

Patrick Henningsen: Iran's Missile Bunkers Rebuilt in Record Time

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#Nima

Good. Nima, your audio—just your audio—is a little bit sloshy.

#Nima

Yeah, let me just check it out. That's better. It's okay? Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay. Let me start. Please follow Patrick on 21st Century Wire. You can go to his Substack, Patrick Henningsen. All the links are in the description of this video. You can access that and follow what Patrick's doing—he's doing an amazing job informing us. There's a lot of information you can find there. And Patrick, let me start with the latest ultimatum from Donald Trump. He's talking again about 48 hours before the hell comes.

You know, he's trying to intimidate Iranians. We've had this before—48 hours before, then five days, then 10 days. Right now we're back to 48 hours. What happened yesterday, I think, was basically different from what we've seen so far in this war—with fighter jets, with helicopters. And then the day before, we had more than 12 generals being, you know, dismissed from their positions, or they were forced to resign under the, you know, Secretary of War, B. Taxt. How do you see the situation right now? Let's start with this 48-hour ultimatum. What does it mean, in your opinion?

#Patrick

Well, I think we can draw a logical conclusion from the timing of this purge of military generals by the Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth. It's pretty obvious—the timing probably has to do with pushback from these generals about a ground invasion or putting U.S. troops on the ground. One of these generals was previously in command of the 82nd Airborne, which is said to be deployed for combat operations in Iran. So it's clear what's going on—there's pushback within the military.

There's no consensus in the U.S. military that this is a good idea—that this war, full stop, should continue to be prosecuted in this kind of ad hoc, ramshackle, make-it-up-as-you-go-along style that Pete Hegseth and the Trump administration are attempting. They're trying to rewrite the rulebook of

military engagement because they believe that, having arrived on the scene in 14 months, this is the beginning of history for them. But this is what happens when you put someone who's not qualified—probably Pete Hegseth's not even really qualified to lead a battalion in the U.S. military, based on his low rank and the fact that he was kicked out of the D.C. National Guard.

I mean, he would never—you know, he wouldn't even get a position in the U.S. military of any average rank. Yet he's been put in charge of the Pentagon at this very crucial time. That's probably why they're doubling down, because this is a political war now. For Donald Trump, it's a political war in the U.S., about legitimacy at home but also internationally. He's staked everything on all these different initiatives—economic wars and military wars—like the tariff war, for instance. His entire reputation, all of his tariff warfare, rests on this military operation, as well as his claim to power: to be the president for the economy, because he's supposedly a successful businessman.

As we can see, the results economically—at least for average Americans—are going to be really, really difficult, given the inflationary pressure from the spike in oil and the throttling of supplies to the global market out of the Persian Gulf, and the effect that's having on oil markets and economic activity across the board. So there's all of that going on now. I think the timing is very bad for the U.S., but it's a lose-lose, really. If they pull out, then Trump's humiliated, the U.S. is humiliated, the Fox News crowd is humiliated—and they just can't accept that. If they stay in, they're going to incur more losses. What we saw in the last 24 or 48 hours in terms of lost aircraft is nothing.

I mean, it's just the beginning. They've put boots on the ground. You multiply that by ten or twenty—that's what's going to happen. There's no real feasible military operation, and even if there were, we could talk about the likely insertion points and what the U.S. would pretend or hope to achieve—at least publicly—what trophy they could hold up after who knows how many days or weeks of combat operations inside Iran. But the fact remains, they don't really have any safe staging ground to mount operations. They don't have fallback positions. They don't have any protected supply lines or anything like that. They're banking on this idea that Iran's going to stand down and not do anything if they enter the country.

Iran's just going to defer to the almighty great force of the U.S. military, and the U.S. will do massive bombing runs all over Iran while they invade. That's the military plan. They're going to do saturation bombings with whatever they have left in terms of standoff munitions—which is probably not much—and that's how they're going to provide cover for their military insertion. They're hoping there's going to be absolutely no resistance from the Iranians. Whether it's going to be an insertion on the southeast coast, that's my best guess—not necessarily in the Persian Gulf. If anything, this was a probing. Potentially, you know, these are probing exercises around Kuwait.

But that's not where the U.S. is, in my opinion—probably not where they'd insert ground troops if they did. It's probably going to be somewhere else. It's not even necessarily Kharg Island. They may try, but it seems like the U.S. is better positioned to invade on the southeastern coast—around Chabahar and the Konarak coast, the Makran coastline of Iran. That seems like a more sensible

insertion point. Then they could utilize the CIA, which has been arming and funding the Baluchi terrorist militias in Baluchistan and trying to engineer a breakaway province there for many years. They'd probably activate them, and hopefully they'd join up with U.S. military positions. I mean, that would be the most logical plan from the United States' point of view.

