

Iran & China CRUSH Trump's Hormuz Blockade, US Navy BACKS DOWN | Magnier

Elijah Magnier joins to discuss Iran's devastating counter to the US naval blockade and why Trump is losing it with each passing day of the 2-week "ceasefire." Follow Elijah: <https://ejmagnier.com/> FOLLOW ME ON RUMBLE: <https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong> FOLLOW ME ON TELEGRAM: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> SUPPORT THE CHANNEL ON PATREON: <https://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong> Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhaiphong> Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho> Follow me on Telegram: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> #iran #trump #china

#Danny

Welcome, everyone. Welcome back to the show. It's your host, Danny Haiphong. I'm joined by war correspondent and independent journalist Elijah Magnier. Everyone, hit the like button as you come in — that helps boost the show in YouTube's algorithm. But Elijah, welcome back.

#Elijah Magnier

Hello, and thank you for having me.

#Danny

Of course. Well, Elijah, I wanted to get right to the developments here, especially the blockade. I wanted to ask you about this, okay? Because this comes on the heels of the so-called ceasefire. I wanted to ask for your reaction — it seems like this blockade is underway. Reports from Al Jazeera say there are over 10,000 U.S. forces, along with a number of destroyers and ships, sailing around the Strait of Hormuz — not in the Strait, but around it. Essentially, what's happened is that both Iranian and Chinese ships, and others related to them, have actually been getting through — at least four in the last day — including two that visited Iranian ports. The promise of the blockade was to hit these ships, like the Trump administration did with Venezuela, if they were to dock and load up at Iranian ports.

At least three others have crossed the Strait of Hormuz since this blockade essentially began. Maybe you can help the audience understand, Elijah — what role does this blockade now have in this war? And how have Iran and, of course, its partners and friends — China being the biggest — responded,

condemning this and also making good on its word that it would continue to sail through the Strait of Hormuz and do what it needed to do with Iran? What does this all mean? Where are we right now in this war?

#Elijah Magnier

I need to give a little bit of background first so people can follow. We've had a 40-day war, and then the Americans came up with a different narrative, different objectives — but they haven't been able to meet those objectives. They said they wanted regime change — they failed. They said they destroyed the Iranian missile system — they failed, because Iran was still launching missiles until they finally acknowledged that the Iranians are actually defending themselves, and that the Israelis and the Americans are unable to achieve their objectives.

This is why they agreed to go to Islamabad for the first round of talks. Now, that's interesting because this is where everything started. At the end of the talks, we have U.S. Vice President Vance saying that these talks have failed. In my opinion, they did not fail. They were never destined to reach an agreement the first time they met after forty days of a very brutal war. They were supposed to exchange ideas, set boundaries, try to elbow one another, test each other's limits. And then we have something interesting coming from Donald Trump — he's saying, "I don't accept 90%. I don't accept 95%. I want 100%."

#Elijah Magnier

That says a lot, because it means they've reached more or less 90% of what Donald Trump wanted and what the Israelis wanted. At the end of the day, this is an Israeli negotiation meeting. This is an Israeli war — it's not an American war. Then the Americans decided to set up a blockade around Iran. Now, this is not working, and we've already seen, in the first hours of the blockade, the movement of shipments. The Americans cannot stop Iranian oil from being sold to China, because then they'd be endangering China's national security — the Chinese economy and energy are a red line for China.

Therefore, the Americans are now caught between not being able to fully implement the blockade as they wished, and at the same time, we see the Iranians not being very harsh on the movement and passage within the Strait of Hormuz. Then we have information coming out that both sides are actually going to meet — maybe in Vienna, maybe in Geneva, but in a European country. They're not going to meet in Islamabad. And the Americans, by agreeing to meet in a European country, are really trying to rebuild their relationship with the Europeans. So, what's the conclusion about what's happening today?

We have a ceasefire that's still holding. We have a gathering of forces that really has no purpose other than to show strength, but it's not going to deter Iran or make it change its mind. That's why we see that, within just two days of the announcement of what the Americans called the failure of

the negotiations, there's already a second meeting happening this week, in the next few days. This means the blockade isn't working and isn't going to work — not because it won't affect Iran; it will, but it won't cripple it, since Iran has a railway connection with China through Uzbekistan.

They have a railway reaching the Caspian Sea. They have the supply line with Russia open. They have seven countries bordering Iran. The line with Turkey is very active. So they can really bother the Iranians, like they have been doing for the last 47 years, but this is not going to have the effect that Donald Trump wants, or wants us to believe. So, at the end of the day, he's trying, but then he's going to go back to negotiations. Is that a good thing? For the Americans, yes, because it offers a ladder for Donald Trump to climb down from the tree he went up for Iran — because Iran is in a defensive position. But not for Israel, which wanted chaos in Iran.

