

# Patrick Henningsen: Indian Ships FORCED to Turn Back Near Hormuz

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/) Follow Dialogue Works: Substack: [https://substack.com/@dialogueworks?utm\\_campaign=profile&utm\\_medium=profile-page](https://substack.com/@dialogueworks?utm_campaign=profile&utm_medium=profile-page) X (Twitter): [https://x.com/Dialogue\\_NRA](https://x.com/Dialogue_NRA) Patreon: [https://patreon.com/Dialogueworks?utm\\_medium=unknown&utm\\_source=join\\_link&utm\\_campaign=creatorshare\\_creator&utm\\_content=](https://patreon.com/Dialogueworks?utm_medium=unknown&utm_source=join_link&utm_campaign=creatorshare_creator&utm_content=)

## #Nima

Hi, everybody. Today is Saturday, April 18th, 2026, and our dear friend, our brother Patrick Henningsen, is here with us. Welcome back, Patrick.

## #Patrick

Great to be with you, Nima.

## #Nima

Patrick, let me start with what we've learned from the Wall Street Journal today. There are two things, two latest news items. One of them, the Wall Street Journal says that the U.S. military is preparing to board Iran-linked ships in the coming days, as an official told them. And we've learned today from a security meeting yesterday that Donald Trump, together with General Kane and Pete Hax at the Secretary of War, are talking about getting back to the war if they don't reach an agreement by the end of this week. What is your understanding of what's going on?

And the new sort of, you know, we had the opening of the Strait of Hormuz, then Donald Trump came out and put a lot more than seven or eight allegations on him for rhetoric. And we are winning, we are winning big. And they're not going to close the Strait of Hormuz today. We've learned the Strait of Hormuz is under total control of Iran, and it's limited. Passing through the Strait of Hormuz is not open. And as I've just mentioned, two new sort of moves of the Trump administration with the war. Where are we headed?

## #Patrick

Unfortunately, Nima, it looks like our greatest fears have been realized. It's what I was saying when they declared this so-called ceasefire or the Islamabad talks. It just seemed to me that I didn't see any fundamental changes in the way the United States was preparing for negotiations. The types of people they were sending were not appropriate, real diplomats. They sent two of the shadiest people really imaginable, who are effectively Israeli assets. That's Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner. And they were sent to make sure that nothing happens. And it's the same reason they were deployed by the Trump administration to Moscow to preside over supposed talks with Russia and Ukraine.

Witkoff and Kushner are sent to make sure that nothing happens. They're there to make sure that there's no political settlement. That's why they're deployed. In this case, they're working on behalf of Israel. J.D. Vance was sent to provide some level of legitimacy to the team, but also, if it went horribly wrong, then he could take the majority of the blame. So he's kind of a cushion, if you will, for the Trump administration. He himself has no legitimacy, no agency at all, no autonomy. He probably doesn't really understand the issues particularly well.

He seemed to be unprepared and kind of making it up as he goes along, sort of winging it, if you will, as we say in America. So based on that, I had no expectations that this was a serious negotiation. It seemed like—really, it seemed at the time like they were—this is what I said at the time—they're buying time to reload and rearm, basically. And Israel needed this time to reposition itself. And then you have to also understand that the game the U.S. and Israel are playing with the world is to give the impression that they're two separate actors, that somehow they're working independently, and the United States is trying to restrain Israel and so forth.

The reality is that they're working on joint strikes together, and currently I think it's pretty certain that the U.S., the Trump administration, and Netanyahu are planning a joint strike on Iran, and it's going to be done in tandem, in addition to what Israel is doing in Lebanon. And Israel did not honor the ceasefire in Lebanon, even though it was announced. And I think Iran's quite aware of this. But in a way, the leadership in Tehran, they've priced all this into the equation. They've priced in Trump's erratic public statements and all the incoherent flip-flopping in terms of policy and claims and so forth. They've also priced in the fact that Israel will never abide by any type of ceasefire.

They never have in their history. So what Israel normally does is use some major event where they know the world's attention is elsewhere. They usually use that to gain some kind of advantage over lands which they covet, which they want to steal or occupy. And they've done that throughout history, time and time again. And I think they did that here. You saw the attack they made on Lebanon, the massacre of Lebanese civilians, women and children—one of the worst ever, really, in a sort of a day's bombing. And there was zero pushback from any of the European countries, certainly from the United States.

