

US Gets Smashed. Irrecoverable Losses.

Trump/Hegseth Panik | Krapivnik

The US War of Aggression against Iran is escalating into a scenario worse than Vietnam... within 3 weeks! The level of damage done to US facilities in the region is unprecedented and Iran will never allow those assets back. What's next for an empire drunk on imaginary military power? I'm speaking to Stas Krapivnik for an update on the war. Support us on Substack: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com> Shop: <https://neutralitystudies-shop.fourthwall.com>

#Pascal

Welcome back to Neutrality Studies. My name is Pascal Lottaz, and today we've got Stas Krapivnik back—a former U.S. Army officer and a great source of insights on all things Russia and war. Stas, welcome back.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Thank you. I can do economics too.

#Pascal

You can do a lot of things, you really can. But you're always brilliant when it comes to connecting the dots between these different fields. So, can we maybe start—and it's really sad that we have to—because there's so much violence at the moment, international violence. But can you give us a bit of an update on your reading of where the Iran war is going? Because it seems to me Donald Trump's not very happy with it anymore, is he?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Well, I don't know what you're talking about. The Iran war ended—what day are we on right now? Yeah, the Iran war ended 14 days ago because Trump has told us he's beaten Iran. Iran has nothing. Iran doesn't do anything. I don't know why they haven't surrendered, because, you know, he "formally" Iran totally out of existence every single day. And by the way, anything that's burning that's not Iranian is all artificial intelligence—that's what we heard yesterday from Trump, that it's all artificial intelligence. And if the media keeps putting that out on the news, they're going to get punished for it because it's fake news. It's all false news.

#Pascal

Very desperate, isn't he? With all the statements he's making—on Truth Social, in front of the camera—they're sounding so desperate now. I mean, trying to enlist the Europeans, the Chinese, and the Japanese in reopening the Strait of Hormuz—it's an insane idea to start with.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

I don't think there was any trying. I think that was more like ordering the vassals—including, I guess, the Chinese, who are supposed to be vassals too. They'll have it really bad if they don't do what, you know, the god emperor demands. Yeah, you're right. And plus, if you look at his posts, they're getting longer and more babbling. I do believe the stress is showing. I think he was already starting to show at least early stages of dementia. Because, I mean, you can look at his first term and then at the beginning of his second term—the way he spoke. He used much simpler words, simpler phrases, and he sounded more like a 13-, maybe 12-, or even 11-year-old kid than an adult.

I'm not saying he was ever the wisest or smartest man around—unless you ask him personally, or those who believe he's the anointed one. But you could see the degradation, the mental degradation. And, you know, if you're already going down that path, massive strain—especially massive strain when you're looking at the end of your presidency, when you're facing a lot of other problems—yeah, that's going to add to it. That's serious mental degradation. And he's babbling. I mean, in his Truth Social posts, he's babbling because he doesn't have a filter. He needs a filter. He needs a manager who takes what he wrote and says, “No, no, we're going to erase this, this, and this.”

He needs an editor or something. Well, he doesn't have one, so it goes straight from Trump's brain to your screen. And when he's out on stage, he's babbling. He's getting worse. I mean, I listened to his latest speech—I've never heard so much crap and so many lies packed into such a short time. I don't think the man said a single true word, except maybe an “a” or an “is.” Just a pack of lies, all meant to cover his own skin and back up Trump. And it's hilarious in one way, but very sad in another—and very dangerous. You've got a guy whose leadership is that mentally degenerated, right in front of you.

#Pascal

And on the other side, we have, you know, doctors and multiple PhDs—Mr. Arakci, Mr. Ali... not Abunim, sorry, Ali Sadeh—what's his name? Sorry, Ali, I forgot—Abu Sadeh. We've got the president, and so on. I mean, all of these people are keeping it incredibly together, and they're also giving a lot of interviews online, right? They're speaking very coherently about the war goals and how to implement them. And just recently there was a new interview on Sky News where the guy tried to push him on when they're going to start negotiating, and the Iranians keep saying, like, no, we forced the other side to stop. But they give these interviews in Tehran and invite U.S. and other foreign media in. And they're not afraid at all to do this publicly, even in the West. I mean, how are you reading this situation?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Well, first of all, it's bravery. Let's call it what it is—it's bravery. I don't see too many American presidents or Western European leaders who would risk their lives, literally risk their lives, going in a parade while the U.S. is dropping bombs on the edge of South Carolina. I'm actually surprised the U. S. didn't commit mass murder at one of these quad parades. I was expecting that. I think at that round only one woman was killed and a couple of people were injured because they were dropping them on the edges. It says a lot that they actually showed that much restraint and didn't just massacre the crowd.

Yeah, at first, I mean, you know, you see these leaders going to Kyiv, and for the life of me, I don't understand why Moscow allows it—because Moscow does allow it. They coordinate with Moscow. They're coming into Kyiv, and they coordinate their trip so nothing is flying in their direction. I always said, you know, wait till they're about twenty minutes out from the airport, start hitting the airport—scare them a bit, at least. Or, you know, if they're on a train, blow up the rail line ahead of them a couple of kilometers so they'll stop, then blow it behind them and let them walk their way out.

They'll get the message real quick, because I haven't actually touched them. But they know they're not going to be touched—they've got Russian guarantees. That's why they go in there. It's the whole plethora of stars from Western politics and Hollywood. They're all coming in to have their little vacation tour in Kyiv with Zelensky. And by the way, according to USAID—at least from the few documents that were actually published, since the majority were never released, believe me—Julie, she got, what, like a million dollars for that trip. Angelina Jolie, the first one, got a million dollars. All these people are getting paid to answer the report. So that's the difference.

