

# Trump in FULL PANIC MODE in Islamabad, Iran BROKE U.S. Empire | Patrick Henningsen

Patrick Henningsen discusses why Trump holds no cards as his negotiating team stares down the abject humiliation of defeat and disaster brought on by their war on Iran. 21st century wire: [https://www.youtube.com/@UCY\\_sGiAswJNo8HQBOKme01g](https://www.youtube.com/@UCY_sGiAswJNo8HQBOKme01g) Patrick's substack: <https://patrickhenningsen.substack.com/> LIKE the video and Subscribe for more in-depth geopolitical analysis! Leave your thoughts in the comments below! Support the Channel: Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong> SUBSCRIBE ON RUMBLE: Rumble: <https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong> Follow Me on Social Media: Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DannyHaiphong> Telegram: <https://t.me/DannyHaiphong> Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhaiphong> Substack: [chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com](https://chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com) Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritho> #trump #iran #islamabad

## #Danny

The talks between the U.S. and Iran are going to be a circus. They were essentially initiated by Donald Trump's administration. In light of this, I wanted to ask you what your view is on how we got to this point. We don't know exactly what's going to happen in these talks, but we do have a record of what the U.S. is like during negotiations. We also have a reality that's being acknowledged by the Western mainstream media and the political pundit class everywhere. We have the Globe and Mail in Canada talking about how Iran has won and everyone else has lost. We also have The New Republic describing the Iran war as a staggering humiliation, and The New York Times talking about how the war turned Iran into a major world power. So in this context, Patrick, what exactly is happening here? And what's your overall analysis of the situation?

## #Patrick Henningsen

There are a couple of different dimensions, Daniel. Domestically in the U.S., politically speaking, there's a lot going on. As you probably saw, quite a few Democrats signed on to this impeachment initiative against Trump in the House. I think about a hundred lawmakers weighed in on that. There's no chance they'll impeach him right now. However, it's a kind of temperature check for what's coming after the midterms. And it's funny that a lot of Democrats were also told not to support this, because if they didn't get a win—if they tried to push for impeachment or invoke the 25th Amendment, meaning that Trump is mentally unfit for office—I think we can all agree that's probably the case.

But if they can't actually get that, they're afraid of basically firing another round without getting a win or hitting the target. So some of the Democratic leadership have been trying to dissuade some of their colleagues from doing this. But still, it's happening. It's there. So that's going on. Now we're into the actual run-up to the midterms. The campaigns will begin, and we already know what the results are likely to be based on the current polling. It's not looking good for the Republicans, and it's not looking good for the Democrats. For Donald Trump, after November, you're looking at a potential deluge of investigations, hearings, impeachment hearings—all sorts of things.

There are a lot of financial scandals just waiting to be ripped open—and that's to say nothing, of course, about the Epstein files. Put that off to the side for a minute. So that's what's going on domestically. I think Trump really wanted to get a win with this war in Iran. And as we saw from the New York Times leaks, Danny, it confirmed what we already knew—that the whole war was a ham-fisted sales pitch by Benjamin Netanyahu. He came to Washington around the second week of February and basically lorded over everybody. They all treated him like a king, and he gave a dodgy, fraudulent sales pitch on pretty much every aspect of this war and what was going to be expected. None of it turned out to be true.

The intelligence was fake, which also begs the question: where was Tulsi Gabbard in all of this? She seemed to want the war to happen. She certainly didn't speak up against all the fake intelligence that Israel had been pushing for the last year—especially in February—stovepiping fake intelligence into the U.S. system, right onto Donald Trump's desk. Joe Kent—luckily, we had a conscientious whistleblower come forward in Joe Kent—revealed what was really going on behind the scenes and why we went to war on behalf of Israel. But still, nothing from the rest of the cabinet. Of course, they'll have to show up later when it's more convenient for them politically. So that's what's going on domestically.