Generally, I know it's really a horrible thing to say, Nima, but Democrats and Republicans do not regard Arab lives as worthy of even acknowledgment. You know, if one Israeli person is traumatized

or dies in an errant, you know, Hamas Katyusha rocket, it's just wall-to-wall coverage in the Western media and everybody has candlelight vigils. But Israel can sort of pulverize whole city blocks in a city like Beirut, including Christians and Muslims alike. They can do that routinely, and there's absolutely no acknowledgment from the U.S. media or from any U.S. politician that this even rises to the level of any kind of minor infraction, let alone a war crime.

So unfortunately, this is the problem. And so I think in a certain way, Iran is probably bracing itself for another onslaught. The U.S. and Israel will attack their infrastructure. They will be targeting power plants. They will be targeting who knows what other infrastructure and other civilian targets, most likely bridges, and also their ability to refine petroleum. What the U.S. and Israel want to do is make life in Iran dysfunctional so they don't have power. And they think that by doing that, they'll finally bring the military, they'll bring the IRGC to heel. And then they'll also be double-tapping previous targets, which Pete already threatened.

He's saying, oh, you're trying to dig out of collapsed tunnels and so forth, and we're watching you from the sky. This is not a fair fight. We're going to crush you. We're just waiting for the opportune time. So what Trump has done is set up a fake kind of paradigm, if you will. That's really what all these erratic tweets have been about by Trump, and these claims that Iran is going to hand over all enriched uranium and that they're going to open the Straits of Hormuz forever and all these things. So what Trump is making it seem like is that the Iranians have agreed to things which they never agreed to. He's doing all this not through official government channels, but through his Truth Social account, an Internet website that he owns.

It's kind of ridiculous if you think about it. But anyway, that's the way the U.S. government is masquerading at the moment as a legitimate entity. And so they want to create a type of Israeli-style straw man, if you will. Say Iran claimed to do this, and we gave them a perfectly good deal, and they turned their back on it. It's like what they said to Yasser Arafat, you know, during the Oslo peace process. Oh, we offered the Palestinians a perfectly good deal, and they were greedy, and their leadership is corrupt. And so we had no choice but to, you know, sort of begin apartheid, ethnic cleansing, and building settlements.

I mean, that's the, so that's a, it's a typical Israeli negotiation tactic, which is to attribute to your counterparty things they said which they never said, or things they offered which they never offered, or claim that what you're giving is just so generous even though you're screwing the other side in negotiations. And then if they don't accept it, saying, I offered you a perfectly good deal, now I'm going to kill you, basically. That is the general framework of Israeli negotiations. And unfortunately, the United States has pretty much transformed into a type of Israeli-style entity in how it conducts itself in negotiations, threats, and so forth, and complete disregard for human life. Unfortunately, you might as well be flying an Israeli flag over the White House right now. I mean, take the U.S. one down.

Just take it down and hoist an Israeli flag, because that is occupied territory right now, Washington, D.C. And Donald Trump is ultimately, at least as far as the politics of this goes, a proxy of the Netanyahu office. But unfortunately, if it only ended there, Nima, we still might be able to manage the situation. But this has a global scope to it with regards to the geopolitics of power, politics of energy, oil, and gas, with which the United States is executing a wider grand strategy to throttle the global supply chains in terms of energy and create an artificial demand for U.S. LNG and gas. And it's working. And this will help to stave off the ultimate, inevitable collapse of the United States dollar. But they are sort of enacting this policy and trying to execute this great genius move at the moment. But it's not serious.

You can't say that you want peace when you're sanctioning Iran during negotiations. You can't say that you want a peaceful solution when you're trying to run the Straits of Hormuz during the Islamabad talks with two U.S. destroyers trying to create a false flag incident, which unfortunately failed for the U.S. You can't say you want peace when you're blockading Iranian ports, which is an act of war. The U.S. has done all these things in the last week. So I think they're preparing, they're moving military assets to the region, Nima, and they're preparing for the next round of war. What else can this president do? What else can Israel do? They're in permanent escalation mode. They're not able to de-escalate. They're caught in what international relations scholars and John Mearsheimer might call an escalation trap right now.