They know they're not going to hit him. Versus people who are walking out—literally—they don't know if they're ever going to get home. But these are their people, and they're showing bravery. And then you look at Netanyahu—if he's still alive—he goes into a bunker. Yeah. And the main bunker, by the way, it's the same one underneath the hospital. So, a little bit of human shields with your own people. Meanwhile, his wife and 29-year-old son are off living a good life in Miami. Yeah, this is Western leadership. This is modern Western leadership. They make a good show of things and virtue-signal, but they're not going to risk their own necks.

#Pascal

Yeah, that's a huge difference. Hey, very brief intermission—because I was recently banned from YouTube. And although I'm back, this could happen again anytime. So please consider subscribing not only here, but also to my mailing list on Substack. That's pascallottaz.substack.com. The link's going to be in the description below. And now, back to the video. Do you put any faith in these kinds of rumors circulating right now—that Netanyahu might be dead? Because we've seen some weird

videos of him showing up with six fingers, and we haven't seen any credible evidence of him for a week or two. Do you think any of this could be remotely real?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Oh, you mean like when he was drinking coffee—except he didn't have any of his wrinkles, they were all gone, his skin was smooth like a little baby's, the coffee wasn't disappearing or sloshing around, and in all these other images his teeth kept disappearing.

#Pascal

All of this could just be people trolling him, right? But he's probably tucked away somewhere in a bunker—which, I mean, let's be honest, would be the sensible thing to do—but...

#Stanislav Krapivnik

I don't know. I can't comment on that because I simply don't know. I mean, the videos are AI fakes—that's obvious enough. They've become memes, that's obvious enough. Is he actually alive? I don't know. But, you know, even if he's gone to whatever just rewards he's gotten somewhere—hopefully that's nice and warm—for all the murder he's spread, there are others in line. I mean, even if they got him, they didn't get the rest of the government. And again, just like any established government, it's not a one-man party. There are other people involved. He may be the head, he may be the thinking group, but there's probably someone ready to take his place. That's how most governments run—they run on redundancy, human redundancy. Right, right.

#Pascal

Just like the Iranians can't be taken out by killing Ayatollah Khamenei, you can't take out Israel by taking out just Mr. Netanyahu. By the way, the man I was referring to earlier is Ali Larijani, the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran. These are highly capable people. So, where do you think they're taking this war now? The Strait of Hormuz—basically, the Iranians have said they're not completely closing it, right? I mean, ships of friendly nations can pass; they said so. The Iranians still have their own oil tankers passing through. So the U.S. really has anything but complete control over the region. Where is the war, militarily, going?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Yeah, as a matter of fact, Iran over the last—well, you know, four days—sorry, eighteen days, has actually exported about ten percent more oil than it normally does over such a period. Go figure that one out. And yesterday there was a Pakistani tanker that was allowed to go through and head to Pakistan with the oil. So yes, oil is still getting out. And the Saudis are getting some oil out through their pipeline to the Red Sea. But again, the vast, vast majority isn't going anywhere, and a lot of it's

been damaged. The infrastructure's been damaged. The U.S.—you know, when Trump said, "I did not destroy the oil infrastructure on Kharg Island"—well, first of all, that's not the only port Iran has. Iran has five ports; it's just the main one.

For oil. But he didn't do that either, because Iran had already said, "If you take ours out, we'll take out everybody's. If we go, we take everybody's infrastructure with us." And then what do you do when it's really destroyed? The damage that's already there is going to take a while to fix. Like it or not, that's how it is. And I think another thing nobody talks about is that the U.S. basically dropped its citizens there—"Survive the best you can." Well, in Saudi Arabia and all these areas, a very large chunk of the oil workers—we're talking engineers, highly skilled technicians—were Americans, or are Americans, many of them with their families. You think they're going to come back to that region? Hell no.

So you're going to have a very big deficit in capable workers—people who are knowledgeable and able to work in these facilities. Nobody's talking about that. That's a little further down the line, but it's going to be an issue too, along with a lot of other issues. Getting things back up and running to where they were before America's war of choice and aggression is going to be a lot more difficult than people think. Most people assume, well, the straits will open, they'll finally make peace, and everything will instantly start working. No, it won't. There will be delays in fixing things. There will be delays in getting people who can fix things. There will be delays in getting ships in and out. There's going to be a cascading effect from this. Most people don't realize it or don't think about it.

But if you do a little bit of brainstorming, what else is going to happen? There are a lot of issues—and that's if desalination plants don't become part of this whole game. The moment they do, the artificial entities known as the Gulf states all start to disappear very quickly. You could have a mass casualty event—people literally dying of thirst. And when I say "mass casualty," you're probably looking at forty, fifty, sixty million people who might die from thirst, because all those entities live totally off desalination plants. Now, I was in Dubai back in 2013 on a business trip, when I was director of supply chain Eurasia for Halliburton.

And I like historic places, so I was determined to go look for historic Dubai. I looked all over the internet trying to find some resources—nothing. What the hell? Got to Dubai, started talking to the locals. They're like, "Yeah, historic Dubai. Historic Dubai was a small mud-brick fort in a tiny little village with a tiny little fort. That was historic Dubai. It doesn't exist anymore. That's it." There was no historic Dubai. There's no great civilization in these areas—just tiny little warlords with tiny little fortresses. And the vast majority of the population, which wasn't that big to begin with, were nomads. That's it. All of this is artificially built.