Internationally, I think all those headlines you showed, Danny, are kind of an admission that while you can brag about your accomplishments—eliminating this many boats, this many missile launchers, devastating Iran's infrastructure—as if these are some sort of great victories or proof of the pain you've inflicted on Iranian society, I'm not sure that's really a victory. They think it's a tactical victory in the U.S., maybe even a strategic one. But the problem is, when you have amateurs running big institutions—like, say, the Pentagon, which has a \$1.5 trillion budget right now—and you've got someone running it who's not even... Pete Hegseth isn't even qualified to lead a platoon in the U.S. military. He was kicked out of the D.C. National Guard—personal problems, alcoholism, the rest of it. His rap sheet is unbelievable.

How on earth was he even confirmed for that position? Well, the Israel lobby instructed U.S. senators to vote for his confirmation. They wanted a religious ideologue with a compromised past, because Israel knows that if you promote somebody with a very bad résumé—someone who's fighting off scandals—they'll do absolutely whatever they're instructed to do once they're in that position. It's almost like they've been given a miracle rescue for their life and career. And that's why they chose him. They wanted to find somebody unqualified, with a lot of personal scandals—big

scandals, by the way—the kinds involving sexual misconduct, alcoholism, or fraud, even bankrupting previous charities he worked for, like Veterans for Freedom.

I mean, all of these charities pretty much went bankrupt while Hegseth was at the helm. Now, whether that was his fault or not, he was in charge, so someone has to take responsibility for that. And then there are the payouts—the out-of-court settlements with the women, the children out of wedlock. It's a disaster. This is the last person you'd want to put in charge of the Pentagon. And they did. They instructed U.S. senators to vote for him, and they all capitulated because they got the call from AIPAC or their AIPAC handler: "Vote for Pete Hegseth." That goes for the other positions as well. You have a lot of other unqualified people who got confirmed, and it's a disaster. So how did we get to this point of this sort of non-existent ceasefire this week?

It's because, with the rank amateur Pete Hegseth and all the gung-ho "invoking God" stuff over Easter weekend, what did they do? They tried to mount some major operation to basically snatch and grab enriched uranium out of Isfahan in Iran. And that's not what the U.S. press ran with. They did report on the briefing, but they didn't say the operation happened. Instead, the press pivoted to this Jessica Lynch-style rescued pilot mythology—a good American, feel-good story we could all rally around. But that's not what happened. And the information has come out: the U.S. suffered record losses, record losses in the last fifty years for lost aircraft during combat operations. So what happened was a botched special forces raid.

So this was Pete Hegseth and Donald Trump's Jimmy Carter moment. This was their big Jimmy Carter moment. This is the thing Republicans constantly castigate Jimmy Carter and the Democrats for—the failed hostage rescue attempt in 1980 during that election cycle, Carter versus Reagan. And here we have worse than Carter, way worse. At least Jimmy Carter was trying to do something honorable and probably legal, although he failed for various reasons. This was a completely illegal, not well-thought-out operation, totally gung-ho and cocksure by Hegseth. You can see they were probably high on God knows what when they all got together and said, "This is a great idea, let's just throw a couple hundred U.S. Special Forces and an unlimited amount of resources."

So what it looks like is that what started off as a pilot rescue, apparently, quickly turned into them using the forces they already had in place to rescue him and somehow use that as cover for the snatch and grab. It's uncertain, but it does look like the U.S. stepped into a trap set by Iran in Isfahan, and they lost a couple of C-130s. There's another C-130 that was likely used to exfiltrate troops. So anyway, the bottom line is it went FUBAR. With a good cover-up by the U.S. military, Pete Hegseth has more or less closed reporting for the Pentagon. In fact, there's a court order basically saying what he's doing is unlawful—by not allowing the press access to the Pentagon—for the first time in history.

So they're saying, oh, Trump's saying it's a national security issue—we can't allow the press to have open, free access to what we're doing with the Pentagon. So all that's going on. Then Trump went absolutely mental. That's when his tantrum—threatening civilizational annihilation of the Iranians—

came on the heels of his Jimmy Carter debacle: a total botched failure, massive losses, and a cover-up. That led to the tantrum. Then he put an 8 p.m. deadline on it: they'd better do something, otherwise we're going to annihilate Iran. And later on, the following day, another 8 p.m. deadline.

