

# Patrick Henningsen: If US-Iran Talks FAIL, China READY to Do THIS

Watch Patrick Henningsen, Like & Subscribe to him on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@21stCenturyWireTV> Also visit Patrick's Substack here: <https://patrickhenningsen.substack.com> See all of Patrick Henningsen and his team's work here: <https://www.21stcenturywire.com> Follow Patrick's daily shorts on Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/21wire\\_media/](https://www.instagram.com/21wire_media/)

## #Nima

Hi, everybody. Today is Saturday, April 11, 2026, and our dear friend and brother, Patrick Henningsen, is here with us. Welcome back.

## #Patrick

It's great to be with you, Nima.

## #Nima

Let me start, Patrick, with the ongoing talks between the United States and Iran. Who's not in these negotiations? It seems, Patrick, that the plan was prepared behind the scenes by the Trump administration, then sent to Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Pakistan, and then to China—China talking to the Iranians, the Iranians then getting back to Turkey. But after all, it seems the whole plan is based, at least from what we've heard from the Iranian side, on the Strait of Hormuz. It's going to remain Iranian.

And they're talking about war reparations and sanctions, really—that's part of their argument right now. Unblocking all frozen assets, you know, and a permanent ceasefire on all fronts in the region. So far, we've had more than five hours; I think it's going to reach six, and they're going to keep negotiating into the night. What's your understanding of the main problem—or I'd say the most important issue—when it comes to the differences between the two parties?

## #Patrick

I think... well, first of all, I'm not speaking for the Iranian delegation, but my impression from them is that they're not expecting anything substantial from the U.S. side. That's my impression. You're right.

## #Nima

You're right.

## **#Patrick**

But they're respecting the process, and they also want to show the world that they're willing to act as a normative power in the international system—much like Russia, much like China, but unlike the United States, which at the moment isn't capable of acting as a normative power. In international relations studies, you'll find that the system tends to bend in favor of normative powers, whether they're superpowers or second-tier powers that can band together—or “bandwagon,” as it's called in international relations. But when it comes to getting results—agreements, treaties, understandings, accords—all these important arrangements can only happen if normative powers can sit down, establish some baseline of trust, and then, of course, come to an agreement.

Both sides need to be agreement-capable. And then, Nima, you need guarantors—you need other partners to guarantee the agreement after that. All of these are requirements; they've always been requirements since the beginning of modern international relations. But the problem is, the current U. S. administration doesn't believe it has to respect, recognize, or acknowledge anything that came before it. In that sense, Donald Trump is like Pol Pot—when he was inaugurated, he had kind of a Pol Pot mentality, which is: this is year zero, everything's different, we're going to throw away all the traditions, we're going to do things our way, our style of negotiations. We're going to be unpredictable, brash, aggressive—we're going to change our mind.

We're going to be all these things, and we don't have to do diplomacy like anybody before us because they're all failures and we're special. That is, in a nutshell, the Trump administration. So the result of that, Nima, has been that every single major negotiation of the last year and a half has been one failure after another. Donald Trump does not have any diplomatic successes under his belt. He just has a string of failures, and those things that haven't completely collapsed or failed are probably in the process of doing so as we speak. And the reason is because this style of politics—which doesn't believe in any framework, doesn't believe in bilateral understanding, doesn't believe in sowing and fostering trust and good relations—means you cannot have the basis for any agreement.

So I predicted a zero percent chance of success before this started. And I look at the negotiation team—it's all the same failing negotiators who presided over the previous failures. I think the big telltale sign here, Nima, is that the U.S., for some strange reason, is not willing to send its top diplomat, the one actually confirmed by the Senate—the Secretary of State. It's not willing to do that. Instead, it's sending these sort of unofficial figures, shadowy figures, friends or family members of the president, and then the vice president, who has no power whatsoever—no executive power at all.

And no experience. The vice president is a 41-year-old tech bro who wrote a best-selling book—that's his prior qualification. He did two years in the Senate, actually less than two years, and then jumped immediately on the Trump campaign bandwagon because Peter Thiel installed him, insisted

that he be Donald Trump's vice-presidential candidate. So it doesn't look good from the U.S. side. It's probably going to fail. The U.S. has used negotiations as cover for a sneak attack pretty consistently—against Iran, against Russia, against Hezbollah, and against Hamas. And when I say the U.S., I mean Israel and the U.S. So there are a couple of structural problems that guarantee failure.

One is that Israel reserves the right to undermine and sabotage any negotiations at any point, at any moment. They reserve that right. They've already done it. As soon as this alleged ceasefire was announced, Israel used it as an opportunity to go in and destroy any sort of bilateral framework by attacking Lebanon in the most vicious manner. And it forced the United States to basically deny Lebanon as a front in this conflict, to panic, and to make counterarguments against Iran—saying, "No, no, Lebanon's not included in any of these negotiations." But it is. It's central. All of these conflict areas are central, because who is the one country in the entire region that's attacking everybody else? It's Israel. The reason they're in this war is because of Israel.