All of this is artificially built on technologies and trade routes—which is, by the way, another point nobody's talking about. What happens when the food runs out? Dubai, the UAE, Qatar—they can't feed themselves. Okay, Saudi Arabia has wheat in the south at least, but it still has to import a lot of food. What happens when these other countries—well, they should be about now running out of

food. There are no imports coming in. I mean, you could bring things in by plane, but when you're dealing with, what, four million people you have to feed in Qatar alone? That's about three to three and a half million workers and maybe half a million locals. That's a lot of planes. That kind of produce usually comes in by ship.

#Pascal

And we are in an active war zone where missiles are flying around and flights are grounded. So people make stupid comments. I've read in the Swiss media about people wondering whether they should try to escape from Dubai or Qatar by taxi. Guys, have you looked at a map? Have you looked at where these places are? You can't just drive through a desert like you drive from Zurich to Paris. You just can't. But anyhow.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

You could, if you can get up to Riyadh. There are roads all the way down to Mecca and Medina. But yeah, I mean, first of all, you need to find a taxi driver. Second, that's a pretty long trek. Third, I don't know what it would cost you. But there's this other point: the U.S. has basically abandoned its civilian population. I mean, Russia has gotten its civilians out, Georgia has gotten its civilians out, and Russia was helping and is ready to continue helping. Other countries managed it. The U.S. just left its civilians there—there's no effort to get them out. As a matter of fact, you know, on day two—or was it day three?—I had a video in one of my updates. This journalist, he calls in while videotaping, he calls the emergency line that was set up for this by the State Department, the Ministry of International Affairs.

And there's the recording. You know, basically, don't count on the U.S. government to get you out—just survive the best you can. So the U.S. government... never mind the two thousand-some soldiers and civilians in the Green Zone and the other two bases in Iraq that have been hit. Nobody's talking about it, even though there are combat operations there every single day. Sooner or later, they're going to run out of provisions and ammunition—and then what? The Green Zone gets hit, and one of their Phalanx systems was destroyed two days ago. Those are the anti-aircraft, anti-missile systems you see—the little R2-D2-like units with a Gatling gun sticking out of them.

#Pascal

The Green Zone—that's the area in Iraq, right? In Baghdad.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

It's in Baghdad. It's a huge zone in the city, set up as a safe area for the embassy, corporate headquarters, and whoever else. Yeah, so one of their main defense points has been destroyed. There may be more by now. But they've been abandoned. And, you know, then there are the people

in Saudi Arabia. Believe me, if they work for Aramco or a lot of these other companies—I mean, I had a job offer from Aramco—professors, Americans, managers from different companies, there are a lot of people. It's not just oil and gas. And they're there with their families. They've all been left behind. "Survive the best you can." The U.S. could have formed convoys to get them to Jordan, at least, and then flown them out of Jordan or down to Egypt. They could have tried to get them up to Turkey—though that would be difficult. Well, I don't know, al-Jolani is their friend now, so he'd probably let them through. But they could have done something, and they've done nothing.

#Pascal

They don't know. But they still have it better than the poor souls now stuck in those bases—the ones right on the Gulf, right? According to you, right? You're the one who told me they didn't even bother to build proper bunkers in those bases.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Yeah, that was a shock when I found that out. You know, I spent my time in armor and infantry, and then, well, besides headquarters units, all officers go into staff sooner or later. But, you know, as an armor officer, as an infantry officer, the fact that they didn't build bunkers is mind-boggling. "What do you mean they didn't build bunkers?" I was talking to a friend of mine—I was doing an interview with him—Pascal Lottaz, who's pretty high up in Georgian society. He's a former infantry officer, first Soviet and then Georgian. And he's like, "Wait, what do you mean? I didn't hear you right. What do you mean?" It's the same reaction everybody from our background has—just, "What?" But yeah, they didn't build bunkers.

One, they were expecting this war to be very, very short. And two, there was absolute reliance and faith in the anti-air systems. Well, the anti-air systems, at best, are out of ammunition. At worst, they were destroyed along the way. And what I've heard is that now there's panic. The Saudis have told the American military, "Go screw yourself. We're not helping you. We're neutral. Survive the best you can." So they're cut off from that. There's talk about evacuating the bases—mass evacuation—and go where? I don't know. Plead for the Saudis to let them pass, because those bases are absolutely untenable. The Iranians are systematically destroying the infrastructure. They haven't started really working over the barracks and places like that yet, but they'll get to that sooner or later.

But these guys, yeah, they don't have bunkers. They didn't plan for this. It's insane. I mean, like I said, from somebody with my background, it's like, how do you not build a bunker? You start digging bunkers the moment you decide where your base is. You start digging bunkers, and then you start building everything else. You know, even Halliburton, Schlumberger—these types of companies in Iraq and other areas like that—they have bunkers on their bases. But yeah, the Air Force and Navy

types, they never built bunkers, which is insane. There may be some bases that have them, but as far as I know, they don't, which again is insane. And now they're suffering for their stupidity. What do you do? You've got no place to hide.

#Pascal

And now this morning, we also had a report that they're actually— I think it's the Gerald Ford, right? The aircraft carrier that's been out at sea for about ten months— and that they actually had a fire. They're saying the fire broke out in one of the laundry rooms, like from the laundromat drying stuff. Anyhow, fire on board; it took them a while, about three hours, to put it out. Let's suppose all of that is true and this isn't external damage, but that this thing is now starting to burn without even being attacked.