#Danny

Yeah, those are all great points, Elijah. I guess my question then is, why? Why were these ships allowed to pass? Some have noted that maybe U.S. forces aren't ready to interdict them yet, given how quickly this blockade was called, declared, and acted upon. Others think there may be deeper reasons, especially since we're hearing that Saudi Arabia is actually begging, through back channels, for Trump to stop this. Given all the news we've heard, maybe you can also comment on the situation in the region — the Gulf region in particular — which is very bad right now in terms of what the Strait of Hormuz has always been about: the shipments, the trade, the movement and flow of oil and other precious commodities for the global economy, which have now become a major part of this war.

#Elijah Magnier

Now, this war has given Iran a new leverage card — the Strait of Hormuz. That wasn't the case before the war. For Iran, this is a great source of income because it can bring in between \$70, \$80, and \$90 billion a year, which is quite a lot — more or less equal to the income from selling energy and oil. For the Gulf countries, this is a problem because they'll have to end up increasing the price of oil, and it's no longer going to be competitive compared to Venezuelan oil, for example. Even if there's a difference in quality — particularly Kuwaiti oil, which is the most expensive, and Venezuelan oil, which is very heavy — it will still create a disturbance in the energy market.

What's happening with the Gulf countries is that, first, they're extremely angry with Iran. The level of hatred toward Iran has never been this high. Nevertheless, on the other hand, they now understand that the Americans are incapable of defending themselves, since they didn't even protect their own bases. They're also incapable of defending the Arab countries that have offered them bases, spending billions of dollars. The Qataris spent \$11 billion on the Al Udeid military air base. So all of this turned out to be really useless, because the Arabs ended up having to spend on their own interceptor missile systems to defend themselves and the U.S. bases.

And they have to go and buy more missile systems to defend the American bases and themselves, because the Americans have put all their forces in Israel. And this is not their war — they were not consulted when the Americans decided to start it, nor were they consulted when the Americans went to sit with the Iranians, which only showed their limitations. For the Arabs — for some of them, like Saudi Arabia and the Emiratis — they wanted to finish off Iran. But that didn't happen, which means now they have to deal with an Iran that can rightly say, "I've managed to stand up against two of the most powerful armies in the world — the Americans globally and the Israelis in the region — and I'm still standing. The Iranian ruling system is still intact."

And the Iranians have shown remarkable resilience by renewing their leadership at both the first and second levels immediately and continuing the war. For the Arabs now, they have to deal with Iran, but they also need to find an alternative to the Strait of Hormuz, which will require a lot of investment — like the Saudis' pipeline through Yanbu, going toward the Red Sea. But even that is vulnerable, because Ansarullah in Yemen are sitting at the corner of Bab al-Mandeb, and they can shut that down. So the message to the Arabs today is that they really have to establish a security agreement with Iran to make sure the people of the region can look after their own security. This is something that Javad Zarif, the former Iranian foreign minister, had proposed to the Arabs when he was active in the Iranian administration under President Rouhani — to set up a security agreement where they look after their own security.

So for now, the Americans are behaving in a way that completely disregards the interests of the Arabs and looks only after the interests of Israel, which is going to bring more logic, not love. There will never be love or good ties between the Arabs and Iran, but the logic is to establish a relationship strong enough to create some kind of balance in the security agreement. Yes.

#Danny

Yeah, well, that's a far different arrangement, Elijah, than what we've had—especially in the last month and a half, but really everything leading up to it. So I guess my next question to you is: does this mean that the Trump administration, the U.S., and even Israel in some respects—given its dependency on the U.S. in so many ways—are on the retreat now? Despite all this talk about the blockade and obliterating ships if they, you know, pass through, and that they'll hit all of Iran's fast-attack ships and all that, does this actually mean the opposite is happening? That the United States is gearing up and preparing to settle this conflict, given that all these developments you laid out are very unfavorable for the U.S.? Your thoughts on this?

#Elijah Magnier

Well, I think the Americans would like to show their muscles to the Iranians with this blockade. They'd like to clash with them to a certain point, just to show the world how they can sink this ship or that ship, or that they've intercepted a tanker or whatever. They want to demonstrate something. On the Iranian side, they're not going to give them the possibility or the chance to do so, because

Iran has been reacting but not taking the initiative to attack. The Americans, on the other hand, have been taking the initiative to attack all the time. That's how this war started. So if the Americans want to keep the pace as it is today—as we've seen, no clashes, no provocations—we've seen them staying at least 200 kilometers away from the Iranian limits around the Shahbahar port.