The reason what's happening in Lebanon isn't because of Hezbollah—it's because of Israel. Hezbollah didn't violate any ceasefire agreement. Anybody looking at it honestly knows that. But Israel has violated its ceasefire with Hezbollah, or with Lebanon, over 1,500 times since it was declared. So it's not even a debate about who's at fault. But if you talk to the U.S., Israel has a perfect record. So overcoming this surrogate relationship that Israel has with the U.S.—this sort of good cop, bad cop act—is difficult, because it's really more of a performance. They're absolutely working together. If the U.S. wants to sabotage negotiations, they can just give Israel a quiet nod. And if Israel wants to sabotage negotiations, they can do it with or without U.S. permission.

They can just go ahead and do it. The U.S. automatically has to conform. So Israel can be both a proxy of the United States and also a rogue actor, antagonizing its own ally if it decides it wants to, you know, negotiate in good faith. Meanwhile, the U.S. will accuse the Iranians of being cheaters, of not negotiating in good faith, and all the rest of it—throwing tantrums and using various excuses to pull out of negotiations or to maintain maximalist demands while giving zero concessions. And I would argue that Ukraine plays the exact same role in any negotiations between Russia and the United States over a political settlement in that conflict. Israel and Ukraine play pretty much identical roles.

They can pretend to be autonomous actors and then go and sabotage any progress by attacking Russia, in the case of Ukraine, or attacking Iran, Lebanon—whatever country Israel decides to bomb. Pretty soon, Turkey will be in that collection of targets. And the United States will then do some fancy footwork. So I see this breaking down very quickly. The United States has already launched provocations, pushing U.S. naval destroyers into the Strait of Hormuz, claiming to be clearing mines. But really, what they're doing is taking advantage of the negotiations, knowing that if Iran fires at a U.S. ship, then Iran will be blamed for sabotaging the peace talks. Meanwhile, the U.S. presents itself as a neutral actor, just moving into the Strait of Hormuz to clear mines and open the seaways, and so forth.

And so, wanting to take away Iran's leverage. And now it's a war of information. The U.S. is claiming that they're doing this, and Iran is saying, no, no, they haven't passed. They're not jointly holding space in the Strait. They've been warned, and they haven't transgressed. But the U.S. media has already run with the U.S. story that they're in there—it's already hit the headlines. And that's to create pressure and then to blame Iran for being the problem, you see. So this is just the way it's going to be. Yeah, Iran's probably not surprised that they're going to have to play this chess match constantly with the U.S. There is no chance—with this president, this current administration—there's zero chance of any successful negotiations.

Zero. Both with this theater and with Russia-Ukraine, or Gaza, or anywhere else. Definitely not Lebanon. The United States is working behind the scenes, actively trying to start a civil war in Lebanon. That's what the United States has been doing for months now—fomenting a civil war—and they're determined to get it. This is what Israel has asked Washington for. Israel has asked Washington to help engineer a civil war in Lebanon because it believes it can take advantage of the chaos to achieve its ambitions of occupying, or reoccupying, South Lebanon, and hopefully vanquishing one of its eternal enemies, which is Hezbollah.

And they will kill, destroy, and ethnically cleanse anything that gets in their way, and they have the full backing and blessing of the United States. So that's why it's an important front. Lebanon is absolutely part and parcel of the Iranian conflict because it's got the same belligerent involved, which is Israel. Israel is the number one belligerent in West Asia. They're number one—they're attacking everybody. They've declared war on everybody. And they're going to, whether a negotiation fails or succeeds, it's going to be based on one factor: whether the U.S. is capable of restraining Israel or not. That's the only factor. Otherwise, the U.S. has to forfeit all of its leverage at any point in negotiations because it cannot control Israel.

So that makes all of this just pantomime, just theater. It can't amount to anything substantial other than a few photo ops and a pause that will allow the U.S. and Israel to rearm, reload, and attack again. And I think they needed this pause—the U.S. and Israel needed this pause. Iran was not calling for a ceasefire. Iran did not need this pause. It was prepared; it was already retrenched. I mean, it's grateful to have a respite, but as we saw with Israel and Hamas, Israel and Hezbollah, the U.S. and Iran, every single time any kind of impasse is reached, it's used to stage a surprise attack. The U.S. and Israel have no intention—no intention—of peace or of giving any concessions at all to Iran, despite what's in the news right now.