And apparently about 600 sailors were affected by that because their quarters got burned out. What does that tell us about the state of the U.S. Navy? I mean, they seem really strained—like, heavily strained. And Donald Trump is now ordering more people into the Indian Ocean, apparently. Alexander Mercouris is interpreting this as maybe not so much about the Strait of Hormuz, but more about trying to intercept Iranian oil tankers. But that's just a wild guess. Where do you see this going?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Well, you remember what I was telling you before about cascading systems. This is all part of it. I mean, an aircraft carrier—first of all, you know, an aircraft carrier is big. There are 5,000 people aboard, and they've been out to sea for 11 months, which is a massive strain on the human body and the human mind. But it's a big place. Now, look at those destroyers. They've been out there as escorts just as long. They've got crews of about 350 people on a much smaller piece of real estate. They're even more cooped up. Nobody's talking about those destroyers or the submarines that are there. But all those systems are highly technical and dependent on each other. And yeah, the crews are strained. I mean, think about it—being 11 months out at sea. Normally they're on six-month rotations. Eleven months is insane.

They haven't been to port in 11 months. It's a massive mental and physical strain on people. You know, if they've done stops, they're very short—just to refuel or reprovision. But people need a break. Physically, people need a break. You know, this is coming from a civilian—a guy who had five deferments for Vietnam. Trump, five deferments. The guy who said the people who ran Vietnam were all fools, all idiots, that they didn't know what they were doing. Master tactician Trump, who had five deferments, could've shown everybody what he was capable of, become an officer. Of course, he didn't, he wouldn't, and he won't. And neither will any member of his family. But, you know, this is abuse—just abuse of people. Even if there wasn't combat, even if this wasn't an illegal war, it's still just an abuse of people. You keep them out there—it's just wrong.

#Pascal

This is the situation even before these assets are being used. I mean, we're talking about this being a huge disaster for the United States now, in just the first half of week three. But they haven't even gone into combat yet. The state of the U.S. military forces seems to be much worse than we thought. Even we critical folks were like, "Ah, they're not going to be able to project that much force," but that they would project that much weakness is a huge surprise to me.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

You know, Tsahal, or the IDF—Tsahal is in Russian. The IDF was supposed to be the premier military force in the Middle East. Um, that is, until they went into Gaza and proved they weren't. They're far, far from it. You know, the thing about being a bully on any yard is you really tend not to get into fights. You might get into one or two fights to establish your reputation, and occasionally you might beat up on somebody small enough to keep that, quote, reputation. But you really don't want to risk fighting anybody who can actually do damage to you. Because even if you beat them, the damage they've done to you is going to show everyone else around you in that yard that, hey, he's not invincible. He's actually taken quite a few hits. Maybe I can take him, or maybe two or three of us can take him. Because, look, he's got cracks in his armor.

And that's exactly what the IDF showed in Gaza. It went in there, killed a lot of people. But two years later, you know, they're still fighting. They haven't been broken. And that shows you that, yeah, the IDF wasn't the big bad force everybody feared. They got themselves bogged down in South Lebanon. Sure, they're good at killing civilians, but they're not very good at fighting. And that's what the U.S. is now showing. Yeah, well, sure, little countries—we can beat up on them. But a regional power is absorbing everything we're throwing at it and hitting us back. And this infrastructure the U.S. built up over 30 years—it's been demobilized and degraded, basically destroyed, really, in the first four or five days. And now Iran is just systematically dismantling whatever's left. And there's nothing the U.S. can do about it except sit there and take it.

#Pascal

So what are they actually targeting? I didn't exactly follow, because it's hard to know—like, the United States and Israel don't exactly put that on the evening news, what kind of facilities came under attack. But from your sources, what do you know the Iranians are going after? Also, in the first two weeks, the Iranians just used their old missile stockpile, which is quite remarkable. And recently they've started using their newer ones, including loitering missiles—whatever that means—but apparently they're even harder to intercept. Can you give us an update on that front?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Yeah, the loitering is loitering munitions. Russia's been using those since day one. Basically, you put a missile up into the air and it just flies around because it's got enough fuel capacity. It flies around looking for a target. So you're not necessarily sending it knowing exactly what you want to hit—you're looking for a target of opportunity. It's flying around while you've got drones or infantry recon units out there in the bush. Obviously, that doesn't work quite as well in the Persian Gulf, but you've got drones looking for a target and munitions already in the air.

So you see a target—say, a tank or a staff car, something like that. Normally, you see it, you call it in, they launch, and by the time you get a chance to destroy it, it may already be gone. Here, you see it, you call it, and there's ammunition already flying around. It just goes in and takes it out. So you get a very fast response time. Like I said, Russia's been working with those for the last four years—very effective. So that's one thing. They're fighting. What we're seeing now is they're going into phase three. Phase one was cheap, old—well, not cheap, but older—stuff and older drones, old ballistics that were 15 or 20 years old.

They used them not to saturate enemy anti-aircraft—that's Phase 2. They used them to blind the West, or, well, not the West in this case—the U.S. and the Israelis—by taking out all those radars and constantly hammering, plus hitting the THAAD radars. Which, by the way, four or five days ago, videos came out of South Korea showing them at night, sneaking those systems out to get them on planes and fly them over to Israel. So they're stripping their assets out everywhere now. Thanks for pissing off China and North Korea, South Korea. We're gone. Bye-bye. Have a good life. We'll be back when this is over—maybe. And the same thing for Japan while we're at it. Thanks for being our patsy. We're gone now, so we'll see you when this is over. That can't leave those leaders in high spirits. It's like, well, now you know your place in the big hierarchy of things.