## **#Nima**

I think the question that you've raised is so important. What else can they do when we know the outcome so far for the United States was not what Donald Trump wanted it to be? Which would be, right now, what are the main obstacles to reaching some sort of mutual understanding that they need to go after, as they call it, a massive crisis? I don't believe that they're going to be able to go underground. If they do that, that's going to be hugely, hugely consequential for Donald Trump himself and his administration. They're going to see a lot of casualties. That's the outcome for the United States. Iran knows that, because Iran is defending itself. They're prepared to sacrifice as much as they can, but the United States is attacking Iran. And that would be problematic for Donald Trump himself. And how is that going to help him? Let's assume they're going to attack Iran with this massive aerial bombardment. What would be the outcome of that, in your opinion?

## **#Patrick**

I think that's—you're correct. I don't think ground troops—after the failed—I mean, Pete Hegseth executed the worst special forces disaster in modern U.S. military history. This was this attempted snatch and grab of enriched uranium in Isfahan. And this was a miserable failure, record losses in terms of U.S. aircraft and so forth. So that was their gambit. That was basically testing the water for putting boots on the ground in Iran, and it was a total failure. But the media was complicit in covering it up. And no one in the U.S., no one in Washington will talk about it because it's deemed—

at least the White House has made it very clear—that anybody doing anything to undermine confidence in this government is putting national security at risk.

Okay, so that includes, you know, press covering the Pentagon or what the, quote, Department of War is up to. This is actually in the courts right now in America—restriction of press to cover this administration. That's unprecedented. I haven't seen that in my lifetime. So the only hand they play, if they don't have a ground troop hand, which I don't believe they do, they're the only one hand to play, which is continued air campaigns. So they can play that hand, Nima. And unfortunately, it looks like they will, because that's the only hand they can continue playing. But the problem is it has diminishing returns the further you go down the road. This will be sort of, what, round three, round four, since February 28th.

And they still, if you look at what the U.S. has achieved or lost, it's just been progressively worse for the United States—both politically, economically, and I would argue even militarily. They're claiming a military victory in America. This is a great historic defeat, but it's not really a historic defeat. I mean, you could pick any target country in the world, okay, and you could threaten them and then hold fake peace talks. And you can use those fake peace talks to basically do a sneak attack and bomb them and assassinate their head of state or kidnap them or whatever. I mean, you can pick any country in the world and do that too. But see, history is not going to write that as a great victory. They're going to write that as an undeclared, illegal, dirty war of aggression.

So they're not going to be able to sort of claim victory. So in the short term, it's just going to be—I think there's going to be more damage, and the United States will be forced to do something different. I mean, I thought that Trump was going to declare victory here. It looked like he was trying to set up a victory narrative where he's saying, look, I forced the Iranians to the table, they've capitulated, we've got a deal, the straits are open, and there's a move on to invade Cuba, or whatever is next on this president's menu. But I don't think that's going to be possible here. I really think they've run up against a wall with Iran. And, you know, the other thing, Nima, is this—this is really important, because how is this going to be adjudicated eventually?

I mean, you can continue bombing and doing airstrikes and killing Iranians and doing all these things, and then grandstanding about how many women and children you've slaughtered, which is what people like Pete Hegseth do, and this president, and you can do that. But what is the legal basis for the Straits of Hormuz right now? So from an international law point of view, whose territorial waters are we dealing with? Well, we're dealing with Iran, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Oman. Okay. So what's the context of this? It's not normal. It's not peacetime. This is wartime. And it's going to remain wartime.

And so Iran is within its rights under international law and precedent to secure or to try to mitigate any direct threats to its security, because it has been a victim of an unprovoked, undeclared war of aggression by the United States and Israel. So until that situation is resolved, there must be an interim accord, and then that would lead to a treaty. And until that is resolved, Iran is within its

rights, in the precedent of international law, to manage its near abroad—in this case, its territorial waterways and security interests—as it sees fit during a state of war. So all of the normal freedom of navigation is suspended. The United States and Israel broke that. They broke that situation.

We're in a state of war. So the question is, how do you get to an accord or a treaty? You need a competent diplomacy team who's disciplined and patient and willing, and the political will needs to be there to come to that final conclusion that both parties will credibly respect. The United States is currently disqualified on both of those fronts. And Israel's not even in the picture. So that means we're going—there's no way the Straits could be—Iran must maintain control of the Straits of Hormuz for the indefinite future. I don't believe this president is capable of signing any treaty to end this war. It won't happen in two years. It's not possible. There'd be a huge knock to Donald Trump's, you know, galactic ego.