With Trump, everything can be walked back in a matter of hours. He'll flip-flop twice before dinner, again before morning coffee, then again before lunch, and twice before the next evening's dinner. So the Trump administration is not agreement-capable. They're just not. They never will be. He doesn't have the personnel. He himself, as an executive, is terrible. All his proponents say Donald Trump's a great dealmaker, but Donald Trump is a terrible dealmaker. He has a string of failures longer than any president, and he's only been in office this term for nearly a year and a half.

He has a string of failures that's just—it's more failed deals in a year and a half than any president could manage to squeeze into one term. And all he does is accuse every other president of signing bad deals. Then he withdraws from treaties and agreements, and he himself doesn't have any success reaching new ones. All you get is this long, monotonous gestalt of chaos, destabilization, and war. That's what this president can deliver—war, instability, a failing economy—and that's exactly what he has delivered, which is the exact opposite of what he was elected on, what he campaigned on.

And he has no problem, apparently, with that—zero self-awareness. He doesn't care what voters think, doesn't care what his base thinks, has basically just ejected and discarded his own support base. He's thumbed his nose at MAGA this week, finally, and basically called them all low-IQ idiots. That's what Donald Trump's doing at the moment. So his base—his remaining base—is Wall Street: thieves who are doing call options and put options on oil and stocks according to what Trump posts on Truth Social. That's part of his base. The other is big oil, big fracking, LNG, big AI, and big defense. There are no people in that base anymore.

There's no more populist support. Donald Trump has gotten rid of all that. And now he's basically being propped up by those elite factions I just mentioned. The results are pretty predictable, quite frankly, because what do all those players I just mentioned want? They want war. They want instability. They want a choked supply of energy on the global market so they can take advantage of higher prices, retrench, and monopolize geographical locations they previously didn't have consolidation over—but they do now. You see how this works. The net-net of all this, whether intended or not, is that there's a short supply of energy on the global market.

And most countries have either had their energy stolen by the U.S. or damaged and destroyed by U.S. allies—like Ukraine, which has destroyed about 30% of Russia's petroleum export capacity. Between Iran, the U.S., and Israel, a large percentage of Gulf production has either been shut down or disrupted. Iran's going to act in its own interest, but that's already been factored in by Israel. That's why Israel hit the South Pars gas field, and that's why the United States asked Israel to hit the South Pars gas field—because it knew Iran would retaliate. The overall degradation of the Gulf benefits America. It's a zero-sum policy: it benefits America, weakens the Gulf, and weakens overall energy production. That can be rebuilt later by the United States and Israel.

This is what they believe. They'll run future energy through Israel as the energy hub—that's their plan. In the meantime, the United States will consolidate, dominate, and profit from the global shortage. They have a bigger share over Europe now than they did before. So, the Nord Stream pipeline sabotage—that was a U.S.-led operation via NATO. Everybody who's studied it knows it. We exposed that in great detail at 21st Century Wire; we still have the reports pinned at the top of our featured section on Nord Stream. The net result of this war in the Persian Gulf has been like a Nord Stream Part 2. The Qatari force majeure on LNG production and shipments to Europe's southern flank has achieved another coup for the United States.

But they got Israel to do it, and they kind of got Iran to do it indirectly for them by starting this war. Iran has to do what it has to do for its own security and to achieve deterrence. But unfortunately, part of the net result of that is playing into U.S. hands, which is to preside over a much more strangled global energy market where they'll emerge as the winner—the most dominant and most profitable country. That's why they went for Venezuela in December, because they knew once they'd secured Venezuela, they could move on to the Persian Gulf—and they did. So I think this was by design. And whether it's successful or not, Nima, remains to be seen.

## **#Nima**

You know, the case of those two destroyers was really interesting, because they tried to get them through the Strait of Hormuz. Then we had reports in the Washington Post saying they'd already passed through the Strait without any difficulties. Iranian media denied it, saying nothing like that had happened. And later on, you know, it turned into a kind of PR operation, because they have this dominance over the mainstream media—they can manipulate public opinion all around the world.

And finally, we had a report on Bloomberg saying they tried to cross the Strait of Hormuz but were turned back after a threat from the IRGC. But basically, Patrick, I think what's really wrong with the Trump administration is that the key issue is the difference between a deal and an agreement. There's a huge difference between the two. A deal is something like, yeah, I sell my car to you—we're not going to see each other anymore. Or I sell an apartment building to you, and it's done. But an agreement is something where you agree with somebody to work on an issue where you have some differences. Like the INF Treaty between Russia and the United States—it needs the active participation of all parties involved in that agreement.

And I think that's what the Trump administration lacks—that ability. You have Steve Witkoff, Jared Kushner; they don't know what negotiations are. You know, we had the JCPOA. It wasn't perfect—everybody knows that—and no deal is perfect, we know that. But it was a huge diplomatic effort on the part of the United States and Iran. Nothing like that can happen now. You look at these groups—different groups went to Pakistan: military group, economic group—huge. Look at the Iranian delegation; it's huge. They have people for every part, to discuss every issue when it comes to sanctions, the military, security, everything.