And what they did to meet his 8 p.m. deadline—he wasn't willing to go through with civilizational annihilation, partly because the pushback, the political backlash, not just in the U.S. but internationally, was immense. So he saw this deal, this ten-point deal by the Iranians, that had been on the table—and previous iterations of it had been on the table for a while. It's like Ukraine with the Russians: the Russian list of demands hasn't changed at all in four years. And it's the same thing with Iran; they have more or less the same demands. So, you don't need to go digging to find it. And they said that in Trump's story, the way the White House tried to spin it was, "Look, the Iranians have capitulated."

They're begging us for a ceasefire. Look, they've given us a ten-point plan. And initially, the U.S. said, well, we'll use that as the basis for talks. We used that as the basis for talks. And then all hell broke loose with Israel, because you could see all the Israeli pundits—Mark Levine, Netanyahu's office, everybody—they're going wild. They're saying, why has Israel not been consulted about this? Ceasefire? What ceasefire? So Israel does what it normally does, which is use any kind of distraction to take advantage of it by doing a bombing run or massacring Palestinians, or hitting the West Bank, or South Lebanon.

And they used it to carry out over a hundred bombing raids in a fifteen-minute window—hitting Beirut, hitting Christian areas, even neighborhoods I lived in, like just off the Corniche. These are not Hezbollah areas. So anyway, Israel just went wild and bombed Lebanon and Beirut, South Lebanon. And this forced J.D. Vance to deny that a ceasefire in Lebanon was part of Iran's overall ceasefire deal. Of course it was. It's already been confirmed twice—by Pakistan, by the Iranians themselves. And they made up a story. I think the White House came up with a fake story that they were given a private list of demands somehow. Who knows?

It could be a used car salesman who's Iranian, a friend of Steve Witkoff's—whoever Steve Witkoff claims he's been talking to, and then relaying that to Trump, saying he's talking to the new regime. I mean, is this a government in exile? The whole thing is just a circus. It's become a clown show. And so this has led to all sorts of fancy footwork and dodging by the Trump administration. The bottom line, Danny, is that Iran has achieved a strategic victory, and the U.S. has been defeated strategically. And if they count civilian deaths, destroyed infrastructure, and civilian life in Iran as some kind of win by the U.S.—if you're touting that as a victory—then where are you as a country, really?

So what they've lost is political. Even Italy has backed off. And at the same time, Pete Hegseth and the Trump administration were attacking the Vatican—attacking the Catholic Church. So the Pope has weighed in, which is unprecedented. My whole life as an Irish Catholic, I've never seen the Church weigh in on wars. I was waiting for it during the whole Iraq debacle, and nothing happened

in America. And suddenly we have this new American Pope, who basically said no and rebuked Pete Hegseth, invoking Jesus, praying for the bombing of Iran like this is some holy act.

And then over Easter Sunday, Trump was making the most sacrilegious statements—almost satanic rants—about killing Iranians and destroying their civilization. So this has created a schism now in American conservative politics. But it means that Meloni in Italy—no, if you're forcing the Italian leader to choose between the Vatican and MAGA, it's not a contest. So now Meloni and the Italians are talking about opening up diplomatic relations with Tehran. At the same time, Spain's talking about opening a diplomatic mission in Tehran. And now Trump is threatening Spain. Look at the way this is going—this is a disaster, both at home and abroad.

They can't do anything right. And meanwhile, they're sending the dull boy of diplomacy, Steve Witkoff, and his sidekick, Rodney—Jared Kushner—off to Islamabad, letting J.D. Vance finally get his feet wet. Where are these negotiations going to go, Danny? They're going to go nowhere. Look at the past negotiations—they've all gone nowhere. Why? Because you can't do these like, "Oh, I've got my list of demands, my maximalist list, and we want all of this, and we're not going to accept any of yours. And if you don't succumb to us, we're going to punish you, we're going to bomb you." So I think this is going to go nowhere.