That port, by the way, is run by the Indians. It's not run by the Iranians. There's an agreement with India. So the blockade—it's not against Iran; it's against China, India, and other parties that are buying Iranian oil. For Iran, it's really careless. Iran is more or less indifferent to American decisions, because 30% of China's oil comes from Iran, and Iran is selling around 1.5 million barrels per day to China. With the increase in the price of oil, that works to the advantage of Iran and Russia, by the way. That plays a very important role. So for now, the Americans are not provoking the Iranians, and vice versa. What we see today is more talk about the possibility of a meeting—where they'll meet, what the agenda will be, and what concessions one side might give to the other.

For example, the Iranians are saying, "We can stop enriching uranium because we have enough for five years. We can stop for five years, and you can inspect our program." So basically, we're back to the JCPOA of 2015, set up by Obama. But Donald Trump couldn't stand the idea of a nuclear deal concluded between Barack Obama and Iran, so he tried to do something different—which is more or less exactly the same. Obama said ten years with no enrichment beyond 3.75% and 20%. Donald Trump is going to say exactly the same, but he's saying twenty years, just to show he can double it. For Iran, as long as it's capable of enriching to 3.75% and 20% for medical and research purposes, that's enough. In fact, the 60% enrichment was only a response to Donald Trump, who pulled out of the JCPOA in March 2018, and in March 2019 Iran started enriching beyond 20%.

#Elijah Magnier

So it's easy for Iran to reach an agreement on the nuclear dossier. However, it will never accept any agreement on missiles, because that's Iran's only way to defend itself. Without the missiles, in the last 40 days, we would have seen Iran completely destroyed. And the relationship with its allies—that's sovereign. Nobody can tell any country whom they can or can't be friends with. So at the end of the day, as I see it now, without any provocations, the situation actually isn't as bad as the Americans would like us to think.

#Danny

Yeah, I saw you reporting on this—China being the first to break the blockade, Iran not holding back on continuing its shipments and its activities in the Strait of Hormuz, just because the United States made these threats. So, you know, from here, Elijah, I guess a lot of what happens next, and what's happening now, is still the exchange of terms in this war.

How will these terms—what are these terms, and how will they either change or not change? Uh, given that now the U.S.—I mean, this has happened before during the Trump administration:

blockades, Venezuela, etc.—with varying degrees of success. Iran is a different situation. And now, with the talk of more talks, I'm seeing Pakistan maybe as another venue where they could happen. I guess I'm curious about your thoughts on Iran's position. Right now, Iran has a certain set of demands, including Lebanon, which I know you've been following closely. Fighting is still happening there. Hezbollah is very active, and the Israelis are continuing to strike Lebanese civilians and infrastructure areas. How does this all play out now that this blockade seems to be ineffective and essentially confronted pretty directly by Iran, China, and the rest of its friends?

#Elijah Magnier

It's important to recognize that Benjamin Netanyahu managed to divide the two fronts—the Iranian and the Lebanese fronts. He was mainly helped by the Lebanese president and prime minister, who rejected any inclusion of Iran in the deal and insisted on speaking for the Lebanese people, refusing to have a ceasefire forced on Israel in their name. So the Lebanese came out saying, "Nobody negotiates on our behalf," which is right. Iran wasn't negotiating on their behalf but was trying to impose a ceasefire that the Lebanese said, "No, even that we don't want." And actually, while we're talking, there's a meeting between the Israelis and the Lebanese in Washington at the U.S. State Department with the Secretary of State.

So, in this meeting, the Lebanese are going in completely exposed. They have no leverage. They can't offer Israel anything except the skin of Hezbollah. And putting Hezbollah on the table for the Israelis is not something the Lebanese government can do, because the Israelis are incapable of killing, destroying, or disarming Hezbollah. The Lebanese government is very weak and not in a strong position to do so. So basically, the president and the prime minister have put themselves in a very awkward situation, where the only way out is a photo with the Israeli ambassador and the Lebanese ambassador in Washington, with the Israelis asking them to disarm Hezbollah before any talks can happen.