## **#Patrick**

But I don't see that kind of ability in the Trump administration.

## **#Nima**

You mentioned why Marco Rubio isn't there. Why is that? Because he's not capable. Nobody in the Trump administration is capable of talking and negotiating, of making agreements. These people are dealmakers at best—that's what I'm talking about. But even in that sense, Donald Trump doesn't trust Marco Rubio. No, he doesn't. He sends these two guys even to Russia. That's the problem.

## **#Patrick**

He sends these two clowns who are widely regarded as unregistered Israeli agents—that's Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner. They act solely in the interests of Israel, and they have a direct line of communication with Benjamin Netanyahu's office. They're basically coordinating with the Israeli government, and they could sit in meetings all week—and they have before. They write nothing down, they record nothing, and it's really only what they choose to relay back to Donald Trump that becomes the substance or the material conclusion of that process, those meetings. That is not diplomacy. That is not someone acting on behalf of a state or a country—neither Steve Witkoff nor Jared Kushner.

Jared Kushner—it's just pure nepotism, because he's the president's son-in-law. And he's a family friend of the Netanyahus. He's the son of a Jewish-American gangster—well, part Israeli, I think, I'm not sure—Charles Kushner, a convicted felon whom Trump pardoned and made ambassador to France. Okay, this is just a normal part of the circus. So you're not going to get anything from these guys. They have no experience. They have a lot of profile because they've been given profile. They fly around, they're seen with Putin, they're getting pictures. But they're really just glorified tourists at the end of the day. You could send a used car salesman from New Jersey—he'd get the same result. He might even get a better result, actually.

But these guys have come up zero every time because their job is to deliver nothing. See, if he sent Marco Rubio, then there would be a problem because—the point of having advisors and a diplomatic corps and a secretary of state is that the president will defer a certain amount of expertise and experience to that team, to give them some level of autonomy to negotiate and manage the process. But Trump cannot have anybody who might rise above him in any of these positions, anyone who might outrank him in terms of experience or credibility. So that's why he maintains a mediocre pool of people. They're not much smarter than him, and they definitely don't have a profile or a résumé that might give them credibility as individuals.

For Trump, the only credibility people on his team have is that he selected them, that he endorsed them. Therefore, they're in his cabinet, in his circle. That's the only real credibility they're allowed to tout, that they're allowed to stand on. This is a typical kind of insecure, sycophantic autocrat's way of assembling, hiring, and managing, basically. You can do that in a business and kind of get away with it, but you can't run a country like that. And this is why the United States, as a country, is failing under this president. This president is running the U.S. into the ground—internationally, domestically, and economically. I don't think that's beyond debate at this point.

I mean, look at the results—they speak for themselves. Look at the mess he's gotten his country and the world into, the mess he's created with the global economy. This is all Donald Trump's doing. Look at the military failures his administration has been involved in. They appointed someone as defense secretary who's not even qualified, who couldn't lead a platoon in the U.S. military—someone who got kicked out of the D.C. National Guard, with alcoholism all over his résumé and all sorts of personal problems. Failed charities, bankrupted organizations left in his wake. That's Pete Hegseth. So again, mediocre—below mediocre—put in the highest possible position.

So they're going to do exactly as they're told, and that's it. Then what happened was—and this all came to a head last week, Nima—this operation, which they quickly rebranded as a mission to rescue this pilot after the downed F-15. What that really was, was a convenient kind of segue for an operation to snatch and grab enriched uranium in Iran, in Isfahan. And the press has refused to report on it. The Washington Post reported on the briefing the president got about the operation, but they won't report on the operation itself. And the operation was made active—it went from planning into doing during this.

And the rescue pilot became the White House's narrative, which they then used to cover up Donald Trump and Pete Hegseth's "Jimmy Carter moment." This was a failed special forces operation involving dozens, if not a hundred or more, U.S. special forces, multiple aircraft—and it was a total failure. The U.S. lost a record number of aircraft and military assets in a combat operation under Pete Hegseth and Donald Trump. This was the Jimmy Carter moment. It was a bigger failure than Carter's failed hostage rescue mission in 1980—a much bigger failure, okay? And you had a total cover-up by the U.S. media because of the national embarrassment of it. Donald Trump is invoking national security against the press.

And so they're in court right now over allowing the press access to the Pentagon. I mean, that's how bad it is right now with the Trump administration. Militarily, they're a total failure. They count success as, you know, "We've killed all these Iranians, we've blown up all these hospitals, we've blown up all these inflatable decoys, we've wiped out this, we've wiped out that." And they think that's a success. They're running with that. But tactically, I think it's a total failure for the U.S. This botched Isfahan operation was the Jimmy Carter moment—huge embarrassment. They're very close to losing the same amount of assets, in dollar terms, as Biden lost with the botched withdrawal from Afghanistan.