I mean, he's like the planet Jupiter. I mean, the amount of—he thinks he has such gravitational pull. He cannot accept any kind of accord or compromise, much less any kind of peace treaty. He just wouldn't be able to accept it. And so you're going to end up with this situation. I think this suits the United States and their overall grand strategy—to throttle global oil and gas, and then use that for strategic advantage to sell at the highest possible price, but also determine who gets energy and who doesn't. And also, they're quite happy to throw the Arabs under the bus, Nima, the Gulf monarchies, and they've just replaced them with an entirely new basin of petrol and gas dollars, which is Europe.

The United States, by nature of the fact that the Qatar supplies of LNG to Europe's southern flank are now severely throttled, let's say, has almost got a working monopoly over European gas. And gas is the most important monopoly for geopolitical and regional leverage, more than oil, which can be almost ubiquitously sourced globally, but not natural gas. So if you look at the fact that the Russians have banned exports in order to protect the stability of the domestic market because their export facilities have been damaged so badly by successive Ukrainian drone attacks, the United States is facilitating those attacks by supporting Ukraine under the Trump administration, certainly not stopping them. And the European NATO allies, which Trump pretends to have an adversarial relationship with—I believe a lot of this is just theater.

The United States is very happy with NATO and itself backing Ukraine as their proxy to weaken Russia's ability to export oil and gas. The U.S. destroyed the Nord Stream pipeline in June and July—well, they wired it for destruction in June and July of '22 during BALTOPS 22, a NATO drill—and then they detonated it in September under the next NATO drill, which took place during September of 2022. So by doing that, that sort of set the stage for what we're seeing right now. And, of course, throttling China's ability to get sufficient supplies is a byproduct that's easy to sell to the United States Congress and all the war hawks there that think China is our enemy.

So seizing Venezuela's control of Venezuela's leading world-proven oil reserves is also part of the strategy, and ramping up U.S. production. Right now, if you go to the petroleum and gas futures,

they are forecasting—they already have record exports in the United States for natural gas, record exports. They're expecting growth through 2030, right? Record-breaking numbers. So the whole industry is now being retooled in the United States. You can go right now to any website like OilPrice or go to the petroleum and gas working trade organizations online, and this is all they're talking about right now.

There's a British journalist named Richard Medhurst who's done an excellent short film outlining this grand strategy by the United States, which effectively is piracy and sabotage—attacking Iranian, Russian, and Venezuelan tankers on the high seas, seizing tankers, stealing oil, blocking Russian supplies. And Britain is also involved in this piracy as well. They're working alongside the United States, as are other NATO allies. And so that's what they're doing. And look at what's happening now—they're getting Israel to destroy Iran's gas and oil facilities as well, and the U.S. is kind of rounding in. But notice how they got Israel to do some of that dirty work, and that triggered a response from Iran against the Gulf states.

So I think Israel and the U.S. are doing this. It's a conspiracy. They're working together. This is very strategic. Israel hopes it's going to maximize its control and influence over natural gas supplies in the Levant and be able to sort of, you know, orchestrate this major shift in its favor. And the United States is there to facilitate that and change the global energy matrix effectively. So end result, net result, net-net, fewer supplies on the market, but no one's throttling U.S. supplies. So the U.S. is there, and they're trying to create a demand for U.S. oil and gas, and by doing so, help to prop up the dying petrodollar, which will eventually die.

This is probably going to stave off the death of it. All these shenanigans that the Trump administration is front-running will stave off the death of the dollar probably by five to ten years. But it's going to happen anyway. Piracy is not sustainable as a grand strategy. But the British and the Americans, and whoever else wants to join in—the Israelis, the UAE—they'll give it a shot. You know, they're going to give it a try, and it might be successful for a while, but I don't think in the long term it's going to be successful. It's probably not going to save the U.S. dollar from completely tailspinning because they're going to have to continue to spend more on the military.

It's a \$2.5 trillion deficit this coming, for the first Trump year, \$2.5 trillion deficit. So what the government makes in receipts, it's gone by May. Everything else is borrowed after that, and they're paying interest on top of that, and pretty soon the interest repayments on the U.S. debt will exceed their revenue. You have, effectively, Trump doing what Trump does best in his business career, which is shepherd the organization through bankruptcy. That's what Donald Trump is—the USA in receivership. That's why Trump probably was selected for this job by the oligarch class, because nobody knows how to do bankruptcy like Donald Trump.