#Pascal

Israel rules. Just as a side note, the Japanese decided two years ago to start building their own missile defense system. They knew it would take ten years, so it's like, yeah, you're about eight years late. But that was already well understood two years ago. And that wasn't because of U.S. pressure—it was because they understood the U.S. isn't reliable. Anyway, a completely different theater. Please, let's continue with what's being hit and what the three phases are. So, phase two—overwhelming the U.S. system.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

So what happened was, the time of preparation for an attack went from around 40 or 45 minutes down to maybe five minutes, because those forward radar stations have been destroyed. The forward eyes are gone—those radars would've picked up the launch. So the moment the missiles start launching, they're already on the scan. If it's heading toward Israel or an American base farther in, they used to have 45 minutes to react. That's a huge amount of time. Now there are no radars to

pick anything up. The THAADs have been destroyed in Saudi Arabia—in other words, they're gone in Jordan too. There's no pickup. By the time you see them coming in, they're five minutes out.

Your reaction time is obviously minimal, so a lot of stuff starts to get through. It's still phase two—you're launching a lot of older equipment. You're going farther in, but now you're using it to soak up and overwhelm the anti-aircraft systems. Because not only are you drawing fire from missiles being launched to destroy your older stuff, but when they launch, the radars switch on. When the launchers fire, their positions are identified, and any follow-on drones or a secondary wave can now target those platforms. So now you're also destroying the actual anti-aircraft system infrastructure, not just using up their missiles. You're doing both—and degrading their defenses.

And once that's effectively done, then you move on to your expensive stuff. That's when you pull out the good toys and start hitting key infrastructure that would normally be defended. That's where we saw Hezbollah fire off about 200 missiles—something they normally wouldn't do in those numbers because they'd be intercepted. But they did it, and they flew, mostly unarmed, to their destinations. So yeah, I mean, this is where we're at now. And there's nothing the U.S. has that can stop this. There's nothing Israel has. Its systems are overwhelmed, its munitions are at minimal, critical levels. And as far as infrastructure in the Persian Gulf, we saw those five Strata tankers burning. This is what Iran is doing.

And you have somewhere—I don't know where, I couldn't even guess from where—they're getting satellite imagery. Because, you know, Donald Trump, by the way, has ordered all U.S. satellite companies to scrub everything from the last two weeks and not give out anything, or at least release it with a two-week delay. So the American companies are offline, but I don't know where they're getting it. Apparently, not only does Iran have a couple of satellites, but other countries on Iran's side have satellites too. A little satellite—I don't know, I didn't expect that. I just don't understand what's happening. This wasn't supposed to be like that. Possibly Russia is proxying the U.S.? How dare they? I mean, only America gets to proxy Russia—it can't go the other direction.

#Pascal

See that coming?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Absolutely. I'm shocked. I'm telling you, I'm shocked—shocked, I am.

#Pascal

I'm sorry, we shouldn't focus on Donald Trump because it's a decoy—a distraction from what's actually happening. The last video I watched on Twitter, from his press conference before we went online, shows him saying that no expert could have foreseen the Iranians striking the countries that

host U.S. military bases. That came out of the blue—nobody expected that. The level of it, I mean... okay, again, it's a distraction from what's really happening. It's just fantastic that that stuff is out there. So we've got all this cooperation going on. We've got the targeting.

We've also learned now, in the third week, that the Iranians were not only able to carry out this three-tiered attack strategy, but even with the U.S. pounding them—and they were pounded, they were also struck—it wasn't nearly enough to take away their capacity to keep going. So the Iranians still maintain that capability. And every single day the Pentagon is telling us—Pascal Lottaz is telling us—that all of Iran's war-making capacity has been destroyed: 95%, 96%, 97%. And yet these things keep flying. So that tells us a lot about the actual capacity of the Iranian military, doesn't it?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Well, what it tells you is that devious Russia has gone from washing machines to refrigerators to get the working chips—and coffee makers, and, you know, everything else. That's how they're feeding Iran their technology and keeping their drones flying.

#Pascal

That's right.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Because, you know, Russia was out of missiles and ammunition three, three and a half years ago.

#Pascal

That's going to shut down the motor lane. Yeah.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Yeah, and shovels—deadly shovels. I mean, it's like hypersonic shovels. So that technology has been shared. Iran is now moving into the next generation of hypersonic shovels. God help us all. They have multiple-warhead shovels on some of these ballistic missiles, as we've seen over Israel. You know, that's when a whole dozen shovels come flying at you at once.

#Pascal

But, you know, for anyone...

#Stanislav Krapivnik

And the latest insult, to try to undermine the Iranian government, is that Khamenei is gay. That's the best they can come up with. That literally is now the line to rhyme, because that will cause a revolution. These people—you look at it—it's kindergarten at its best.

#Pascal

No, but it's really difficult for us to keep a straight face. And everybody—if you're listening and you don't get the shovel reference—then you're probably very, very statistically unlikely to be on this channel, because you're probably too young. But I mean, there's just so much cynicism that we've had to endure over the last four years. And it really seems that, you know, we were talking about this, right, in an earlier episode with all the colleagues, that the West started believing its own lies.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

And this is the moment when it all comes together...