That was seven billion dollars in military assets. Trump has now lost close to three billion in military assets during this thing. So normally, Nima, in our country, after this many failures, you'd drag Pete Hegseth, in his—you know—funny suit that he wears, that Captain Kangaroo-style suit, in front of a Senate hearing or Congress or Armed Services, whatever. And he'd have to answer for why he's failed so badly. How has he lost so many assets? Why was this mission aborted? Why did they have to lose all these aircraft just to escape a disastrous, botched mission? He hasn't had to. He hasn't been held accountable. Why?

Because the Israeli lobby is working very hard behind the scenes right now in Washington to do damage control, and they're putting pressure on all the key committee members not to damp down any pressure in terms of, or even impeachment efforts by, the Democrats. Democratic leadership, with the Israeli lobby behind them, is being pushed—saying, “No, no, no, don't go for the 25th Amendment now, because if we don't get it, it's going to be a loss, and we don't want a loss going into the midterms.” That's not just politics; that's AIPAC. And the Israeli lobby—they're lobbying hard behind the scenes to determine what our lawmakers are going to do, and what they will and won't do, in relation to Donald Trump and this disastrous war.

They lobbied to confirm Pete Hegseth. That's why he got confirmed—because each one of those senators was instructed to vote for his confirmation. And I think if we had a full investigation, we'd find out the exact contents of those messages and letters. That should happen, because that's a level of foreign interference that's unprecedented. We have a foreign country—a foreign government—that's basically deciding who's going to be in the cabinet of a U.S. administration. And that same foreign government has dragged the United States into a war of choice that's been an unmitigated disaster from beginning to end.

This deserves a major overhaul in the U.S. government as a result. This is way bigger than Watergate—it's like Watergate times a hundred. But let me tell you, the effect of Watergate on the Republican Party after Nixon was that a lot of people left the party because of it. And I think you're going to see even more people leave the Republican Party now, and definitely not want anything to do with Trump or MAGA. They're already in the process of moving away from this president. You can see now that the Israel lobby doesn't care about Republicans, because they've done everything to undermine and sabotage the Republicans' chances in the midterms to hold the House and the Senate.

So they don't care, because what they wanted was this war—Israel needed this war. They needed it now because they know the window of opportunity is closing for the kind of support they might get from a president like this. This is their last chance to take the land they want, to knock out the leaderships and governments in the region they don't like, and to destroy the infrastructure of potential rivals. Israel sees Trump as their last chance to do that. They know attitudes are changing after October 7, 2023, and Israel will never be in favor again—it's only going to go downhill for Israel.

They know that, so they've used Trump to try to get what they can. They dragged the U.S. into this war. And, of course, there's always been a neocon Zionist faction in America that has always wanted this war against Iran. They've just been waiting for it, represented by the Lindsey Grahams of the world. But that's actually what's happening. And it's not just them—many Democrats want this war as well. The Hillary Clinton camp, the Nancy Pelosi camp, the Chuck Schumer camp—they're very aggressive and very pro-Israel, obviously.

So this is the problem. We have a problem in the U.S. political system—there's no viable opposition anymore to any of this. The Israeli lobby and other military-industrial interests have managed to

basically co-opt, steer, and create controlled opposition cells under the larger umbrella of a two-party system. And this is the end result; we're watching it now. So again, back to the original point, Nima, because of this, I don't see any hope for peace negotiations here. But I do see something—I see a level of maturity from Iran, and also no naivety with Iran that I see with Russia. And Russia has played Trump like a fiddle on the Ukraine negotiations.

And Russia has basically said, "Bring your fake diplomats. We'll entertain them. We have our businessman—he's not an official diplomat. You can have caviar, we'll do some nice banquets in Moscow, you guys get some good photo ops and some headlines—but we're going to get down to business and do what we need to do on the ground in Ukraine, period." And Iran's the same way. They're like, "Okay, we'll go through the motions of negotiations, but we're preparing for your next attack. We're preparing to secure our interests in the region. We're committed, and we're just going to get on with it. Go ahead with your theater, go ahead with your proxies."

And so this is a level of realism that has taken hold in Tehran. And, you know, the end result, as you well know, is that if the West was hoping the reformists or whatever were going to emerge as some sort of viable bloc in Iran, that's not going to happen. And likewise in Russia—the liberal, pro-LGBT, pro-liberal, pro-this, pro-that bloc in Russia, the Navalny bloc or whatever—that's not going to happen either. So what they've done is they've further polarized the situation, but they've also empowered Russia. They've empowered China. The United States has empowered Iran and Israel as well through their own actions. They've empowered them and forced their hand.