So that's one side. How is it going to play out for Iran? Because the Lebanese said, "We'll deal with ourselves," then Hezbollah and Israel will keep fighting. And this fight is going to continue; it's not going to stop—not in the next week—because the Israelis want to occupy the village of Bint Jbeil and create another kind of security zone, but not made of villages—made of completely destroyed villages, similar to Rafah. This is what the Israeli Defense Minister, Israel Katz, promised at the very beginning of the renewal of this conflict, saying, "We will turn all these villages exactly the same way we turned Rafah," which is completely destroyed.

It's a flat area with nothing, which means tens of thousands of Lebanese will be completely homeless. And it doesn't mean that by doing so, the Israelis will have security. Hezbollah will not stop fighting. Controlling the land is one thing, but defending it and remaining there without being harassed is something else. Hezbollah today has turned into a resistance force. It's not a classic army; it's a force dedicated to one objective—to harass the occupation forces. And they can do that for decades.

#Danny

Yeah. Elijah, do you see any scenario where—how I'm seeing this develop is that the Trump administration of the United States appears to be, while talking, running a very harsh and big kind of war game. It does. It's engaged in a ceasefire and even its blockade, as you wrote—and maybe you can elaborate on this too—might hurt Iran, but it also won't break it. And it's probably the case that the U.S. administration knows this. Do you see any scenario where...

The U.S. is essentially trying to broker a settlement with Iran to get out of the mess it created and can't really sustain. Meanwhile, Iran—given what you just laid out with Lebanon and Hezbollah—might actually re-engage with Israel, because that's been Iran's stated promise. And Iran has this demand, as you said, in the ceasefire terms, while the ceasefire is fast approaching its two-week expiration. Of course, Israel is showing very few signs of letting up; in fact, the way it's reacting is quite the opposite. So, your thoughts on this?

#Elijah Magnier

So basically, what U.S. Vice President Vance told us is quite important. He said the negotiations have failed. But then we have the Israeli Prime Minister—sorry, I mean Benjamin Netanyahu—saying that he receives a report daily from the U.S. administration, and that Mr. Vance contacted him on his way back to Washington to tell him the news. Netanyahu even called Vance during the meeting in Islamabad, which means Benjamin Netanyahu has no problem offending the American people and the American administration by saying, "Well, actually, the American administration reports to me about what's happening, so I can tell them what to do, what they cannot do, what I accept, and what I do not accept."

That clear declaration of control and power from Israel over the United States is really scary—to come out in the media and say it so openly. And because of that, for Benjamin Netanyahu, it's important to continue the war on at least one front. This is how he survives. Without war, he cannot survive. So, if there's a deal between the Americans and the Iranians—say, the Iranians agree not to enrich uranium for ten years, like the deal under Barack Obama—then Donald Trump can say, "Well, I'm satisfied." And Benjamin Netanyahu can accept that outcome, because both Netanyahu and Trump failed to destroy Iran or change its ruling system.

And for that, the reward Netanyahu gets is to continue the war on Lebanon. But is he going to achieve any of his objectives? Of course not, because he didn't achieve his objective with Hamas. Hamas still exists in Gaza and is still in control there. Iran didn't fall—it fought back—and Donald Trump said he wanted to participate in the selection of the new leader, which he didn't. But that means he accepted that the same ruling system remains in place, and he has no choice in the matter, because Iran defended itself well enough to impose its own ruling system on its own people. The only thing that remains is Hezbollah, because of the weakness of the Lebanese government.

Now, it doesn't mean Netanyahu is going to succeed in Lebanon. He might have some tactical victories—like taking the city of Bint Jbeil. This is where the late Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah once said that Israel was weaker than a spider web. Netanyahu can come out and brag about it, but he's no longer taken seriously by his own people. For the first time, when he gave that speech in the last 48 hours, the Israeli media didn't report his words or say what he said, because they're fed up. They don't believe him. They see him repeating the same things over and over again and achieving nothing.

We're seeing a complete shift in the world dynamic. Americans are angry because they see their own administration lying to them. They voted for Donald Trump because he declared himself the "peace president." Now they see that the ruler of the United States, at least in terms of foreign policy, seems to be a foreign prime minister—Benjamin Netanyahu—who's telling the world how he's leading the U.S. by the nose. And we see the United States losing its allies in both Europe and the Middle East. In Europe, they're not shy about telling off Donald Trump and saying, "We're not participating in your war." In the Middle East, they don't say it outright because of cultural differences, but they're doing the same thing.