#Pascal

The fact that they did believe their own lies led them not only into the Ukraine proxy war, but now into the Iran war. And it turns out Iran is nothing like it was portrayed. Even really senior people in serious positions—not just Trump, but those below him within the military structures—seem to have believed the lies they told themselves.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

You know, like I said, the three big things that came out of yesterday from the U.S. are: A, no more satellite images; B, it's all AI; and C, Khamenei is gay.

#Pascal

Did they actually say that—about the gay thing? They actually said that? Yes, yes, yes.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

See, because he's gay, and you have to have a revolution. It's on X, it's on other platforms. Yes, absolutely—this will cause a revolution. We killed all of them; that didn't cause a revolution. Let's brainstorm quickly—what else have we got? I mean, this is the epitome of U.S. intelligence and the PR spirit, I guess, at this point in the conflict. This is how ludicrous they're getting. You know, there's grasping at straws, and then there's grasping at thin air—and this is the level they've reached. The best they can do is "he's gay."

#Pascal

But he fears that sort of... At the beginning of week number three, we're already that far into this desperation. Doesn't that mean we're getting dangerously close to maybe seeing the first nuke being used?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

From the U.S., no. From Israel, maybe. Of course, if Israel—ah, I missed one else, sorry. There was point four: everybody must come here and help us open the straits.

#Pascal

We're not going to do it ourselves, because that's dangerous.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

So bring your chips and do it. I'm sorry—that was the fourth point. I'll have all that in my update. So yeah, that was the fourth point. I'm sorry, I cheated everybody out of 25% of the points. So it's fake, no imaging, he's gay, and it's your duty to open the Straits of Hormuz. That's the takeaway from the last two days. It's like, really? This is how far it's all sunk. This is—well, you know, whatever his personal life, I'm pretty sure that's not going to affect the war effort at this point. Nobody else is going to come save your behinds in there. Everybody went, "Ah, thanks, we'll think about it next year." Oh, and now, by the way, part of that plea-slash-threat was: things will get bad for NATO if you don't come do this now.

#Pascal

Tell me—because you're sitting there—how's the Russian media reporting all of this? I mean, they must be having the time of their lives right now, right? Yeah.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Oh, yeah, it is. On the Russian side—I don't watch too much television; I don't have time. Actually, I've watched a little bit of it, but I really don't have the time. I read a lot of the stuff that comes out, though. And yeah, there are a few things with it. I mean, the ludicrousness of all this is just... The degradation of it all is amazing. It's not that the king doesn't have any clothes on—he doesn't have any skin on. He's gilded, and he doesn't have any skin on. You know, at this point, to make it a little crude, if he cuts and runs now, part of it is still going to be attached to him.

The longer he stays, the more gilded he becomes, because there's no way to win outside of nuking. And then you go into a whole different era that you really don't want to go into—possible counter-nukes from some of the Muslim states that have them. And by the way, that would be the green flag for every country that can to either start their own nuclear program or buy someone else's, like

Pakistan's or Korea's nukes. You're talking about mass nuclearization of the world. It's not even a matter of closing the gates after the horses have fled the barn.

#Pascal

It's like closing the gates after the barn's already burned down.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

You're still holding the gate. There's no war—that's what it would be. And Trump would more likely be walking out in handcuffs from the White House before it's all over, because his enemies are going to have a field day with him anyway. It's just a question of how badly you want to go down in history. Or he'd have to go full dictator mode. You know, it's Israel, on the other hand. But of course, if Israel does it—Israel has a nuclear power plant. It's not a very big one, but it's there, about a hundred kilometers south of Jerusalem. The point is, the whole country is pretty damn small.

If that nuclear power plant gets taken out—the heating, the backup electricity, the cooling systems—all of that goes down. And with Israel's air defense basically degraded to almost nothing, that's not hard to imagine. You'd have a nuclear meltdown, and that would contaminate a very large part of a very small country. So you'd still be looking at a huge area, not the majority, but still radioactive to some degree. And since it's not a very wet climate—the big plus of a wet climate is that sooner or later it washes out to sea—you don't even have that advantage.

#Pascal

Yeah.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

If you're in a desert environment, it doesn't wash out to sea. And every time the wind blows, everything that's still radioactive, that hasn't decayed out of existence, gets blown right back into the atmosphere. And everybody gets to breathe it, eat it, and drink it all over again.

#Pascal

So, yeah, the best protection Israel has against that scenario is actually the worldview of the Iranian leadership. When I talked to Mohammad Marandi, he said several times, "Look, Pascal, this is the land of Palestine. We have no intention of poisoning Palestine." So that's good for them, but it's extremely dangerous, of course. Maybe let's talk a little bit about not just what we can foresee, but how you think the developments coming from Russia and China—what that tells us. Two days ago, I had a discussion with a Chinese scholar that's not out yet, but I'll put it out Thursday or Friday this week.

He was making the point that when the war started, the Chinese were very pessimistic. He said that, in the Chinese view, the Iranians had always been too optimistic about the U.S. and their ability to negotiate with them, and so on. So they were very pessimistic and withheld some of the support they could have given because they didn't want to bet on a losing horse. Now that the Iranians are really kind of succeeding in their campaigns, he says the Chinese are becoming much more confident—adding more backup and, rhetorically, speaking out for Iran more, which they were very hesitant to do in the beginning. Is something similar happening in Russia?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Well, Russia was backing Iran as it was. So, does success breed success? Of course it does. You know, the great aid that helped the Soviet Union really kicked in during the Second World War. It happened when the British ambassador drove out of Moscow, up toward Kyiv—which at that point was about 120 kilometers north of Moscow, about 90 now; Moscow's growing. This was right after New Year's, following the death and destruction of a German division. It had been surrounded, it had been exterminated—I mean exterminated. And he telegraphed back to Churchill and Roosevelt, "I think they're going to win."