And now you're starting to see the results of that. And then the other question is, what's going to become of the Gulf countries—these Gulf monarchies that were set up by the British Empire—which are not legitimate monarchs? They're tribal chieftains who've been elevated way above their natural status, kings and princes created by the British and then maintained by the Americans after them for the sheer purpose of looking after American and Western interests, fueling the petrodollar, and so forth. But now all that's been thrown into disarray, Nima. So there's no guarantee for the existence of any of these Gulf sheikdoms going forward. They're on borrowed time now, and I think they know it.

So it's really going to be up to them whether they want to survive. It looks like Qatar has probably been the most pragmatic so far. Qatar has seen the writing on the wall and is saying, "Actually, we want to survive, so we're going to change our policies now vis-à-vis our relations with America." And that's going to put pressure on the other Gulf states to decide what they want to do as well. So things are changing, Nima. Maybe not as fast or in the way that we—or those who want peace, prosperity, and stability—would like, but they are changing.

## **#Nima**

You know, the latest news here—CNN reported that the talks would continue tonight, and maybe tomorrow they'll keep going with the negotiations. But the main issue, it seems, is how to manage

this foremost. The United States is suggesting to the Iranian side that they can do it together with Iran. It's amazing to hear that. It's not going to happen. I think never—never—would Iran accept that. If they get back into the war, the worst war, they're not going to accept that. But I think, after all, they're going to come to some sort of solution, in my opinion.

That could be Iran controlling, straight up or almost, the way that somehow... because they're talking about using yuan, using other currencies to manage the world. Maybe the negotiations will go in that direction—just do it the way that, you know, influences the dollar, you know? Not influencing the dollar that much. I think the whole opinion is going to move in that direction if they insist on their position to somehow influence the Strait or, foremost, the trade routes. I don't see anything more than that happening.

### **#Patrick**

No, no. Look, Nima, for one reason—which you just mentioned—pretty much disqualifies any chance of joint management. And that is, Iran cannot; they have to demand other foreign currencies. They have to, for two reasons: one, to avoid sanctions, and two, to avoid frozen assets. Why would you jump back into the same trap you just climbed out of?

### **#Nima**

Sorry for interrupting. People need to understand that Iran is under tremendous sanctions. They haven't been able to use U.S. dollars for more than 46 years—that's huge. Many people don't realize that. They can't buy anything, not even medicine—nothing—with dollars. Go ahead, sorry for interrupting.

### **#Patrick**

Yes, exactly. There's just no way. The United States will want to—well, they're automatically going to be doing dollar business if the U.S. is jointly managing with them. There's no way the U.S. would be involved in anything that doesn't have dollars in it. That's the first thing. The second thing is, why would the Iranians give up all the strategic advantages they've just worked hard and spilled blood to achieve? One of those is the total removal of the U.S. military footprint in the Persian Gulf. They tried this with the Russians—saying, "Russia, you have to withdraw from these lines, you have to give up this, and you can't have that."

And then Russia's like, why would we give up the leverage we've fought and died for, that we've sacrificed so much for, that we've spilled blood into the dirt for? Why would we do that? And who are you to demand that we do that—because we're winning? See, America can't win. America can announce they've won by saying what they've destroyed, or by saying how hard they've punished Iran, or how much they've made them suffer. They can announce victory. But the reality is, the United States of America is many, many, many thousand miles away, and that's not their home field.

There's only so much they can do to micromanage and control that region, or control Iran, either through sanctions or hard power. And one of the big advantages the U.S. had, they just sacrificed.

They gave up all their bases in the region for Israel. For Israel. How is that in the U.S. imperial interest? I mean, it's not. So Israel felt that was a gamble it was willing to take, and they basically forced the United States into that gambling hand by opening up the front in this war. And, you know, the U.S. has arguably had joint planning operations with Israel, but we have to go by the front-of-house narrative, because at the end of the day, that's the legal narrative of this war. Any agreements are going to be based on that legal definition, which is that Israel started the war and the United States joined them in a preemptive war of choice. So if there's any agreement, it's going to be based on the legal definition of what we've just witnessed over the last forty-something days.

But anybody who's still making the argument that this is really in the U.S. imperial interest—to have given up billions and billions of dollars invested in the region over many, many years, like seventy years—and then forfeiting all of that as a gamble in a sneak attack by their greatest ally in the region, Israel... I mean, it's not a serious argument. So anybody who's saying that the tail doesn't wag the dog, trying to make that argument—it's not a serious argument. It's saying that Israel is not a factor in U.S. foreign policy. I mean, that's a kind of conspiracy theory that's very hard to reconcile, but there are still a lot of people making that argument. And Israel has provided the evidence against it. They've forced the United States to sacrifice its military positions in seventeen bases—everything. Nima, in a matter of a month, in a matter of a month, they lost it all.