Another photo op for Witkoff, another failure—zero percent chance of success, zero. And then... I fully expect Israel will start bombing Iran after, I don't know, a week, maybe two. Maybe if they get on the verge of some breakthrough, then you know it's guaranteed Israel will attack some target in Iran, and then the United States will have to join in to support Israel, and we'll be back to square one again. Why am I so cynical? Because I'm just looking at the past pattern of behavior. They failed in Ukraine with Russia for the same reason—they can't do diplomacy. They're inept, they're not capable. Trump's style of negotiations is no concessions.

You must get down on your knees and prostrate yourself to me and my demands. Otherwise, we're going to punish you. That's not going to work with Iran. It didn't work with Russia. Iran's already priced this in. They're going to go through the theater, like the Russians go through the theater with the U.S., knowing full well they just have to get down to business on the battlefield. And that's what Iran's going to do. And Trump—it'll just be a slow, painful death for the Trump administration and for the American empire. We're watching it. We're watching the greatest train wreck of all time in slow motion.

## **#Danny**

It seems like the worse the train wreck gets, the more Donald Trump posts on Truth Social. What's interesting about the point you made about Iran's ten-point plan being out in the open for quite a while now is that we know Trump is very active on social media. So it seems likely that Trump

himself already knew what Iran wanted—let alone the fact that everybody knew what Iran wanted, because it's been circulating for quite some time. But nevertheless, Patrick, we're getting Donald Trump's interpretations of reality every single day, sometimes multiple times a day.

And here he says the Iranians don't seem to realize they have no cards other than short-term extortion of the world by using, in capitals, by the way, international waterways. The only reason they are alive today is to negotiate. This is how Donald Trump is talking amid negotiations that I'm already hearing are going to be indirect. They won't be in the same room. We're already seeing the Trump administration, from Vance and others, say, "Well, we didn't agree to the demands that Iran put on the table to initiate the ceasefire, with Pakistan as the mediator."

And then this—"international waterways." I guess he's referring to the Strait of Hormuz. And now we also have this blatant threat toward the negotiators themselves: "Oh, the only reason the Iranians are alive in the first place is to do this, to negotiate, basically kiss our feet." I mean, this is the way the Trump administration is talking. Probably at no other time in the history of the United States has a sitting president spoken like this in these kinds of moments, when everyone else is saying, "This is not looking great for the United States." It truly is a quandary. What's your reaction to these comments?

## **#Patrick Henningsen**

Look, with all of the U.S. faults and deep cardinal sins of the past—and there are just too many to mention, the sins of empire—there was always this air of decorum, that they at least had to go through the motions diplomatically. What you have with the Trump administration is that they've basically abandoned the high road, or even the play-acting of the high road, to opt for the gutter. And the gutter is where Israel resides. Israel resides in the gutter. They make threats. They assassinate negotiators. If the Israelis are in negotiations, you can be sure they'll try to kill the other side across the table—and they've done that multiple times. They'll even go so far as to announce they're going to kill any future negotiators, which they've done with Iran. Ali Larijani is an example—that's something Israel had threatened they were going to do, and they did it. So, I mean, these gutter, mafia tactics are where Trump is now.

For some reason, he's just, out of pure sort of assimilation, become Israeli in that sense. So it doesn't reflect American traditions of diplomacy or negotiation, or at least America trying to act like an honest broker, even if they probably never were. But that's going to make it very difficult for the United States to throw its weight around with other countries that do value decorum, that do think agreements, negotiations, and diplomacy are important—countries that are agreement-capable. You have to remember, countries like China, India, Russia—these are agreement-capable countries. Iran is agreement-capable.

So, in international relations, we call those "normative powers." Normative powers. The international system, when you conceptualize it, bends in favor of normative powers. Why? Because other

powers—even top powers, maybe not quite first-tier, maybe second-tier powers—can bandwagon together under the assumption that who they're bandwagoning with is rational, logical, and agreement-capable. That way, you can have a treaty, you can have a multilateral agreement. And these are the things that mark the benchmarks of history—how things get done in the international system. If you have a rogue state, they're not a normative power.