**#Nima**

I think more than six times he did that, and I don't know. Patrick, when you look at the situation in the Middle East, I think the people in Iran and in Lebanon, with what has happened so far in Lebanon as well, they were getting to the point that the only way to put an end to this conflict would be on the battlefield. Because nobody's serious in terms of negotiating, talking—they're sending messages, but they're trying to, you know... just yesterday we saw what has happened with the case of Trump coming out and saying "total victory," and they're going to give us the enriched uranium. They're going to basically capitulate to us. I think that's the main objective on the part of the Trump administration. That's why the negotiations in Islamabad didn't go anywhere.

And that would be the case for the future sort of talks and negotiations if nothing happens—if no substantial change happens within the atmosphere of negotiation, which nobody believes will happen. In my opinion, that's not going to happen with the Trump administration. So the only solution would be the battlefield. And how—let's go that way—how prepared is the United States for that? Attacking is one thing, but defending yourself from the attack of Iran, as Iran decides to fire back, you have to defend yourself. You have to defend Israel. The radars are not there. The air defense system is not there. Yesterday I talked with Professor Ted Postol, and he just mentioned Israel is naked—basically naked. How do you understand that?

## **#Patrick**

It doesn't look good on paper, Nima, for Israel or for the United States. I mean, what does the U.S. have in the Persian Gulf? Nothing. They forfeited pretty much all of their military positions in order to facilitate Israel's war. So, you know, another genius move there by the Trump administration. But because it doesn't add up on paper, and because the United States doesn't have a lot in terms of staging grounds from which they can mount attacks—I mean, I don't think Kuwait is... they tried to mount that operation that failed, Jimmy Carter-style, failed operation by Pete Hegseth the other week. They tried to mount that from Kuwait. But Kuwait will—there's not going to be anything left. There won't be an airstrip left in Kuwait if they do anything there. And also, Iranian intelligence is just so dialed in to everything that's happening in all the Gulf states.

I mean, just to be aware, they don't need Chinese satellites, the Iranians, to know exactly where everything is at all times in Bahrain, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Oman. And Qatar, for that matter—Qatar, to its credit, seems to be one of the only Gulf states to kind of be taking more of a sane approach to this situation, realizing that the writing may very well be on the wall. And so they've adjusted accordingly. But so that means, Nima, what's left is—I believe, especially if we see Netanyahu fly to Washington this week or next week, then we know something big is coming. And I really fear that they probably believe between themselves that they can't win a war of attrition against Iran. I'm talking about the United States and Israel. So then what would be their strategy or their tactic there?

It would be to deal such a devastating blow to the Iranians that they wouldn't dare think about continuing this war. Now, what would that entail? And again, I know Ted Postol and others have discussed the possibility of tactical nuclear weapons, which really aren't tactical at all. They're as devastating as strategic weapons—thermonuclear weapons. But would the U.S. and Israel be able to justify that amongst themselves, that that is a prudent course of action? And I think there's a high risk, especially with the mental instability—the emotional, mental instability—of the current U.S. president, who's clearly in cognitive decline. Everybody knows that in Washington, I think around the world at this point. But also, it means that Trump is very easy to manipulate.

It's proven that he's been very easy to manipulate. He's caved with a little bit of pressure from Netanyahu or his daughter or his son-in-law, and the Israeli lobby, and a little push from Mark Levin. And Trump is a bit of a coward in that sense. He would rather kowtow to Israeli interests than be able to even begin to comprehend what might be American interests long term, or the world's interests as well. That's also a fundamental problem with the so-called America First movement, that it's America first and everyone else last. And so they really don't factor in the rest of humanity very well.

And that's a bit of a fundamental flaw in American thinking at the moment. And again, that's also a symptom of late-stage empire. And that will be to the demise of America in general if it continues down that path. There are too many different ways that can take place. But nonetheless... And that's one of my big fears, Nima, is that they will make the type of political plea that the United States made at the end of the Second World War—that this is going to be too costly, it's going to be too difficult, we need to drop an A-bomb to draw a line under this, to put an exclamation mark on it, and to move on. Because the world economy can't afford it, there's famine.