That's like going to the table in Vegas, putting it all on black, spinning the roulette, and it comes up red. You just lost everything. You put your house on there, you put the car, you even put up your wife as collateral—and you lost it all. That's what Donald Trump just did for the American empire. And anybody making the argument that that's in the U.S. imperial interest is smoking some strong product, I'm telling you right now. It's just not. But this is also the result of the outsized influence Israel has over U.S. politics, the outsized control it's developed over U.S. foreign policy decision-making, and the fact that Israel has managed to commandeer the United States military as its own private mercenary force.

And that's exactly what Joe Kent, the whistleblower and Donald Trump's former counterterrorism chief, said when he resigned in his letter. And this is what a lot of people are now saying in America—they don't want to fight as mercenaries for a foreign state, in this case Israel. And this is exactly what's happening. It's a disaster, Nima. I mean, we can dress it up, we can follow the bouncing ball, we can talk about negotiations, but we cannot forget the fact: this is massive, this is like a historic defeat, a historic meltdown for the United States of America. And Donald Trump was the man who sank this Titanic—he ran into the iceberg.

And he did so quite happily, because at the end of the day, he did what he was instructed to do. And, you know, when the person steering the ship was Bibi Netanyahu—we just learned this from the New York Times report this week—he came to Washington on February 11th. The day I was in

Tehran, Bibi landed in Washington and sat at the head of the table for a special command planning situation room, barking orders at everybody. So, the U.S.—are they really a superpower? Who's the political superpower? Who's the head of the superpower? Is it Trump or is it Netanyahu? Who's more powerful? Who makes the decisions? It's not Trump. It's Netanyahu.

So then, the U.S. might be the material power militarily. They might be the economic power, with the dollar as a reserve currency that allows it to go into debt to pay for the massive military. But politically, who's the power? It's not the United States. The consensus in the United States bends automatically toward Israel—what Israel wants, what the Israel lobby wants, and what Benjamin Netanyahu's office wants. That's the political power in this arrangement. So I would argue that's a bifurcated power. The U.S. and Israel are kind of joined at the hip, and the tail is wagging the dog 110%. Anyone making an argument against that should not be taken seriously, in my opinion.

## **#Nima**

John Kerry said in his latest interview that Benjamin Netanyahu wanted the Obama administration to attack Iran. He wanted Joe Biden to attack Iran. He wanted George W. Bush to attack Iran. He asked every U.S. president. I think Colonel Wilkerson said something about how this guy, Benjamin Netanyahu, is a genius when it comes to manipulation—when it comes to manipulating domestic policy in the United States. He did that with Donald Trump. No, he simply used Donald Trump as a proxy, just like NATO used Zelensky. That's a total humiliation, looking at the reality of what's happened so far. It's unbelievable how Donald Trump was trapped in this war against Iran—the war of Israel, the war of Benjamin Netanyahu, the war he wanted for such a long time before leaving office in Israel. He's Zelensky right now.

## **#Patrick**

He is. He is. Who's smarter? Who would you favor in a chess match—Netanyahu versus Trump? Who would you bet on? I know who I'd bet on. It's not Trump. I'd bet on Netanyahu every day.

## **#Nima**

No one.

## **#Patrick**

Trump is like Zelensky in the sense that Zelensky is a reality TV actor who was put into the presidency, controlled by oligarchs and by Israel. There's massive Israeli influence in Kyiv, especially over Zelensky. And Donald Trump is a reality TV actor who was put into the presidency, controlled by oligarchs and by Israel. Isn't that amazing? The two worst geopolitical disasters in the world

feature these two people with almost identical profiles. Both are probably incompetent, both are narcissists, and both are only good at one thing—looking after their own image and micromanaging whatever scene they happen to be in front of, at any given moment.

That is their number one skill set. Everything else—a failure, a disaster, an abysmal disaster for their countries. So that's quite an interesting comparison, but at the same time, you know, they do change places a little bit. Ukraine's allowed to be the rogue attack dog, to go attack Russia as and when, to stymie any peace negotiations—that's the role they play—and also to help disrupt Russia's energy industry. And then, likewise, the U.S. allows Israel to, or Israel allows itself to be, that rogue actor—to attack, to undermine negotiations, and to hit any energy infrastructure in the region to throttle global supply.

And they're both involved in so many different facets that some of these actors in these two theaters are performing very similar roles. Just look at the bottom line—look at the bottom line. Then you can see, as they say in Latin, *\*cui bono\**—who benefits. That's the ultimate question. Follow the money and you'll see who the beneficiaries are. Right now, in the Persian Gulf, the chief beneficiaries—well, Iran has benefited politically, tremendously—but they've done that at a huge cost, and they've also fought for it, okay? They've done it out of self-defense. Big difference. They didn't attack.