The international system will not bend in their favor. And so the United States is now in the category of a rogue state. Again, they're adopting the Israeli method, which is international gangsterism—zero-sum diplomacy, punishing everybody, threatening to kill and killing, and all these other things—abandoning all pretense of past agreements or treaties. That's where the U.S. is now. Honestly, I would say I don't think America can recover from this. Even if they had a new administration in 2026, or J.D. Vance takes over as president, they're not going to recover from this because they've done it at the worst possible time. They've done it during the ascendancy of multipolarism.

They've done this during the ascendancy of BRICS. And the United States has sacrificed all of its positions, its previous footholds, and the things that make the U.S. a world power. It's basically sacrificed them at the altar of Israel. I'll give you a perfect example. There's a tweet by Joe Kent regarding NATO. You know, you've heard all this rhetoric from Trump saying NATO is not pulling its weight, that they didn't come to our aid, and that in the Straits of Formosa we bailed them out with Ukraine. I mean, it's a stupid argument by Trump, because the U.S. started the Ukraine civil war in 2014 that led to this war anyway—but let's just put that aside. So what is all this talk about leaving NATO, slagging off NATO? I always wondered.

None of this made sense, because we know NATO is the foundation of U.S. power projection across half the globe. I mean, that's how the U.S. is able to get around Congress and do things unilaterally under the fake banner of NATO. It's the greatest tool ever for U.S. imperialism. After the Second World War, it also became a great protection racket, because they can, you know, like the mafia, make the Europeans buy tons of weapons and pretend they're going to protect them from an enemy the U.S. created—in this case, Russia. But where is all this coming from with Hormuz? It's like a reverse Article Five mentality by Trump. I mean, by Trump's standards, it's bizarre. And then I'm thinking to myself—and then Joe Kent tweets this out just yesterday.

He said, no, this talk about NATO is to withdraw the U.S., either temporarily or permanently, so that Israel can attack Turkey. Now, that makes perfect sense because it follows a pattern of the U.S. abandoning its leverage—abandoning the positions that gave it power—for Israel, ignoring and going against U.S. interests in favor of Israeli interests. And that, I think, is the most rational explanation. It makes sense. So again, imagine that—basically ejecting from NATO so Israel can attack Turkey, and then you don't have any obligation to defend Turkey. I mean, listen, Danny, if Israel attacked Turkey today, would the U.S. push back on Israel? Would anyone in Europe push back?

**#Danny**

No, I mean—no. This has been a historical pattern: trying to goad Turkey into a relationship, and then when things get a little harder, when Turkey wants something, it's like, "No, how about you just stay where you are," kind of thing. And I feel like it would be the same thing here. I think it would be even worse, in the sense that the United States wouldn't even want to pay attention to something like that, because that's an extremely messy situation that the U.S. has no capacity to really handle. It would be really difficult for the U.S. to navigate that disaster.

## **#Patrick Henningsen**

So who would come to Turkey's defense? There are only a few countries. It's going to be China, it's going to be Russia, possibly Pakistan or India—I don't know, that's it. Maybe Brazil. Maybe it's the BRICS countries.

## **#Danny**

That's it. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

## **#Patrick Henningsen**

And so that's amazing—but that's the reality. Think about it. Naftali Bennett, the former Israeli prime minister, has come out publicly and said, "Turkey is the new Iran." He said that publicly. That was a very powerful statement. That's like a warning shot right there. And let me tell you, when Israel fires warning shots, you'd better pay attention, because that means they're coming—if they're allowed to, anyway. So if the U.S. can't restrain them, I mean, that's going to fundamentally alter geopolitics, and it's very dangerous. You know, world wars have been started over the Ottoman Empire and Turkey.

Arguably, the deeper foundation of World War I was to prevent Germany from allying with the Ottoman Empire, and also to gain control of the oil fields in what is now Iraqi Kurdistan—Mosul, Kirkuk, and so forth. The British and their allies mobilized to prevent that from happening. But that east-meets-west pivot point—Turkey—is the ultimate geopolitical pivot. And if Israel is allowed to do that, not to mention what could happen in Cyprus, then you have a major catastrophe on your hands that would be very difficult to contain. So right now, looking at that, Iran's looking like the normative power.

