector. Okay? Because the U.S. military always games scenarios—they always put themselves in those situations. I mean, when I did the Model United Nations in college, West Point, right? West Point's topic that year was Libya.

Do you know what I mean? They actually thrust themselves into the adversary's mind. They learn things. They—they become more humble because they learn from the inside, okay? They're supposed to question strategy. I don't know if that exists in the U.S. military anymore. I feel for these characters, you know, and I think more and more veterans—we don't hear loudly enough from veterans—but veterans are usually the most anti-war people I've met in the United States. So I think seeing this man in full uniform, not screaming and shouting, okay, but his hand broke—that is a real tragedy, I think. Yeah, I really don't know how much more to say about that. I found it disgusting. I find the American government disgusting.

I find American leaders disgusting and vile, and American billionaires disgusting and vile. And when Americans go, "Oh, why did Jack Ma disappear? The Chinese government took him and, like, beat some sense into him," you know? Like, "How dare they? That's not free and democratic." You guys complain about your billionaires all day long. So when China reminds their billionaires, "Hang on, you're not bigger than the state. You're not bigger than the greater good and the communal good," right? Oh, they've done something wrong. I think—I don't know—I don't think there are any answers for America right now. I've always contended, I mean, for almost 20 years now, that America needs to crash and burn and be rebuilt, because there are no Band-Aid solutions for this one.

**#Danny**

Yeah, well, you know, I think the question is, what role will people in the United States play in whether—and, you know, what—that crash and burn looks like? We know that the economic system always crashes. And we know that this war, Charmaine—we covered it all here today, or at least we covered a lot of it. We know where the holes are. We know where the crises are mounting. We know, from the economic to the military side to the political side, there are going to be mounting crises the longer this goes on. And the question will be, how do people in the United States react to this?

And how do they, you know, do exactly that? Do they crash and burn and build something new? Hell, I'm not, you know, I'm not "rah, rah, rah" about U.S. history, the initial founding, all of that. But hell, even the Founding Fathers—Thomas Jefferson said, if the government isn't working for you, then you've got to get a new government. And that's kind of what's happening right now. The government is not working for people in the United States. Of course, it's beholden to all the forces you just mentioned. Yeah.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Look, just as we're experiencing something new—take a Global South country that's wiping out U.S. military bases and assets in this region—we're like, "Oh, whoa, whoa." You know, we haven't seen that before. There are a lot of new things we're going to have to see, right? We've been taught to unsee. Let's be frank about that. There's nothing conspiratorial here. The fact is, the U.S. government and a lot of Western governments, especially as their economies have declined politically, have sought to control and sway the views of their populations. They talk openly about it.

It's not like, you know, DARPA—the technology arm of the U.S. Department of Defense—has developed tools where U.S. servicemen can have ten different personalities online, and these tools are deployed to sway perceptions on social media, right? I mean, this is open-source information. So I would say, what the Americans were telling us at the beginning of the Arab Spring—they were blaring from their headlines that the fear barrier had been broken. "Oh, look, in Egypt the fear barrier has been broken. In Syria the fear barrier has been broken. In Libya the fear—" I mean, it just went on and on. And the fact is, those words are compelling. They make you think about what you're doing in that moment, and you're like, "You're right, I have no fear now," right? And a new narrative is set: you need to jump over your fear barrier.

What are you going to do? I mean, what are they going to do—shoot Americans? Yeah, they will. They will. Okay, and then they'll have to stop, because the American population is the most well-armed population in the world. Okay, what did you buy those things for? Surely not to kill every moose in America. There's a reason you're armed. I don't know how this is going to go. I mean, obviously, peaceful is best, but I think you have the most militarized U.S. government and establishment in its history, perhaps. In the early days, it was more—I don't know. And yet you also have the most militarized public, right? And the only thing that can change that is the fear barrier in America.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, I think this is a good place to conclude, Charmaine, because there's going to be a lot more updating needed as this war goes on and we see the trajectory clear up more and more as these crises mount. I want to make sure everybody knows I'm going to pull up all the Super Chats and the new members—I really appreciate all that support. But I also want to make sure everyone knows to go to the video description after the show and check out The Cradle. You can support The Cradle via the donation button on their website, so be sure to do that. Hit the like button as you go, and there's also the "please support this channel" link in the video description as well. Sharmeen, is there anything you want to say before we— Yeah, I just want to say, since Saturday, since the onset of the war, The Cradle's YouTube channel—once a day at, I guess, 8 p.m. Beirut time, which is...

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Probably 1 p.m. U.S. time, Eastern Standard Time, they're giving a recap of the day's events and the war's developments. So for anyone who wants to dive really deep into the weeds of what's happening in West Asia, we welcome you.

## **#Danny**

Great, and there was one question here—I don't know if it was meant to be ironic. Will the U.S. use Iron Beam? Will Israel use the Iron Beam instead? Not sure what that means. Oh, it's a thing.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Yeah, it's a thing. We actually did an article about it on The Cradle, but I can't remember much of it because it was a few years ago—before all this. The Iron Beam is supposed to be like a laser-beam interceptor, right? I don't think it's ever been used yet; I think it's just been tested. But, you know, we'll see. Just so you know, it's a real thing.