So, I mean, there are a whole bunch of different aspects of this we could go into, including what was revealed over the last two days—that there are many, many layers of air defense. It's not just S-400-style systems along large perimeters repelling those kinds of air attacks. Maybe the U.S. has taken out quite a few radar systems, and Israel has as well. But that doesn't mean Iran doesn't have shorter-range air defense, and that's going to come into play as they move in closer with helicopters and more aircraft to do glide bombing and other strikes, because that's all the U.S. can do right now. They have to move in closer and use things like glide bombs to hit targets, because I believe they're running out of cruise missiles and standoff munitions.

So that means they're going to be in the firing line of lighter, more decentralized, and mobile air defenses—and even vulnerable to potential targeting from MANPADS and things like that. I think we saw some of that in the last 24 hours. I mean, that's just pretty basic common sense. They're going to take aircraft losses. How much can they take? This is already a huge political problem in America, believe it or not. A few aircraft losses could potentially delay, if not derail, the U.S. ground invasion—if enough political inertia builds from New York Times headlines about downed U.S. aircraft and missing pilots. That might be enough to deter this kind of reckless military operation by Donald Trump, Pete Hegseth, and the others. So, we'll see.

#Nima

I think they have to send these forces to Iran, as you mentioned, in the southern part of the country—basically the southeast or southwest, but generally the south. They have to send them in using helicopters. I don't know, how is that even possible? Are they going to rely on these Arab states to, you know, provide them with everything—going there, using their land, and then moving into Iran? That would be hugely problematic, in my opinion, because if that happens, Iran would destroy everything in those countries. That's something else entirely. You know, this is a new escalation. If the invasion happens—we've heard it before—the head of parliament in Iran said they're literally going to hit everything in those countries. And on the other hand, if they put troops on the ground, let's assume 50,000, that's the number we've heard so far, the number we've seen so far.

Together with air power, I think we're going to see a lot of these fighter jets being hit by the air defense system—not only because you mentioned the radars. The radars in Iran are mostly mobile; they're not fixed in one location. They move around, go into these underground cities, come out again, move, find targets, and send signals. This is the problem the United States is dealing with, because from the targets we've seen so far, they're basically blind to where these radars, missiles, and missile production sites actually are. They don't know. That's why they're hitting bridges and,

you know, pharmaceutical facilities in Iran. I think that's one of the basic problems for the United States. What do you make of it?

#Patrick

Yeah, I think there are always going to be logistical problems. There's also, you know, the fact that the Iranians can fire at aircraft even using visual technology—visual, infrared, heat-seeking, and all these other systems. Nima, this is exactly why the Russian Federation hasn't used its air force over Ukraine in four years. Imagine that. You look at the size of Russia's air force—fifth-generation fighters, very advanced, some of the best pilots in the world—who've run highly targeted air campaigns, even in very tight logistical situations like in Aleppo, for instance.

So Russia's well capable of running air campaigns, but they haven't in Ukraine. Why is that? Because of the risks. It's because of the risks. And America's going to face those same risks when they start moving in closer. See, what you have is the Trump administration—the currency for this presidency is memes. I'll tell you, it's memes, it's soundbites, headlines, tweets, and lies. They've been lying about this military campaign to the American public and to the world. They've been talking like the U. S. has been loitering over Iranian cities with aircraft the whole time. It's not true.

The majority of the attacks on Iran have been with long-distance cruise missiles and other standoff munitions, targeting from submarines or from U.S. destroyers parked well over 1,200 kilometers from the Iranian coast—so, at a safe distance. That's the majority. And then, of course, there's some high-altitude bombing, but only just. Now, because of the logistical problems with this, they'll have to move in closer in order to continue to, quote, "hit targets," and things like that. They're going to become more vulnerable to targeting from various levels and types of air defense. They've been able to avoid that so far, for the most part. And I think they've gotten overconfident.

And now they've realized it, and this is why it's going to be a problem. This is a huge political crisis right now. I'm telling you, when this hits the headlines of the New York Times, everyone's talking about it, and everyone's doubting Pete Hegseth—which they're doing now—and looking for different excuses or ways to remove him. Meanwhile, he's panicking and desperate because he's been given a do-or-die order from the Israeli lobby: you will prosecute this war, otherwise you're finished. So Pete Hegseth's career, his future, his ability to have a normal life and stay out of prison, really hinge on keeping this war going. In that sense, Pete Hegseth has become a kind of Zelensky character.

You know, sort of a clown, sort of a stage actor—he's a TV presenter. That's his main career, TV presenting. Like President Trump, he's a reality TV actor. And, you know, whatever they think they've carved out in the world of politics, they feel they have to double down. They have to keep this war going, like Zelensky, and they just want to keep it going indefinitely. This is suiting them. We can talk about why this is suiting the U.S. empire. I think this is the strategy the U.S. empire wants

in Iran, in the Persian Gulf, as well as in Ukraine, because it's having a net effect on the global energy market that, at least in the short term, has provided a tremendous amount of leverage for the United States.