They're going to do this. And that's when Lend-Lease started coming in from the Americans—which was all paid for. And, by the way, the Mongolians, dollar-wise, gave just as much as the Americans did. If we're going to go down that road, they actually did. It was slightly different materials, but yeah. But success breeds success. "Oh, they've got a pretty damn good chance of winning this. Okay, we can back this now." Russia's been backing them as it is. That's why, you know, all the shock and awe—"Oh my God, they're giving coordinates!" You didn't realize that was going to happen.

But Russia is still actively providing equipment. Believe you me, you don't train MiG-29, Su-35, and S-400 operators and pilots in three or four months. Those people train for a year or more. So, make your own judgment about who's sitting behind the controls of those planes and the S-400 system—which, by the way, has been held back so far. Because the Americans—the B-2s—have flown in to some degree, but the majority of American and Israeli aircraft, including the B-52s, have not flown over Iran. No matter what they say about there being no air defense, there is air defense. There's at least one S-400 system out there somewhere, waiting.

So those B-52s come flying in right over Iran—easy, prime targets. I'd expect to see a few of them going down. So there's that. But yeah, I think China, from what I've heard, this may be happening. China's not only seeing that Iran can defeat, at least locally, the U.S., but it's also drawing other conclusions from it. They may be celebrating a reunification before the end of this year. That's something else, because Taiwan's got to be getting really nervous right now. The U.S. military's shown itself to be—at what level of capability? You know, the Lincoln had to run away. I mean, you can call it what you want, but the Lincoln had to run away. The F-35—I was talking with Colonel Wilkerson.

He's got a lot of information on Lockheed Martin's prime cash cow—the F-35. First of all, the F-35—for those who don't understand what it is—it's a plane that was supposed to do everything. So it does everything really, really badly. You know, can it make coffee? No, but it can fall out of the sky right on the spot. I mean, if it runs out of ammunition, it can bomb things just by falling straight down on them. There are a couple of videos that came out showing that. So it may have a coffee maker in there too, for all I know. I mean, it gets better. Not only are they insanely expensive, but Lockheed Martin, by contract—on avionics, propulsion, and certain other subsystems—has it specified that the U.S. military, and therefore the military of every other country that owns them, is not allowed to service those subsystems.

Only Lockheed Martin mechanics can service those subsystems. They charge five or six hundred dollars an hour. And to service them, obviously, they have to be on the aircraft carrier. So they're paying—I don't know how many thousands of dollars a day per person—that Lockheed Martin's making, and these guys are making, just for being there. That's insane, right? But what's even more insane is that the plane has a maximum bingo distance of about 500 kilometers. "Bingo" means it has to turn around or it runs out of fuel. And it can't—so half the fuel is gone. Five hundred kilometers is pretty damn short. I mean, the F-18, I think, is around 800 kilometers—seven hundred-something kilometers.

#Pascal

That's about the distance from Tokyo to Osaka. That's not far. That's only like a 40- or 20-minute flight.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Now, if it's going one way—if it doesn't have to return—it can go about 1,000 kilometers from point A to point B before the fuel runs out.

#Pascal

If you want to go bomb Iran, then you kind of need to come back.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Yeah, yeah. You kind of want to land somewhere other than, you know, inside Iran or out on the outskirts of Iran. So you have to have refueling stratoforces. Basically, the entire American air tanker fleet, the British air tanker fleet, and everybody else's are there. It's almost all concentrated there. So when they get destroyed, that's a hit—a pretty big hit. Basically, the U.S. has lost six of them. They're saying some of these can be repaired, but six of them in two days—one got shot down, and five got hit on the ground. Whether or not they can be repaired, that's not something that's going to happen with fire damage in one or two days. So, yeah, they're combat-ineffective because the

aircraft carrier has to stay far enough away that it doesn't get whacked, which means it's on the other side of Oman.

The Chinese satellites found them. And they really can't go very far in. Well, it gets better. Yes, how could it get better, Stas? Oh, strap in—it gets better. You know, the M1 Abrams as a tank, our standard rule of thumb was one hour of operation, two to three hours of maintenance, which is bad—already bad. Russian tanks take a lot less maintenance. This thing, if what Colonel Wilkerson told me is correct, they're looking at about ten to twenty hours of maintenance for every hour of operation. So basically, you can't fly multiple sorties with these things. You fly out once, you come back, and it's grounded for basically a day while they try to fix it. And talk about inefficient—this has got to be the most inefficient plane ever built. I mean, for its cost, for the cost of maintenance and everything else, it's incredible.

#Pascal

Just let me get this straight. So not only does the United States not have enough of these things, and they cost a hell of a lot of money, and the production capacity depends on China's willingness to export rare earths, but they also break almost immediately. After one hour of flight, you need thirty hours of maintenance. I mean, this is just a whole new level of decrepit military system, which I never thought the U.S. military-industrial complex was capable of being.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Two corrections. It doesn't necessarily mean they're great, but the whole system has to be reviewed, analyzed, tweaked, and somewhere it has to be fixed. And it takes about 20 hours to go through everything. So that seems to be what it is. Maybe Colonel Wilkerson heard it wrong, but he's got military sources, obviously. The man is very well connected, and I'm just passing on the information he told me. As far as—oh, correct, it's not rare earths, it's processed rare earths. The U.S. has tons of rare earths; they're not that rare. Only two of the 17 elements are actually very, very rare.