They go to Pakistan, to Turkey, to China, to make deals with them—security deals. And then they look at the Americans like, well, how dare you talk to us now or try to impose anything? We're not going to go against you. Otherwise, the Americans could topple all these regimes—Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the Emirates—and change them under the flag of color revolution and democracy. But the Americans have lost their weight in the Middle East, and they've lost their weight in Europe. Europe today, particularly the United Kingdom, said to the Americans, "No, I'm not participating in patrolling the Strait of Hormuz. NATO is not going to support America."

These are big decisions that were made during the war, and this marks a huge shift in the future of the United States and its hegemony—when the most powerful country fails to destroy, control, or subdue a nation after 47 years of sanctions, and then sits at the negotiation table as if it has achieved nothing. What the Americans are bringing to the table today is more or less the same as what they brought to the last negotiations in Oman, just a few days before the war. That was confirmed by a member of the UK Foreign Ministry—an expert who was present during the meeting—who said that Iran had never offered what they did in this round of peace talks, and that it was really something valuable to take and secure. But the Americans didn't do that, because they were driven by the Israelis to go to war.

Therefore, we see today that the Americans are accepting—and will continue to accept—what Iran has already offered at the table. But there is one thing that's new today: America has lost all its allies, or at least those allies can now say no to America. By allies, I mean the Europeans and the Middle Eastern countries, and this also shows the limits of U.S. forces globally. China has looked very carefully at what happened in the Middle East—at the capability of the U.S. to tame or destroy Iran, at what the U.S. is actually capable of, and at the way they used force, escalating from military to civilian targets, destroying infrastructure and showing how desperate the Americans were to achieve

objectives they ultimately failed to reach. All of that has changed the entire dynamic of geopolitics around the world and will have consequences for decades to come.

#Danny

Yeah, yeah, that's for sure. And, you know, these consequences are indeed mounting—especially given that Iran is saying it hasn't shown all its cards. It's talking about having weapons at its disposal if it has to restart any kind of significant kinetic action against the United States and/or Israel, and that these weapons can be easily unveiled. It's also promising to ensure the closure of the Bab al-Mandeb Strait, which over the last week—including the last 24 to 48 hours—has caused a lot of concern among observers, especially those with connections to and attention on the oil markets.

Maybe you can talk about what exactly you believe in terms of the strategy and the flow and movement of this war. What exactly is not just the significance, but I guess, what is the possible trigger for the closure of the Bab al-Mandeb Strait? Because that, in my estimation—at least from what I've seen and how people are talking about it, how observers are talking about it—would be a massive catastrophe: for both the Strait of Hormuz to be under the concerted and assertive control of Iran, and for the Bab al-Mandeb Strait to be controlled and enforced in that way, likely by Ansar Allah, maybe also Iran too. So, your thoughts on this?

#Elijah Magnier

What's the question? Sorry.

#Danny

Oh, well, what would that be? What would be the possible trigger for the closure of the Bab al-Mandeb Strait? And why is it significant to bring up? Because there's a lot of concern, I think, among observers. And Iran has said it's ready for this to happen if things get out of hand with the United States again.

#Elijah Magnier

So, the Strait of Hormuz has never been closed. The passage was reduced, and particularly anything related to the United States and Israel did not cross the Strait of Hormuz. But Iran also showed other things. They threatened to close the Bab al-Mandeb. And Hezbollah showed surface-to-surface missiles, saying it had attacked an Israeli vessel in the Mediterranean—showing that the Mediterranean could also be subject to closure if the war escalates. These messages were received by the Americans, and the U.S. administration was taken by surprise. This is what Donald Trump told us in the first few days.

Trump said they didn't expect the Iranians to react against the Arab countries. And then he said they didn't expect the Americans to attack them in the Gulf. He didn't expect the Americans to put a limit on passage through the Strait of Hormuz. The Iranians just said, "Oh, we launched several thousand mines into the water, and we don't know where they are because we're just putting them there." Which isn't entirely accurate, because they have mines that work with artificial intelligence. They have electronic mines, traditional mines, and they know exactly where each one is.

But they're saying to the Americans, "Well, actually, if you want to be tough on us, then you won't be able to cross the Strait of Hormuz—especially when NATO and Europe aren't helping you. And even if they do, they'll have to slow down, and they'll be exposed to our missiles." So these are the messages the Americans have received. And I think, in my opinion, this is why they're not acting too harshly—though that doesn't exclude the possibility that they might still try to attack a vessel, a tanker, or something else. But they won't be as aggressive as they wanted us to believe when they made that decision.