## **#Danny**

Great, and there was one question about the support that Iran is getting in the world—that much of the world seems to be behind Iran right now. What has shifted this? I think we covered that pretty well, but if there's any comment you want to make on it, go ahead.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Um, Iran so far is making every attempt—and has made it clear—that they're going to do this on their own. I don't know, Danny, if you saw the social media posts or the articles about Chinese netizens calling and contacting the Iranian embassy in Beijing to donate. And Iran's like, "Thank you very much, kind people, but we really don't need that kind of help right now." They've turned it

down. I mean, the Russians said—I think it was the Kremlin, the other day or the day before—that the Iranians have not asked for their help yet. Iran does have ready-access partners in the region. The Iraqi resistance is helping, but I don't know; I don't think that's guided by Iran. Iraq has its own things to address with the Americans and the American military. They do, I would say they do. And Hezbollah knows that Israel was going to attack all of Lebanon, so that started kind of organically on its own—potentially nothing to do with Iran. So Iran already has, and Yemen hasn't even—Ansar Allah in Yemen hasn't even started. I can't wait for that one.

## **#Danny**

I wanted to mention this—and we know it's coming. People on social media have been wondering: if the Strait of Hormuz is closed, can the Bab al-Mandab Strait in the Red Sea be used to make up for those losses? Yes.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

And you can imagine a choke point here and a choke point there.

## **#Danny**

I think Yemen is waiting. My prediction is that Yemen is waiting for the effects of Iran's own capacity to slow down activity in the Strait of Hormuz. Then, when there's a shift—when they start to see a lot of activity coming out of the region from the Red Sea—they'll strike. People don't understand how important it is to have that element of surprise. It's not about saying, "Okay, we're going to do it now," but doing it when it hurts the most, when there's heavy reliance. You don't want to tell the companies, the insurance firms, all of them, "Oh yeah, you're going to do this now." No—you do it when it's going to hurt the most, and it's going to be a surprise. I think that's what's coming down the line as the economy and the world situation get worse.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

You know, I mean, we were talking about aura earlier. I have to say, in the last two and a half years, the player with aura in West Asia is Yemen. We're still trying to figure out a great T-shirt caption, because we have merch at The Cradle for this, but we can't quite capture it yet. We're so, you know, kind of adrenaline-charged about this, as I was saying earlier. And we said, why Yemen? What is Yemen thinking? So we decided to call someone in Ansar Allah—a political bureau member—and we have an article, was it out yesterday or today, quoting him. And, you know, as usual in times of conflict, it's really hard to get statements from officials. He said, "We are in this war, but when we're going to turn on our thing depends on our leadership."

## **#Danny**

Yeah, fingers on the trigger.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

Yeah, but again, I don't think this is going to be Iran calling on Saralan, saying, "Can you help us with this?" That's not how Iran wants to wage this war. For your viewers who may not understand, Operations True Promise 1, 2, and 3 were nothing for Iran. Iran kept saying—and believe what Iran says—they've continuously said, "We've been preparing for 40 years for a war with the United States, because they're the ones who have their eye on us. We're preparing for war with a superpower. Israel's just a sideshow, right?"

And now you can see the preparation unfolding. I think Iran has built the capabilities and the asymmetrical strategies and tactics to fight a superpower war. So for it to then call on Russia, China, and God knows who else for help—it's not the look it's going for, if you want to put it that way. So, a lot less to see. And I'm sure we'll be covering every twist and turn on our respective channels. Danny, by the way, I love being on your show. I don't know, I just feel like there's such a... Let's do it.

## **#Danny**

Let's do it.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

I just like the way our conversation flows.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, no, I mean, you know, this channel is really dedicated to putting out a perspective that people may not get—and definitely don't get in the Western mainstream. But even in alternative media, they may not get it either. You know, and I've been saying, people have said, "Charmaine, Danny, what do you have to say for yourself? Hezbollah—gone. Iran—you know, it's Operation True Promise, they didn't, no deterrence. Gaza—completely, utterly a disaster. All of this." And then now you see, in this moment, the resistance is very much in play everywhere. And it goes to show that there's an adage this channel will never go against, because I think history just bears out this fact: resistance does not... you don't kill actual resistance.

It can ebb, it can flow, it can face setbacks. But when there's a moment to strike, like Iran is right now, you'll see it strike. And you'll see exactly what people have spent decades of blood, sweat, and tears fighting for—their independence and sovereignty, and whatever system they want to build for

themselves in their own self-determined way. That is, I think, a big point that nobody's getting. But yeah, I try to have people on who respect that, who understand this, and who will at least engage with it. Because, of course, we know mainstream media doesn't want to engage with this.

## **#Sharmine Narwani**

No, it's why people are watching us, you know? They know the truth of it—they really do. I'm constantly... For people, you know, people say—like politicians who say the masses are stupid—I think the masses sense things well before leaders do. Honestly, I do. So yeah, good for us, right? For doing the work we do.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, seriously, we should all give ourselves pats on the back. And of course, thanks to everyone watching our programs. Without further ado, everyone, we're going to end here. Hit the like button before you go. The Cradle is in the video description—check it out after you hit the like button. And then, of course, all the places to support this show are there, too. Thanks to everyone who watched, gave a super chat, and everyone who didn't—we appreciate you, too. Until next time, I'll see you tomorrow at 1 p.m. Eastern Time, March 7th, with Stanislav Kropivnik, who'll give a further military update on what's going on overnight. All right, everybody, catch you on the next update. Bye-bye.