Russia has banned gasoline exports because of the damage to its refineries and export facilities caused by Ukrainian drone attacks. That's happening in the background of all this. So the U.S. uses its proxy, which is Ukraine, to damage Russian export capacity—and successfully so. They've knocked it down 30%, possibly 40% at the moment. Until it's repaired, that will take months. And Israel has knocked out Iranian capacity, and then, in retaliation, Iran has knocked out Gulf capacity. So between the U.S. and Israel, they've initiated a kind of downgrading, if you will, of the global oil and gas export market. And the direct beneficiary is U.S. oil and gas.

They are the direct beneficiary. They have control over Venezuela's petroleum at the moment. They've also now knocked out a significant amount in the Persian Gulf and in Russia. So it's absolutely a leveraged position for the United States empire, as it were. That's the big picture. It leads me to believe they want to keep dragging this on as long as possible. And Israel and the U.S. are quite happy to degrade the Gulf—quite happy. They think they can ride this out, then create more leverage, maybe another conflict or flashpoint, or some other situation where they can increase their leverage. That's how they're thinking in Washington right now. They're stepping back.

#Nima

You mean the elites of the market—the one percent, the top people, not ordinary folks.

#Patrick

Yes, correct. It's bad for the American people. It means we pay the inflation tax, and the Europeans are paying it too. It's bad for the people—it's bad for the economies of everyone except the upper 1% or the 0.1%. And that is Donald Trump's base. Donald Trump has lost many of the active-duty military; they don't support him. I know because I've been on the ground interviewing them over the last two weeks. Many veterans have also withdrawn their support. The MAGA base—they've peeled off. He's lost half of them. He's lost all of the independents, almost 100% of independent votes.

That was the swing vote for Trump in the last election—the one he wouldn't have won without them. He got their vote because he lied, pretending to be an anti-war president. It was a very good acting job by Donald Trump. So what's left? Wall Street, Howard Lutnick's people, big oil, big gas in Texas, big AI, big tech, and Wall Street again. That's it. That's Trump—and the media, most of the mainstream media class. That's it. There's no popular base anymore. It's finished. That's what people have to realize. It's a fraction of what it was during the 2024 election campaign. So time is not going to be kind to Trump politically. But do the Israelis really care what the Republicans do in the midterms?

I don't think so. They've already set this story in motion, and Wall Street's happy. They're making money every time Trump sends out a tweet. So is his inner circle. So are his children. So is his son-in-law. They're all making a fortune every time he posts on Truth Social, because they'll put their call options in, watch the stock market go up, then wait a few hours for Iran to say, "We're not negotiating anything with the U.S.—what's this man talking about?" And then, all of a sudden, the market drops and oil prices go back up. He and his people—and his base, which are Wall Street, big AI, big military, and big oil—they're making money on the dip as well as on the rebound.

And on the dip again—they're making money. The financial markets have been weaponized around oil trading and commodities. So much so that there's even a whole wing of cryptocurrency trading we've exposed at 21stcenturywire.com. It's on our website right now; it's called *Hormuz Hype*. We've got a report breaking it down. They've gamed the price of petroleum in Europe. The European market shouldn't be affected—they only get 7% of their oil from the Persian Gulf, Nima, 7%. The majority of European oil doesn't come from the Persian Gulf. That's just a talking point by the Trump administration. It comes from Norway—that's where most of Europe's oil comes from.

#Nima

Norway, which goes to Poland, and then...

#Patrick

Well, that's a gas pipeline as well. But then Kazakhstan, Nigeria, and a little bit from Libya—that's the majority, that's the bulk—and the United States. That's the bulk of European oil at the moment. They're getting some from Russia, but less than before, obviously. So the main oil companies, the energy companies, are jacking up their price-fixing to take advantage of the crisis and maximize profits. It's a big scandal right now in Europe. We're one of the few outlets that have put a great report together. I work with a French journalist, Freddie Ponton, who's done tremendous work on this topic and others.

But that's a report on our website right now. The same is true in America, Nima. The United States—oil is priced globally, but it shouldn't, in terms of supply, affect the U.S. market at all. It shouldn't. But the big firms run a cartel, and they pretend to react to geopolitical events in order to maximize profits at the pump in real time, even though the downstream effects shouldn't show up for months when it comes to the price of petrol or gasoline in the U.S. I mean, it's ridiculous. But they're doing it. They're doing it to gain. And this is what's happened.

And futures markets are piling in. Now the crypto trading is also pressuring these betting markets and, again, driving more volatility and more profit. So the markets—they're just moving. The capital is moving right now in the energy markets. That's where it is. They're taking advantage. And then,

when this crisis is over, Nima, they're going to move to another. The capital will then migrate to another market—bailout or whatever Ponzi scheme the Federal Reserve might be running to provide a rescue package for this disaster that Trump has gotten his own country and the world into.

#Nima

This is what these people do.

#Patrick

They're absolute criminals. They're crooks. And they don't care. They don't care about the working class. The working class is getting destroyed right now—and the middle class too. Jobs, all these things are going to... So, of course, this is going to hurt him, Trump, politically in the midterms. But the people who paid for this presidency are, unfortunately, the Israeli lobby. They don't care. They really don't care. They'll move on to work with a Democrat-led government. This is how it works. Until people wake up in America and realize how badly they've been played—and will continue to be played along these lines—I don't think we can do much except wait for the next crisis, really. That's kind of where it's at.