Now, there are trace elements and crystalline formations dominated by other minerals or metals, and they can be separated in different ways. It's expensive, it's dirty, and China's got 97% of the world's capacity. Russia has one plant, and it's doubling its capacity over the next two years. The rest of the world has about 2%. The U.S. has one plant that started doing it, and Trump was showing this magnet off because, in their pure form, they're highly magnetic. They're very good for electronics—particularly radar systems, imaging, X-ray imaging. Some of the elements are naturally radioactive.

So they're good for imaging, MRIs, things like that. All modern electronics use them. It's just that the U.S. can't mass-produce them in the quantities it needs for its missiles, guidance systems, planes, and big radar domes. So, yeah, there's that little bit of a problem. It's like saying, you know, the

Roman legions are great—we just don't have any steel production, so Carthage has to provide us with steel. Other than that, we'll conquer Carthage and keep them down. You've got little problems there. This is the same thing, just more modern. And by the way, steel came before iron—iron's a high-tech process.

#Pascal

People don't own steel. Again, about the way this war is developing—how long do you think the United States can physically keep attacking Iran?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Oh, that's a—well, they could keep dropping JDAMs on Iran for a long time. The U.S. has a lot of dumb iron bombs, and they're manufacturing guidance units and glide assemblies to attach to them. It's pretty cheap, all things considered. They could do it for a very, very long time. Effectiveness? Big question. Public support—they never even had a "rally around the flag" moment that the U.S. normally gets when it starts these wars. And very quickly, gas prices are heading toward their limit. There was at least one station in California already at \$8, but on average they're \$5-plus, and still going up. The EU is screaming and hollering, but of course the U.S. will just ignore it.

But since the U.S. could step in on the oil industry—at least inside the U.S.—they could impose export controls and price ceilings. They could. But then the donor class would be really, really upset, because they're making money off this. I'm just wondering, you know, the reason there was so much oil is because we've allowed Russia to sell its excess oil. We've allowed nobody else to do anything. The reason Russia had excess oil—and everybody else did too, if you look at the oil charts—for about three or four months before this started, oil prices had been going down. So a lot of companies held onto their oil instead of selling it. They put it on ships, in mobile storage facilities, and in land-based storage, waiting for the price to go up.

Oh boy, that price has gone up. So my question is, Barron Trump and the rest of these guys—how much do they buy stocks and bonds in the oil industry? That's happened before in other industries, and it's not limited to Trump. That's just the way the U.S. government works. Insider trading is illegal for everyone except Congress. Congress wrote itself out of that little bill, by the way. They literally have an exemption, so they know what's coming up, who's going to get the big contracts, and they buy up their stocks and dump the ones that won't. That's why Congress is full of millionaires and billionaires, even though most of them came in with upper-middle-class or lower-upper-class salaries.

And they're not making that much money as congressmen, you know, but yet they're all millionaires. So Congress is in the loop for that. And I'm sure, you know, who's going to say if Trump's closest associates were buying up stocks? You know, people can say it, but they can't prove it—or if they can prove it, they can't do anything about it, because there's always, you know, amnesty. So yeah,

you know, look, war is a racket. Even a losing war is still a racket. People are still making money. You're absolutely right, Pascal, but it's worse. It's not just a racket. Well, war is not necessarily always a racket. Sometimes it's necessary. Well, most of the time it is.

It at least has a good chunk of it. But the point here, too, is that for the U.S. and the military-industrial complex, they don't care if they win or lose. They don't. They're making money either way, so they're not even trying to win. It's just to prolong it—as long as possible—because they're making money. That's the end of it. They'd walk away tomorrow if the money went away. It's even worse. I mean, people are making money while there's a war, but at least they're trying to win it, trying to get something. When the people backing it don't give a damn—two decades in Afghanistan, seven trillion dollars spent—they didn't care if they won or not. They needed to extend it because they were making money off it.

#Pascal

Yeah, and if there's anything, you know, the United States doesn't lose wars. There are moments when it doesn't win them, but the military-industrial complex still makes a ton of money out of it. No, I mean, the U.S. didn't lose the Vietnam War—South Vietnam lost the Vietnam War. When you're eradicated from the map, that's certainly not going to happen, and they know it, and they're going to keep profiteering from it. Stas, this was, again, a good update and good insights. People who want to follow you should go to MrSlavicMan—Slavic with a K—on YouTube and on Telegram. Anywhere else they can find you?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Yeah, I've got a Substack—it's me, Zvi Grinic. And I'm also under Stanis Kropivnik. We can flip the whole name; we Russians like long names, okay? Unfortunately, I don't post enough on there, so, yeah—Stanis Kropivnik. But yeah, and Zvi Grinic, I'm using that just like you. I'm using it as a backup right now, uploading all my videos. I mean, the videos I'm uploading are older ones, obviously, because I've got a big backlog of them. But yeah, you never know if YouTube will block you or not, so...

#Pascal

Everybody, find Stas now—go on Substack, on X, on YouTube. Stas Kropivnik, thank you very much for your time today.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Thank you.