So I think geopolitics will bend in favor of Iran in the long term if they can survive—if they can keep the Strait of Hormuz not closed, but under their management or whatever. It's probably going to be under their management for the foreseeable future, but closed to U.S. allies and to U.S. business for, I'd say, give it another month. And right now, the inflation, the economy in the U.S.—it's not good. It's really not good. But, hey, oil prices dropped a little with this announcement, and the stock market went up. And somebody put a massive bet on another one, and billions of dollars were made on the back of Trump's announcement. So somebody's doing—someone's doing okay.

## **#Danny**

On the one hand, your point about the United States empire—it's been acting against its own interests, against the empire's interests, by getting into conflagrations like the one with Iran. That can only lead to bad outcomes, because they wanted to preserve, strengthen, and give impetus to Israel—whatever people's theories are about why Israel is so important to the U.S., there are many reasons. And then, on the other side, many people say, well, the U.S. can afford to lose a war with Iran because there will be people getting rich off it, especially the LNG and oil corporations.

However, it seems to me that as this war has reached this inflection point, everybody in the establishment has a gripe with what happened in the war with Iran—except for the Trump administration, which keeps saying, "We won, we won, we won. Everything is OK." It seems like there was pressure coming from everywhere—through the mainstream media, through back channels—that this was getting out of control. And now we're seeing reports that the consequences of this, whether it's Saudi Arabia losing 1.3 million barrels of oil per day from its production capacity, or the fact that, as you just mentioned, the cost to the global economy is going to put huge pressure on people for the foreseeable future—even if there's no more shooting, which is not a guarantee.

## **#Patrick Henningsen**

Well, the headline you showed earlier says it all: Iran's won and everyone else has lost. That's the way it looks. Now, that reminds me of something else—who else has won with the Ukraine proxy war against Russia, NATO's proxy war against Russia in Ukraine? Who are the winners, besides the military-industrial complex? Everyone else is, relatively speaking, a loser. Europe's a massive loser. U.S. gas is a winner, okay? U.S. oil and gas—they're winners. There are a few other potential winners here. Qatar is no longer benefiting from it after this debacle. So look at this—this has similarities. It's almost an identical pattern to the Iranian war, because with Ukraine, that's the proxy.

Any time there's any breakthrough in negotiations, Ukraine will suddenly launch a drone strike—attack Moscow, try to assassinate Putin, kill some Russians, or hit a Russian oil refinery, and so on. That's what they've been doing. In fact, Ukraine's been so busy on that front in recent months that Russia has been forced to put a freeze on petroleum exports—refined gasoline—because they're afraid their market supplies might become unstable, since their production capacity is way down. Why? Export capacity is down because of Ukrainian drone attacks. So anywhere between 30% and 40% of Russian export capacity is compromised as a result of what Ukraine has been doing. That proxy has been busy behind the scenes.

And the U.S. and Europeans can always do a good cop, bad cop illusion there and say, "Oh, look, it's not us, it's those feisty Ukrainians, and we can't tell them what to do. They're really pissed off at the Russians." So they'd have to accept that the net result is more petroleum and gas being taken off the global market. That's the first thing. Same thing with Israel. Israel, in a sense, is playing that Ukrainian spoiler role with this war in Iran, and the U.S. is playing the good cop, bad cop—

pretending that Israel and the U.S. are separate in terms of their military coordination, intelligence, and all the rest of it, when clearly there's very little distance between them.

And so, very little daylight between them. Israel can then stymie any negotiations at any time—either through a targeted assassination, some kind of rogue airstrike, or bombing a school or something in Iran. Who knows? So you're guaranteed that on both of those fronts, those major fronts, there's going to be no progress in diplomacy, no negotiated political settlement at all. It's just going to be a slow degradation of the situation.

And then Russia and Iran, in this case, will be forced to focus on their own priorities—securing their own perimeter and dealing with their own interests outside of negotiations, on the battlefield or through deterrence, whatever form that takes. But the end result is the same. If you look at it, by Israel striking Iran—knowing that Iran would hit back against Israel and U.S. bases in the region—and then Israel striking the South Pars gas field, knowing that Iran would retaliate against the Gulf states, more oil and gas have been taken off the global market. So you have all the oil and gas on the Russian side taken out, all the Persian Gulf taken off, and this has been very strategic.