#Nima

Actually, we've learned that Iran is buying again. India has made its first Iranian oil purchase in seven years, with no payment problems, because India says it can no longer rely on oil from the Arab states due to the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz. And we know that the price of oil has at least doubled since the war started. I think that's the reality that's changing the mindset, somehow, on the part of the Europeans. We had the foreign minister of Austria talking with the foreign minister of Iran about how they can manage the passage of tankers related to Austria—tankers they want to pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

Something is happening in that sense. The Europeans—we had Macron acting the same way. Macron, by the way, is behaving totally differently from what we saw in Ukraine, for example. The leverage Iran has in the Strait of Hormuz—what's your understanding of that? What do you make of how Iran's policy in the Strait of Hormuz is somehow changing the nature of the relationship among those countries that need the strait to pass through?

#Patrick

In terms of Emmanuel Macron inserting himself into this situation, I don't put a lot of weight on it, also because he's very inconsistent. He's done this with Russian relations—he's flip-flopped literally days or weeks after. That's actually his hallmark: he's a flip-flopper. That's Macron. And typical French political negotiation style is to be engaged, to talk.

#Nima

I'm 100% agreeing with you.

#Patrick

Yeah, 100%—really engaged in it, you know, talking it up: “It’s going to be great, it’s going to be wonderful.” And then they always back out at the end. Always. This is just a French high-level corporate style of negotiation. Then they’ll try to do an end run around themselves with somebody else, possibly to get a better price. Who knows? So, as far as Macron goes, that’s how I view him. What Macron’s done is make himself relevant on the world stage by doing nothing—just by making a statement. Everyone’s like, “Wow, that sounds very multipolar. Oh, he’s the future. Finally, some leadership from Europe.” But he’s really doing this for a domestic audience, because this war is hugely unpopular—in France, and also among Muslims in France as well. This has not gone unnoticed.

So this is a president who’s joined at the hip with Benjamin Netanyahu and has been totally supportive of the Gaza genocide. And France has done whatever Israel wants, pretty much. So this has also hurt him politically—his brand has been tarnished. He doesn’t want to make the same mistake here. You can see Europeans are not very, you know, they’re not pro-Trump. Even the right wing in Europe is going sour on Trump, just because of the level—the crudeness, the sort of disgusting, rude, sloppy way he goes about his political business. He’s disrespectful to smaller countries, constantly jibing European states, saying they’re not pulling their weight in NATO, which is ridiculous. NATO is just a big protection racket for the U.S. to sell weapons. They create the threat and then sell protection to the European countries, demanding that they spend 3% of GDP to defend themselves.

Defend themselves against what? Defend themselves against an aggressive Russia that only appears aggressive because the United States staged a violent coup in Kyiv in February 2014, which started a civil war that led to the war we have now. That was a U.S. operation from beginning to end. And then they turn to the Europeans and say, you know, “You’ve got to buy more weapons, because the Russians are dangerous, they want to invade.” And most Europeans believe that. You have, say, not very intelligent European leaders like Kaja Kallas, like the new prime minister of Finland, Mr. Stubb, and of course Poland. There’s a faction in Poland that’s always found it very profitable to talk up a Russian threat and to cultivate Russian hate from previous generations—from the Soviet era, the Warsaw Pact days.

#Nima

You're talking about the Kaczyński ilk.

#Patrick

Yeah, exactly. It's a great career move. That's all American money—American money injected into the Polish political system. So if you have those views, it's very profitable. It's good for your career. You get on all the panels, you get the fellowships at the think tanks, you do your time in America, and you get a nice cushy corporate banking job in New York or wherever—on the board of whichever company. That's the career trajectory in Poland. So that's just an example of how screwed up Europe is. They don't even know what's good for themselves.

So they're looking at this situation in Iran, and now in Italy and Spain the governments are coming under direct pressure from their electorates about allowing their military bases—of which there are many U.S. bases under the guise of NATO. This is, again, part of the scam. The U.S. criticizes NATO, saying they're not pulling their weight, while using NATO as a fig leaf to maintain hundreds of bases and facilities all over Europe. Then they use those as launching pads for illegal wars of aggression outside of NATO. That's what it is. So, you know, Meloni and the governments in Italy and Spain are coming under pressure from their electorates on this—people don't want to be part of these illegal wars.

They don't want to have World War III blood on their hands if this thing spins out of control. And so, yeah, you know, in a way, a lot's being revealed—a lot is being revealed through Trump, through his kind of recklessness, and through the crazy bombast of the Pete Hegseths of the world. A lot's being revealed. Now it's pushed relationships right to the edge. And Europeans especially have to basically look in the mirror and say, do we have any of these ethical, moral, or international law considerations that we've been so pious and sanctimonious about over the Ukraine conflict? Does any of this apply in reality when it comes to the United States? And that's why they're backing off. If they're engaged, they have to then deal with all of that hypocrisy.