So all these elements that Iran threw into the market are basically saying, "This is what we have, these are your limitations. You won't be able to cross without us, and we can tell you where the safe passage is—and for that, we dictate the policy here." This is why the Americans haven't really provoked the Iranians further up to now. We don't know what's going to happen tomorrow, or what kind of leverage Donald Trump wants to pull out of his hat before the meeting, thinking he can use it against Iran. He forgot that in 2018 he said, "I'm waiting by the phone for the Iranians to call me," and they never did. He's still not really relying on his memory of how the Iranians have acted.

#Danny

Is there any act of intimidation? Because it feels like the Trump administration—Donald Trump himself—has taken an approach of intimidation leading to outcomes in talks, right? The more you punish, the harder you hit, the scarier you are, the bigger you are, the more you bully—that will lead to some kind of outcome in talks. Do you see any scenario where that could work at all with Iran? And if not, that seems to mean there are no options left for the Trump administration other than maybe two in front of him: continue the war and face the consequences there, continue at a more full-scale level, or begin talking seriously about what a reasonable settlement would look like—not just for the United States, which always cares about itself only, but for the Iranians. Iran—your thoughts?

#Elijah Magnier

Well, I think Donald Trump renewed the ceasefire and said they'd add a few more days to it. So he's not really trying to provoke Iran into resuming the fight. Although we see the gathering of forces, when we see generals in the United States resigning or being asked to resign, it means the war plans aren't working. There's a big difference between Donald Trump saying, "I want to occupy an island or several islands in Iran," and actually being able to protect them, keep them, and maintain

control. That would cost a lot of lives, and the Americans wouldn't be able to stabilize themselves on those islands. So the invasion idea has been dropped. What remains is that when the Americans move to destroy energy plants, it means they can't find any more military objectives—even though Iran is still firing missiles at the Gulf, at the Americans in the Gulf, and at the Israelis.

Therefore, the Americans have shown their limitations in this war, and the Iranians have learned how to deal with an overwhelming superpower that controls the sky, more or less. But it also shows how Iran, with 1,648,000 square kilometers, can really defend itself. So that option is off the table. As for destroying energy facilities—well, the Arabs told the Americans that if you do that, the Iranians have promised to destroy ours. And energy infrastructure in the Middle East is extremely fragile. They've cost billions of dollars, but it takes only a few drones—each one costing about \$10,000—to destroy them. This is the kind of damage that was done to the Qatari gas facilities. Qatar said it had spent \$26 billion on them, and then two drones caused damage worth two billion.

Twenty billion dollars. So this is not to the advantage of the Gulf countries, and they're really fed up with these irrational decisions that aren't going to achieve anything in Iran. If these objectives were actually reachable, then the Arabs would support Donald Trump—they don't like Iran. But because they aren't achievable, because the Iranians have shown they can defend themselves, because Israel and the Americans have tried everything in their power and exhausted the list of targets, this is where the Arabs say, "No, stop. It's important for you to stop now, because we can't sustain further damage." So there is a ceasefire.

So what other leverage can the Americans use? Impose more sanctions? Well, Iran is drowning in sanctions. Since 1980—the first one imposed by Jimmy Carter—it's never stopped. Every single new U.S. president has added more, until Donald Trump imposed the maximum sanctions. Then Joe Biden found something else and imposed that. Now Trump is doing the same. And this blockade isn't really working, because it's shifted the battle into Asia, where the Americans have already shown their limitations against Iran. They certainly don't want to start another war with China or anyone else. That's why I doubt the Americans can really impose themselves with any new leverage—unless they say, "Well, okay, now we can effectively block your oil."

And the Iranians will say, "Well, you're blocking Chinese oil, because we're selling it." And I don't know if people remember when Donald Trump said, "I'm going to give the Iranians the possibility to sell their oil." They had 400 million barrels of oil at sea, and Iran said, "No, thank you. We already sold it to China, so we don't have anything left to sell." So even there, Donald Trump showed that he can offer concessions on sanctions, on oil, on energy, and on the assets Iran has frozen in several banks around the world—we're talking about dozens of billions of dollars. So what we see today—and here I'll conclude—is Donald Trump giving far more concessions in this war than before it started, including, in Iran's deterrence agenda or list, the Strait of Hormuz.

#Danny

You know, and it even extends, Elijah, beyond the theater—at least the direct theater with Iran, the conflict, the war, the economic war even. I mean, I think the Trump administration just extended sanctions relief for Russian tankers and Russian oil being sold on the market. So that shows that, yeah, the concessions are even deeper, that there's obviously a major crisis.