They didn't start the war. But on the economic side, the other beneficiaries are the U.S. oil and gas industry, the U.S. stock market, the banks, and Wall Street. They've benefited tremendously. They're making a lot of money, and the president himself has personally benefited—as have his family and his inner circle—from his tweets, from his policy flip-flopping, and from the general chaos and disaster that is this conflict. So that's beyond debate at this point. In terms of whether this is going to be allowed to continue or not, or whether the U.S. will be serious about any of these preconditions from Iran—the minute they allow unfrozen assets, unless they do it secretly, which is a possibility, to unfreeze Iran's assets but keep it secret—the press will... there'll be a massive backlash from the right-wing press, because they've been saying that Obama was handing money to terrorists, basically, after the JCPOA. Planes full of pallets of cash were sent to the mullahs in Iran.

They still say that on Fox—that it was done to fund terror. It's done to fund terror, you know. So that could turn on Trump if they allow sanctioned assets to be released to Iran. There are all these impediments built into the U.S. system, and the U.S. propaganda matrix will prevent a lot of the concessions that would lead to a deal. So again, this is why I predict a zero percent chance of success for the Trump administration on this, especially with his shady, so-called negotiators who are basically glorified Israeli assets—Steve Wyckoff and Jared Kushner. If they're involved, you can be sure the sneak attack is underway.

Any moment, a sneak attack could happen. If those two are involved, they're relaying stuff back to Israel and probably giving a whole bill of goods to Trump, because their priority—Steve Wyckoff and Jared Kushner's priority—is not the United States. It's not Donald Trump. It's not the people of the United States. Their priority, overwhelmingly, is to deliver what Israel needs and what Israel wants.

And I'd like to see anybody make an argument against that. You can see it in their words and their actions, and look at their past results. So that statement I've just made, I think, is irrefutable.

## **#Nima**

Patrick, there was a report on CNN—an exclusive report—saying that U.S. intelligence indicates China is preparing a weapons shipment to Iran. It seems that there's some kind of communication between Iran and Russia. Today, for example, we saw an Iranian C-130 cargo plane over Tehran, so something's going on. These two weeks of ceasefire aren't just going to be a rest for the Israelis and the United States, but also, you know, good for the Iranians as well. But do you think that if the report is true—if they're not just making some kind of false allegation—it means China really is preparing? We've learned that China has been trying to convince Iran to continue with these negotiations, right? Now, if the reports are accurate, is China planning for the possibility that the negotiations fail, to then move in another direction?

## **#Patrick**

Yeah. Of course, China is under no illusions that these negotiations are going to produce anything substantial. They're part of a longer process, and that process includes everyone in the world watching and observing as well. It's part of the political process and the development of it. But I don't think—so, China is already making contingencies. Russia has already made contingencies, and I think a lot of other countries are too. The fact that Pakistan is in a mediation position, I think, is a massive win for China, because Pakistan's a very strong ally of China. But I think Pakistan has done this of its own volition, because its relationship with Tehran is also very strong. People don't realize that, and it has traditionally been very good. For Pakistan, it's an existential issue.

They know that if Iran falls, they're next, because they've already been threatened by the Israelis, you see. An Islamic country cannot be allowed to have a nuclear weapon in Tehran, in Asia, and so that was a direct threat to Pakistan. So obviously, for them, it's a direct interest. But overall, I think China is not in a hurry, though it would like to see a resolution on this. And obviously, they have energy concerns as well. But China will still survive even if there's a throttling of the Persian Gulf for the next six months. It's going to be a disaster for the global economy, but China will survive. It'll be difficult, but they'll cope. They'll manage. I can't say the same for a lot of other countries, especially Western Europe. Different story altogether. So we'll see. We'll see.

## **#Nima**

Yeah, exactly. Thank you so much, Patrick, for being with us today. A great pleasure, as always.

## **#Patrick**

My pleasure, Nima. Take care. All the best.

## **#Nima**

Yeah, before we wrap up, please go to [21stCenturyWire](https://21stCenturyWire.com), and you can follow Patrick on his Substack at [PatrickHenningsen.Substack.com](https://PatrickHenningsen.Substack.com). Right below his name, you can see his Substack along with [21stCenturyWire](https://21stCenturyWire.com).

## **#Patrick**

And then drop my YouTube channel—put the link in the description. And if you guys can like and subscribe to our YouTube channel, we're heavily censored on YouTube. Any help—likes, subscribes, follows—would be massive, and we'd really appreciate it if you could do that. So, thank you.

## **#Nima**

Yeah, sure, sure. I'll put all the links in the description of this video right after this.

## **#Patrick**

Thanks. Thanks a lot.

## **#Nima**

Thank you.