That means banning Russia from sporting events and the Olympics, sanctioning them, and kicking Russian people and businesses out of Europe—all this other stuff based on the claim that Russia did a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which it didn't. Even then, that was under the framework of UN Security Council Resolution 2202 and the Minsk Accords. So Russia was merely intervening on a humanitarian basis, as was expected if the Minsk Accords and that UN Security Council resolution collapsed. And it did. The rest was fairly academic to anyone who was actually watching and paying attention to the Ukraine civil war.

But Europe rebranded all that, remarketed it as Russian aggression. And that suited the U.S. under the last administration, under Joe Biden. They used it to re-leverage U.S. positions in Europe, to try to destroy Russia economically, and to create this bifurcated global system—which has largely failed. And now here we go: another front has opened up. Where are all those great platitudes now? Where are the speeches? I don't see them anymore. They've all disappeared. The Europeans are hiding—they're running behind the filing cabinets in Brussels. They're hiding.

They don't know what to do about Daddy. Daddy's gone off the reservation. They don't know what to say. So it's brilliant on one level, because this is just another layer of hypocrisy that's exposed

Israel, the United States, and the European elite leadership for what they are—absolute charlatans. They don't have a moral or ethical bone left in their bodies anyway. So it's terrible. The whole situation is terrible, don't get me wrong. It's terrible. But it has exposed everything. And that, I think, could be a positive in the long run—if we survive this crisis.

#Nima

We're basically in the same sort of stalemate when it comes to Ukraine and Iran, because in both cases the United States is asking for a ceasefire. Even Donald Trump was asking for a 48-hour ceasefire—I don't know what that means. He wanted to find the pilots.

#Patrick

So the U.S. was basically begging Iran—without begging publicly—but they were foolishly asking for a 48-hour pause to clean up a mess. That's what it is. We're talking now about, what, four, maybe five aircraft either shot down or damaged, plus missing U.S. airmen. It's a mess. They needed time. They wanted to down tools, and Iran told them to go pound sand—and rightfully so. So they didn't get it. Everything the U.S. or Trump says from this point forward—if he says, "Oh, I'm giving you a deadline, I'm giving you five days"—expect an attack within 24 hours. Or if he says, "No, I'm going to give you until April 29th, we're going to give you two weeks," some arbitrary number—expect an attack right before that time limit, probably days before or the weekend before. Expect some kind of major attack or something by the U.S. or Israel.

So, in other words, all these announcements by the U.S.—the claims, the requests, whatever—they're meaningless at this point. They're meaningless. The U.S. is not agreement-capable. The U.S. cannot abide by any ceasefire, even a 24-hour ceasefire. I wouldn't even give them that. They're not worth it. The U.S. has lied and deceived so many times. They've basically adopted, if you look at it, all the methods and tactics of the Israelis—which is, you know, just this rampaging, occult rampage foreign policy: kill, assassinate, bomb, lie, deceive, propagandize, false flags—everything. This is what the U.S. is adopting. Before, the U.S. used to allow Israel to be in the gutter, to do the dirty work in the gutter, and that was Israel's role. And the U.S. would stand above it, pretend to be above that, and pretend to be the rational hegemon.

But under Trump, he's basically taken the United States down into the gutter with Israel—to use gutter methods, dirty street-criminal methods. That's normally Israel's stock-in-trade: deception, lying, assassinating people, killing negotiation teams so you don't have anyone left to negotiate with, and then disingenuously going to the public, like Netanyahu does every time, and saying, "We don't have any partners to negotiate with. We're trying to negotiate with the Palestinians, but nobody will talk to us because you killed them all." But that's normal for Israel. And now Trump has adopted these tactics. Why?

Because Israel is directing U.S. foreign policy, and Israel is providing tasking for the U.S. military. The U.S. is outsourced. The U.S. is nothing more than a glorified mercenary force for the state of Israel and the Israeli lobby—as far as this conflict is concerned, 100%. And probably for big oil and big gas as well. They're always working as a surrogate for BlackRock, for U.S. big oil and gas, that's without a doubt. But in terms of actual tasking and what the U.S.'s position is at any given moment, it's absolutely dictated by a foreign country through a foreign lobby based in the U.S. that doesn't have to register as a foreign agent—because they've lobbied to make sure they wouldn't have to register as a foreign agent.

And they paid a lot of money for that. It's not hard to figure out at this point. They've given us the Ph.D. crash course over the last year. Now you can see what their relationship is like. You don't even need to read John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt's book **The Israel Lobby**, which I have on my desk here. You don't need to read that—Israel has given everybody a crash course. Trump has given everyone a crash course on how Washington really works and how the Israel lobby runs Washington. It's all clear for everyone to see now.