And I'm curious, given your long experience covering wars in the region—especially in West Asia—if there's a precedent being set here. It's hard for me to remember, going back to when I was very young and the war on terror began, a situation where the United States took a step toward full-scale war and this kind of massive escalation over just six weeks, leading to a scenario where it seems like every move the U.S. makes has the potential to trigger a global economic catastrophe that's already been building up, and people are already feeling the consequences. Is there a precedent for this? And is this changing the nature of war itself, given that the United States is so dependent on it? Israel basically lives and dies on it—if it doesn't have it, it's not really going to have much of a future, if it has one at all. Yeah, I'm curious about your thoughts on that.

#Elijah Magnier

You've raised many points, so let me tackle your questions a bit differently. First of all, we've seen the limitations of American military power. The Americans can destroy any country if they want to—they have a lot of bombs, a lot of air power, capabilities beyond belief. Yes, but then what? Destruction doesn't mean achieving objectives. This isn't Venezuela we're talking about with Iran, or even Afghanistan. The Iranians dealt with Afghanistan in the past, and they had a bad relationship with the Afghans until the Americans came and actually restored relations between Iran and Afghanistan.

The Americans moved into Afghanistan and removed the Taliban from Kabul because the Taliban left Kabul. And after 20 years, they gave it back to the Taliban. In Iraq, it's a catastrophe. Iraq is not an independent country. The Iraqis cannot select their own prime minister. They don't have their oil revenues going into their own accounts, because it goes to the Federal Reserve Bank in the United States. The Americans control the skies, allow the Israelis to come and bomb Iraqi security forces. So they're occupying the country, and they don't know what to do with it. They haven't known how to run it since 2003. So yes, they toppled Saddam Hussein—but then what did they do with the country?

And this is exactly what they wanted to do with Iran. What do they do with Iran? There are so many ethnic groups, so many resources in the country that the chaos would spread across all its borders. And what do they do then? They create havoc in the world without any objective. They say, "Okay, we go and destroy." Well, then what? You go and destroy—what are the consequences? Do you have any plan? No. On the third day, Donald Trump said, "I did not expect..." And he repeated that phrase three or four times in two weeks about so many other things that Iran reacted to. So yes, the use of power shows the power of the side using it. But then people need to think about what is behind it.

What is the objective that this country, or this entity, or this army wants to achieve—and is it achievable or not? So far, we've seen Israel incapable of achieving any objectives against either non-state or state actors, which shows the limitation of power when the culture and ideology are misunderstood. Now, if you look at what Donald Trump is doing in this war, I'm going to give you another angle—another window—the relationship with Europe. Donald Trump gave Russia the possibility to sell oil for over \$100 a barrel. Why is he doing that? Because he's seeking revenge against the Europeans. He's saying to them, "You don't want to help me."

I'm going to make Russia rich again by selling Russian oil on the market, while the Europeans have been trying since the 22nd of February 2022, the beginning of the war in Ukraine, to destroy the Russian economy. And Donald Trump is saying to the Europeans, "You are going to pay the price for what he considers misbehavior." So my point in telling you that is, we have the most powerful person on earth leading the most powerful country and the most powerful army, reacting out of anger. This is not how it should be. Even if I want to write an article, I can't write it out of anger—I have to remain a bit balanced. So you see a leader of the world reacting out of anger, damaging both his allies and his enemies, but with no clear objective.

He doesn't have a long-term policy. Where is he taking the world? Where is he taking America? He cannot answer this question. One day he's a Jesus, another day he's a winner, a peacemaker. And then he wants to win prizes he doesn't deserve. And he doesn't know how to run domestic policy, saying, "I don't care about the Medicare of the American people." Why is he president if he's not going to look after both domestic and foreign policy? This kind of leader is attacking other countries around the world and creating havoc in the world economy. Now, in Europe, we have to pay 37% more for gas. But the damage doesn't end the day this war stops—absolutely not.

For the next six months, we'll keep paying the extra bill and higher energy costs because of these kinds of decisions. Now, if you look at the interests of the United States and the interests of Israel, you can't be the president of America and go and fulfill the objectives of someone else, like Benjamin Netanyahu, because those objectives are incompatible, and you just want to please him. It doesn't work, because Benjamin Netanyahu wants chaos. And chaos cannot rule the world—our population will starve, or we'll be forced to migrate. Crime will increase, poverty will increase, and the lack of good food is driving prices to impossible levels. All that because Donald Trump was convinced by Benjamin Netanyahu to go to war without any clear objective. This is what we're seeing today.