And, you know, you could argue whether Iran is playing into the U.S.'s broader geostrategic hand by doing this, or into the Israeli hand. That's an argument you can have, and there's not a clear answer there, quite frankly, because Iran has to do what it has to do. But the main beneficiary is—this goes back to a very old neocon plan, right back to the days of the "Clean Break" document—where if they could throttle global petroleum, they'd be able to use that to contain China. They'd be able to throttle peer competitors. And then the U.S. would be able to ride out the storm with its great, unproven—or, sorry, announced—oil and gas reserves, from which they're going to benefit from a rise in price.

Trump's base is big oil, big gas, big fracking—and they're going to benefit from it, even if we all lose, Daniel, even if we all lose. And even if there's a food shortage of ammonia, urea, agricultural fertilizer, and that causes a global food crisis, big oil and big gas in America will benefit, because nobody is sending drones to attack our refineries in Texas or elsewhere. And so we'll be able to—and this makes the Venezuela play much more understandable in that sense—that was a stepping stone. That's the hardcore neocon strategy of throttling global oil and gas, and then riding out the storm with U.S. muscle. That was one of their basic core plans. Now, they would have said that was crazy back in the early 2000s.

But they're doing it 25 years later. They're actually doing it with Israel's help. So, is this going to work or not? It's a very big gamble by Israel and a very big gamble by the U.S. It could destroy the United States as an imperial power. It could destroy Israel as a colonial settler-state project, a Zionist project. It could cost them the Greater Israel project. Who knows? So my last question would be: does Israel care about the Trump administration or the Republican Party? Does the United States

really care about Israel and the Netanyahu project? Do either of these two parties really care about each other when you drill down to it? I think that's an interesting question—and an even more interesting answer.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, it definitely feels like there's a lot of complexity to the conclusion that they're using each other. And I always say they're two cheeks on the same animal's behind. They really do— to kind of paraphrase George Galloway—walk in tandem. They have contestation, conflict, antagonisms, but at the same time, this idea of them actually...

## **#Patrick Henningsen**

Caring for each other, being allies with each other—I don't think that's ever really been the case.

## **#Danny**

I think there's a deep—like you said—a real complexity to why they behave the way they do, why each party acts the way it does. Why it sometimes looks like capitulation from the United States, or why it looks like Trump can call up Netanyahu and say, "Do this," and he'll do it. I think there's a lot of give and take, and sometimes... I guess, in the world they live in—you know, the Epstein Island world—maybe there's some flogging, abuse, that kind of thing going on, where they scratch each other's backs and sometimes scratch too hard. It's a real dirty game.

And then finally, Patrick—when you were talking about the sabotage of the oil fields—Saudi Arabia, maybe just in a few minutes, reacted to this. Saudi Arabia named Iran, and Iran has hit strategic sites against Saudi Arabia throughout the war, but they're pretty strategic about it and usually understand how much they're hitting, how much damage is going to be done if they hit it, you know, as close as possible. But what Saudi Arabia is reporting are devastating consequences that many have noted—as you just noted—that Israel has a huge interest in hitting some of these sites, like in Kuwait, the UAE, and now Saudi Arabia.

And I thought the reason why China—well, I think China rallied Pakistan to step it up. Everyone's saying the U.S. chose, but China and Pakistan are much closer friends than even the U.S. and Pakistan. And I believe China was looking at the situation like, "Wow, actually the entire global energy market might be destroyed if the U.S. carries out what it said it was going to do." Even if they didn't have the capacity to wipe out everything—civilization itself—even if they just went to decimate Iran's oil industry.

And then Iran, of course, responded in kind—trying to decimate the whole Gulf energy system, turn out the lights, all of that. And you have a major global catastrophe on your hands. I think China came in and said, "Iran's winning. How about we use this disastrous opportunity to try to push with

Iran for what it wants?" That's how I see it. Other people are saying China is controlling Iran and all that. I don't see that. I actually see this as more of a pragmatic move. Yeah, this disaster was the bluff of the century, and now it's time to see if we can take advantage of it. And if we can't, well, it's just going to go back to what it was before.