#Nima

I think that's not hidden anymore, because we had General Keane on Fox News. At least twice I heard him—and Benjamin Netanyahu—telling Donald Trump what to do as time goes by. This is serious. When an analyst on Fox News says that, you know, just imagine how deep that goes—what's really going on—and what Donald Trump's understanding or strategy is in this world without Benjamin Netanyahu. I think it's all defined by Mossad, by Netanyahu, and by many of these military commanders who are leaving the administration or leaving the armed forces because of what's happening with Israeli leverage, because nobody's there to hear them.

And how do you see it? Because the way Pete Hegseth is trying to, you know—he's dominant, he's controlling everything—but we see some sort of chaos happening from within. And I don't know how long Donald Trump can hide that. It's not because of what's going on with the Israelis; it's because of the number of casualties that were reported incorrectly. They said more than 70%, even 90%, of Iranian missiles and interceptors—air defense systems—were destroyed so far. But later, CNN reported it was 50%, which is not, by the way, the case. Still, we see some disagreement when it comes to their assessment. It shows how fragile the intelligence assessment is on their part.

#Patrick

Yeah, it does. I mean, I'm shocked. In my lifetime, I never thought I'd see CNN go against the Pentagon. That never happened. CNN always had their embedded correspondent, Barbara Starr, in the Pentagon, and her job was basically to be a propagandist for the Pentagon—verbatim. So all the wars, at least while she was there, and even before that with Wolf Blitzer and the others, their job was to repeat Pentagon propaganda and never veer off the script, because for them it was a

national security imperative. So CNN and the mainstream media become an extension of the government at that point. They have to abide by that. But this is the first conflict in my adult life where I've seen the mainstream media breaking away from the White House, breaking away from the government.

And CNN's been—I don't know for how much longer—because my understanding is that Larry Ellison and Israel will take control of that network very soon. Um, but, uh, let's just say for now, the leak about the CIA arming the Iranian Kurdish factions over the border in Iraqi Kurdistan, to deploy them—remember that? That was CNN that pushed that out. And they said, "That's going to be a problem for the Trump administration," verbatim. That's what they said. And I was surprised. I'm like, what's going on here? Is this just some kind of distraction to fool the public? You know, it was like—no, but it looked like that leak created some damage for that operation. So I think the CIA is split.

I think there are veterans within the CIA who do not support this war, don't support this president, and don't respect Pete Hegseth or Trump or any of his advisors for the way they're carrying on. That's true. In the media, there's a split—we can see that. The hate and aversion toward Trump by a lot of mainstream media propagandists... they would normally just bite their tongue and go along with it, but now they're actively working to undermine Trump with their coverage. And I think this is a positive thing, because that's what the press is supposed to do. They're supposed to challenge the government, speak truth to power, and hold power accountable. That's the whole purpose of the press, if you believe the law of the United States is a democracy. Okay? So we're starting to see that now.

So they're kind of doing their job—maybe not enough, not enough to really, I think, pull this war effort down overnight. But they are doing it, and there are all sorts of other clues showing that. I mean, the casualty cover-up is huge. That's, you know... It's interesting, Nima, because our sources told us last week that the number of casualties is orders of magnitude higher than what's being reported—especially deaths. Deaths are not included on the manifests going back to the United States with the wounded. Deaths are being triaged and managed—being managed. So I'd say, based on the Intercept report and other reporting on this, I mean, I know the Iranian news agency says the number of U.S. soldiers killed at bases that were hit, etc., is in the hundreds.

Okay. The Iranian news agency is saying the Intercept is reporting it's in the dozens, potentially. I'd say it's probably somewhere in between, most likely. So it's way higher—you know, probably multiples higher than what's been admitted—because of the political price. Trump couldn't withstand the pressure, even from a hundred dead soldiers. He couldn't; he would fold under pressure. He's notoriously weak when challenged, and I think you can see this presidency has fallen back on lying, fake news, and propaganda to create this kind of fictional war—what Trump's calling a "perfect war." This is what he's saying: this is the perfect war.

Nobody's seen a war like this, ever, in the history of human warfare. No one's seen anything like it. People tell me how wonderful this war is. They tell me, "Trump, nobody had the guts to do this, and thank you, Trump." Thank you, Trump—for talking about himself in the third person. This is what he's saying. So he can't—there's no way that if the facts start undermining this huge, massive bar he's set for expectations of this "perfect war," any chink in the armor, that house of cards is going to come falling down. And I think you're starting to see the beginnings of that this weekend, with all the downed U.S. aircraft. Plus, I think a Chinook got blown up on the tarmac—if I'm not mistaken, it was at the Kuwaiti base that was hit, literally.

So, I mean, the U.S. has taken more material losses—in terms of drones, aircraft, helicopters, et cetera—in this war, in this short space of time, than in any other conflict in living memory. And normally what that means, Nima, is that Pete Hegseth, the Secretary of War, gets dragged in front of the Senate and congressional committees to answer why the U.S. has lost so many billions of dollars. Is this because of bad organization? Is this because you don't know what you're doing? Is this because you're making up your missions as you go along and there's no real strategy to any of this? They haven't been made accountable. They managed to bypass Congress. The Israeli lobby helped instruct senators and congressmen to vote against the War Powers Act.