#Danny

Yeah, and maybe finally, as we get close to the end here, Elijah, it is quite the contradiction, what you're spelling out—especially in terms of interests, right? Because I've seen, and I've also argued,

that the U.S. obviously backs Israel because there are many, at least in the top brass, who see Israel not just as an ideological friend, if you can even call it that, but also as serving certain military, maybe expansionist and hegemonic goals.

But at the same time, the way it goes about this partnership ends up leading to something like what we've seen over the last six to twelve months—the June war, and now this one—where it seems like the outcomes, and this has maybe been true for the last twenty-plus years, end up with the United States actually having to reduce its presence, reduce its influence, even talk about and pander to the need to get out of the region. And this war has shown that, yeah, the further you go down this path of chaos—like what the escalation ladder for the United States was ultimately going to lead to—you end up with a major problem with the markets.

You have a major problem with the Gulf allies—all of this. You have the potential for U.S. interests to actually collapse, be decimated, reduced. They already have been, but it could get even worse. Your reactions to this? Because I think this is kind of the material side of what you were just saying—about how U.S. interests are actually impeded, even the empire, the imperial interests, are actually impeded by this pursuit of chaos. Sorry about that. Hold on. Continue.

#Elijah Magnier

Some people think that Donald Trump is just following the money, or that he wants to control energy, or that he wants to be a great man. But it's not that easy to control energy. He can't control it because he's actually losing control over it. Of course, he can make a bit of money, and his friends around him can make money on speculation when he comes out on a Monday before the market opens saying, "Well, I'm talking to the Iranians and I'm reaching a deal." So he can play with the prices—and that's illegal, by the way.

However, this is not control of energy, because today those who control energy in the Middle East are shifting toward the yuan and China. They want alternative markets; they want alternative relationships. So he's losing the energy. He's not after the money for the United States, because if you look at the cost of this war, it's enormous. He's spending about five billion dollars every two or three days. So in forty days, you can imagine how much money has been spent—and what's going to happen to the world's industry, the world economy, and energy. Is he today in a position to control more energy than he was before?

Well, what happened was, Venezuela's oil is heavy, and it's one of the largest reserves in the world. But he needs to invest a lot of money to make it work. In fact, all the big American companies refused to go to Venezuela and start business because they want the laws to be changed, they want the refineries to be working—and that costs billions of dollars. They're not ready to invest now with such an unstable market. So no, people are not really very accurate when they say he's after the

money or after the energy. He says so, and he allows us to think so, but what he's done with energy today—he hasn't controlled it. He's not in better control of energy now than he was forty days ago, with the war on Iran.

On the contrary, he made the oil-producing countries richer than they were forty days ago, despite all the damage they've suffered, because their gas and oil are much more expensive today than before the war, when it was around \$60. And today it's fluctuating—it's reached \$120, \$110, \$100, \$96, \$92, and then back to \$100. So they're making an awful lot of money, but not Donald Trump. He's not in control. What he wants, with all his theatrics, is to make us think he's in control. Actually, he's not. He's confused. He doesn't know what he's saying. He doesn't know what to do next. He's trying to keep the attention always focused on what he's doing—maybe for the Epstein affair, maybe for other reasons. Maybe this is the only thing he knows how to do. That's why he goes and puts up the photo of Jesus and puts himself in that position.

Or he criticizes the Pope. You're criticizing the representative of 2.5 billion Christians around the world. Why is he doing that? Again, it's just about attracting attention. This is not a policy. This is not something the American people can benefit from. People need to shift away from the comedies, from the theatrics, and get to the essence: what have they achieved, what has Donald Trump achieved for them? Are their lives today better than yesterday, or than a year and a half ago? Are they making more money today? Do they pay less for utilities and the goods they buy? Is the world a safer place? Has any act he's done been positive and constructive for the American people or for the rest of the world? Well, the answer on all levels is no. So people really need to think carefully before they vote for a president next time.

#Danny

Indeed, indeed, indeed. Well, Elijah, it was great to be with you. I want to make sure everybody knows that your website, ElijahMagnier.com, is in the video description, where they can check out all your work, support, and subscribe. Everybody, hit the like button before you go—that helps boost the show even after we're done here. I want to thank everyone who gave a super chat, everyone who watched, all the members, and of course all the moderators who helped out with today's show. I'll be back very soon, everyone. I'm in Beijing, I'm very jet-lagged, I've got to go—I've got to run out of here. I want to thank Elijah again. We're going to head out together, and I'll be back very soon. Hopefully, I'll be able to get some kind of walking-around-China thing going soon. I've been messing with the internet and trying to figure that out. So, without further ado, everybody, take care. I'll see you guys soon. Bye-bye.