## **#Patrick Henningsen**

But your final reactions on this? Well, the thing you've got to know—I personally think Pakistan self-deployed. And I'll tell you why. There's a deep political and, I think, also a kind of kindred spiritual connection between Pakistan and Iran. They're both Islamic republics. So, in terms of the DNA of those two countries—politically and spiritually—even though they differ in which branch of Islam the majority practices, there's a substantial Shia population in Pakistan, and they're very politically active. They've taken on a lot of the core tenets of the Iranian people's Islamic Revolution.

It had a big impact on Pakistan's political life and, in many ways, validated the Pakistani project. That's the thing. So when Israel starts threatening Pakistan—which they did in the last couple of months—they were talking about how a nuclear-armed Pakistan cannot be allowed to exist, that Israel will not be safe with an Islamic country possessing nuclear weapons. So I think Pakistan is looking at this as an existential issue: if Iran falls, they're next. It's as simple as that. And while they have the support of China and are an important economic partner with China and the Belt and Road, Pakistan is a major partner in the Belt and Road.

But Iran is also a major partner in the Middle Corridor projects and the future of east-west economic overland and sea combination routes. Russia and China are very much invested in Iran. Iraq is also an important part of that, and so is Turkey, for that matter. And, you know, Europe is going to be the ultimate beneficiary of that—if it's allowed to happen. But try telling that to the current European leadership and you'll be way too far ahead for them. They're playing Yahtzee, and the East is playing chess on this. So we can't help Europe at the moment. I think Pakistan has asserted itself. Also, Pakistan is very, very tight with Saudi Arabia.

Those two are probably, in terms of leadership, national dialogue, and cooperation, two of the tightest allies in the entire region—Saudi Arabia and Pakistan—both relying on each other: one on finance, the other on defense. So Saudi's hedging its bets for the future as well and sees Pakistan as a loyal ally. That's also part of the background. I think Trump's comments about MBS kissing one of his "you-know-what" cheeks are probably going to be the death knell for U.S.–Saudi relations. And again, Trump, with his big mouth—I don't know.

I could say a lot of things right now to describe Donald Trump and his little sidekick, J.D. Vance, who's kind of a finger-puppet version of Trump. It's bizarre. I could say they're this, they're that, that Trump's advisors are low IQ or whatever—there are lots of things you could say. But they're certainly not exuding a lot of confidence. If you look at the results of what's happened, it's just a disaster for America, for the region, for the global economy. Out of this, a lot of people are going to

emerge as voices of sanity, and I think that's huge. Say two major European countries—one a G7 country, Italy, and then Spain—two NATO countries wanting to open up diplomatic missions in Tehran. Listen.

And now they're looking at Russia through a different lens—comparing Russia to the United States—and saying, why does Russia have to be our mortal enemy? A lot of people in Europe are having this conversation now. Like, what's actually wrong with Russia? What did they do that was so bad? I mean, look at the United States. If we can't mobilize that kind of anger, sanctions, and full-spectrum punishment for the U.S. or Israel in this case—because they're inflicting economic pain on us in Europe—then what are we doing? So that same conversation is going to have to happen. You could see some breaking of ranks in Europe. I think it's already begun. If that happens at the Brussels level, it's going to be a big problem for Washington.

### **#Danny**

Well, Patrick, I want to make sure everyone knows to check the video description so they can find your 21st Century Wire YouTube channel and your Substack there. Everybody, hit the like button—that'll keep this video going well after we're done. Thanks so much for joining me today, Patrick.

### **#Patrick Henningsen**

Yep. And just a quick shout—if people can help, just hit our YouTube channel, like and subscribe, because we're so heavily throttled. We've been on that platform for about 10 years, and we've been through the censorship gauntlet. So any help you can give us for visibility and to fight the algorithmic suppression is greatly appreciated. We really appreciate it.

### **#Danny**

Great. Yes, everyone, you heard him. All right, that's it for the show. See you again soon, everyone. Bye-bye.