So they were obedient to the Israeli lobby. So again, a foreign government has a lobby in the U.S. that's instructing our congressmen and senators to vote against the War Powers Act. Isn't that amazing, how that democracy works? So they're bypassed. There's no oversight. We're five, six weeks in—no oversight for this war. This is an undeclared war of choice, a war of aggression—zero, zero oversight. The Secretary of Defense, or War, whatever the hell his title is, doesn't have to go in front of anybody. He would melt. He'd probably have a tantrum, storm out of the hearing, rip his tie off, then go outside, pull his shirt off with all his tattoos, and scream at the cameras. I mean, that's what Pete Hegseth would do. He's so emotionally and psychologically unstable anyway.

You can see his outbursts—how he attacks people and the press whenever anybody asks him a difficult question or challenges his authority or the president's authority. These people are paper thin right now, in terms of the integrity behind what they're doing politically and militarily. So, I mean, what I would expect as an American, at the very least, is that this man needs to be dragged in front of both Senate and congressional hearings to answer for all of this. And this is just the beginning. Then we're going to have to have some kind of inquiry into why this war started in the first place. The only honest assessment I've heard so far, Nima, is from Marco Rubio, who accidentally said that the reason we got into the war is because Israel was going in first.

Obviously, this was planned ahead of time, and they were going in. We all know it. But at least the fake excuse that Rubio gave is mostly true, which is that the Israelis went in and we had to go in behind them because we have to abide by the wishes of the State of Israel as a global superpower. So we're not the global superpower—we're just a proxy of the real superpower, which politically looks like it's Israel, based on the Secretary of State's own admission. I'm just going by his words. It'

s not my conspiracy theory; I'm taking his words at face value. The Secretary of State—the top diplomat—also claims he's the National Security Advisor at the same time. Those two jobs are supposed to be done by different people, by the way. The National Security Advisor should be independent and not political, per se. What a mess.

#Nima

It is. I think what Marco Rubio said will remain in the history of the United States—how Israel, you know, created this chaos. I think what's happening in the Middle East is huge—politically, militarily, economically. First of all, you see how Iran has destroyed all these American bases in the Arab states, in the GCC countries. This is not something small. Many people are asking themselves, in Europe and elsewhere, what's the point of these bases if they can't even protect themselves against an Iranian attack? On the other hand, we know the escalation is moving toward Iranian facilities—civilian facilities.

We had the bridge—one of the largest in the Middle East—hit by the United States and Israel together. And we had the Pasteur Institute, which produces medicine mostly for people with cancer and other serious conditions. Another target, mentioned in one of the Iranian foreign minister's tweets and causing a lot of concern—not so much for Iran but for the GCC countries—was the nuclear power plant in Bushehr. It was attacked four times. He said the radioactive fallout will affect the lives of people in the GCC capitals, not Tehran—they're the ones who are going to be impacted.

And they're facilitating, they're somehow cooperating with the United States. We've seen two drones coming from the UAE, for example, into Iran to hit targets. I think that still needs a response from the Iranians. But after all, their lives are on the line right now with these new attacks, with these escalations. How do you see the way these Arab states—two of them, by the way, we've learned were in contact with Iranian officials recently about the Strait of Hormuz—basically saying, "Green light, we're going to pay whatever you want to charge us. We'll pay that to pass through the Strait of Hormuz."

#Patrick

And how do you see the escalation pathway?

#Nima

Because Donald Trump said he's going to hit the Iranians—you know, send them back to the Stone Age where they belong. Those are heavy words for Iranians, for anybody Iranian. All the Iranians in Iran and outside of Iran heard that.

#Patrick

Well, you know, the Gulf states should pay attention. If these were real leaders—real political leaders or real rulers, real monarchs for that matter—these are tribesmen who were selected by the British Empire and the British colonial rulers to rule over those artificial emirates. That's how they got into power, their family dynasties. It's not based on merit, it's not based on any hereditary royal line or anything like that. It's just completely fake—just like the previous monarch dynasty in Iran, the Pahlavi dynasty. It's completely fake, imposed by colonial rulers. So they're really just pretending at the end of the day. But they have an opportunity now to actually show that they can rule, by making decisions that are in the interest of their countries, the people who live there, and the business investments.

And certainly, the smart thing to do would be to reevaluate the relationship with the United States, which has been using them as a military launching pad for an attack on Iran—and to protect Israel. That's the whole purpose of the U.S. military arrangement, and to protect the petrodollar, which allows the U.S. to spend over \$2 trillion per year beyond its budget to pay for that military. It's circular logic. It's very clear how this relationship works. So if the Gulf states were smart, they'd look at this as an existential crisis and think, well, maybe we need to look ahead rather than look back here. And it looks like the relationship with the U.S. and the European countries is not going well. And forget the Abraham Accords—Israel doesn't really care about us anyway.

In fact, Israel is planning to take over the UAE. That's the long-term plan. Israel will end up ousting the royal family in the UAE anyway—they're gone. I'd probably give it ten years. Israeli intelligence has already infiltrated the UAE to such a deep level—its military, everything—that it's only a matter of time before they take over the country. They allowed them in, and that was their mistake. But they still have a chance to normalize relations with Iran through this crisis. They have a perfect excuse to do it, a perfect excuse to reevaluate their relationship with the United States. They would be in the right morally—the UAE, the Gulf states, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait—but they don't know what to do. Why?

Because these are not people who are accountable to the people living in those countries. They're not even real. If they were real monarchs, they'd do what's in the best interest of their people and their future line. They're not even doing that, which is very dangerous, actually. But that shows you they're not really accountable, which shows you they're not real sovereigns. A real sovereign would act in the interest of the next generation to continue their own line. Makes sense, right? I mean, that's what anyone would do. But they're not doing that. So you're not dealing with a normal monarchy here. You're not dealing with a real monarchy. You're dealing with puppet regimes that serve at the pleasure of Western powers and, ultimately, of Israel.

Look, if they want to escalate against Iran—when Trump said in his State of the Union speech on Wednesday night, he said, yeah, we've hit the nuclear plants and there's nuclear dust everywhere, nuclear dust blowing around—they won't be able to use them again for a long time because of the dust. So Donald Trump basically admitted there's radioactive material blowing around Iran's nuclear facilities after U.S. and Israeli attacks on those sites, including one you mentioned, the Bushehr site.

And seeing that these Arab leaders in the UAE are only about 120 miles away, you'd think they'd pick up on that comment from Trump, right? They'd say publicly, "We're against this. The United States should not be attacking nuclear sites."

And then bragging that there's dust blowing around, like Trump has done—that would be, to me, the more responsible, more of a leadership move by these Gulf Arab leaders. But they're terrified. They're terrified to say that publicly, to condemn the U.S. or to condemn Trump publicly. They're terrified because they serve at the pleasure of Western powers. And their arrangement is: keep your mouth shut, buy our weapons, do what we say, or you're out. The U.S. could stage a military coup in the UAE or Saudi Arabia or any of these countries like that. There'd be a military coup—that's how they would oust the regime. It would be very, very quick. Very quick, and it would be over. The U.S. would buy off heads of intelligence and the military, and in 72 hours they'd flip the government in all of those Gulf states.

One by one. Very easy. Bahrain—no problem. And the royals will be sent packing to their penthouse in Paris, their penthouse in New York, their villa in Los Angeles, or wherever—San Diego. They have five or six options each: they can go to the south of Spain, the Côte d'Azur in Cannes, the south of France, or the Amalfi Coast. They have islands—they've bought islands in Greece anyway. Saudis. So they're gone. They're out. It's that easy. And that's probably going to happen. They might voluntarily leave after their desalination plants get hit, after they keep escalating against Iran, throwing like a drunk gambler at the craps table, rolling the dice. They're not acting like real leaders.

They're not. They're not making rational choices because they are not sovereign. They serve at the pleasure of the U.S., European elites, and, of course, Israel—all of those Gulf states. They know it. Now we know it. Because if they weren't, they'd be absolutely pushing back against everything the U.S. and Israel are doing. But they can't. They're terrified. It's not going to end well. It's not going to end well for them anyway. The smart thing to do would be, at least, if you're going to go out, go out with some dignity and integrity. Do what's right for the people under your custodianship, for your dynasty. Maybe there's a chance you'll have a future heir, if there will still be a monarchical regime in charge.

But the U.S. can replace them whenever they want—whenever they want. There's nothing. There's no loyalty between the West, Israel, and these Gulf states. They perform a function: they prop up the U.S. dollar, and they're there to buy U.S. weapons and make U.S. defense contractors rich. That is the sole purpose of their existence. And they're only allowed to exist in their current political form as long as they do those two things—prop up the U.S. dollar and make defense companies in the U.S. and the West rich—and invest money in Western brands to help inflate the S&P 500. That's what the West wants from the Gulf states. If they don't provide that, then they're out. Simple. I mean, I hate to sound flippant about it.

#Nima

That's reality, by the way. I really think the same way. That's the sad reality of the GCC countries, unfortunately.

#Patrick

They've really betrayed—I think they've betrayed—the Arab people. I mean, just by throwing the Palestinians under the bus for so long, over the years. But the fact that they're allowing the U.S. and Israel to militarily attack nuclear power plants just across the Gulf, and the environmental devastation that will result from that—that will be against their own future in the Gulf—and they stay silent about it, and they can't summon the courage to censure or rebuke the U.S. president, the U.S. military, and the Israelis for this. This is a level of cowardice that's just hard to comprehend. It really is. It's breathtaking.

#Nima

Thank you so much, Patrick. A great pleasure, as always. These are not good things to talk about—these are sad things, tragedies we're talking about today: war, destruction, death. But after all, we're learning. It's a learning process for us, to avoid that in the future—in the near future.

#Patrick

Absolutely. Absolutely. Thank you, Nima.

#Nima

Thank you.