So the U.S. and Israel have created all the conditions for some kind of desperate outcry from the world to stop this war—a war they started, and a war that they've been given ample opportunities to help come to some kind of amicable arrangement in terms of a ceasefire or negotiated settlement. But the United States and Israel have, at every turn, undermined any of those possibilities through their, I don't know, very dishonest, deceptive way, or non-existent diplomacy, or masquerading as diplomacy—but really all it is is tradecraft and dirty tricks and basically very cheap tactics to gain short-term advantages.

In the meantime, we have evidence that the president and his inner circle are profiting greatly off the erratic fluctuations in the oil markets as well as the stock market. So there are people who are doing well out of this. But the rest of the world is being hit with inflation. Because the other problem is this, Nima: the price of oil isn't merely about supply and demand. It's also about reserves—what reserves are on the water at the moment, and also market expectations, what the market believes is going to be the state of the market in a month or two months. So while oil futures have been somewhat held in check over the last month, now that those sort of floating oil reserves, if you will, on the global market have been expended, that's going to send a signal to the futures market.

So while I would say that \$200 a barrel on the futures market is not—it's still very much possible. It's still very much possible. And I think you'll begin to see some additional volatility on that right now. And so the U.S. thinks it's positioned to manage that, to weather the storm. What it's done is block supplies by Russia and Iran and Venezuela in the key places, that they now have created a situation that's hugely volatile and unstable. But because they believe they manage all the choke points, or they can create stoppages in those choke points through their proxies—Ukraine, Israel—or just literally a forced takeover of Venezuela. But again, they believe that they can weather the storm.

They can put up the drawbridges of Fortress America, wait it out while the rest of the world suffers and burns, and then come in to basically sweep it up and pass out worthless crypto tokens. Maybe that's Trump's plan—to extend the life and utility of the U.S. dollar through some crypto Ponzi scheme, front-run by the Federal Reserve. All of those things are actually in place right now. So, I mean, I'm just giving you my speculation. If there was that type of disastrous economic situation, what the U.S. general response might be, perhaps. But, you know, I really think that they're planning to win in Washington. As bad as it looks, Nima, they're still playing to win, and they think this is a winning formula.

Piracy, sabotage, subterfuge, war, theft. The Greenland thing is not a joke. That's real. Neither is Cuba. Cuba is not a joke. The United States could invade Cuba, Nima. But I'm telling you this, Nima, there would be no way the U.S. could carpet bomb Cuba in the Western Hemisphere without just receiving the most unholy backlash from Latin America, from Mexico, from the entire Global South. So it would have to be some kind of a ham-fisted ground invasion. And I think that then you're into Bay of Pigs 2.0 at that point. It's funny how history repeats itself, but they do have the ideal person in the Pentagon in charge right now to preside over some kind of a catastrophic embarrassment like that.

I think he's just begging for it. Pete Hegseth. So that's where the U.S. could stumble, actually. But I don't think they'll be able to hit Cuba—the Trump administration won't be able to attack Cuba—until they resolve this, possibly resolve this situation somehow in Iran. And I'm not sure if they can. I'm not sure if they can at the moment. I don't think they can if it was just the U.S., Nima. But it's not. It's a two-headed beast. It's the U.S. and Israel. And for that reason, I just don't see Washington really having much agency in the matter.

## **#Nima**

I think, Patrick, you mentioned the case of a nuclear bomb, but before getting to the nuclear bomb, I think they're going to go after power grids in Iran or something like that, and energy. And, you know, the consequences of that would be huge for the whole global economy. Because Iran—there was a phone call between the foreign minister of Iran and the foreign minister of Saudi Arabia. They talked to each other. I think there was some sort of warning to Saudi Arabia, because if something happens, nobody can send oil out of the region. They're using the pipeline going to the Red Sea, and

that can be dismantled by an attack—an Iranian attack or drone attack, whoever, Houthis attacking them. And are they going to take that risk? Because if they don't go after power grids and they don't go after energy infrastructure in Iran, so what else can they do? Are they going to again attack schools, hospitals? What else? Bridges?

**#Patrick**

Yeah, bridges.

**#Nima**

That's going to bring a lot. The unity in Iran is going to be better, and it's going to be improved if they go. And the people are not—you know, what's so amazing to me is that they don't understand the outcomes of what they're doing in Iran. The people are coming together. It doesn't matter how big the suffering is. They're getting united. They want to fight back. That's why yesterday I saw that people were attacking Iranian officials. Why did you say the strait is open?

**#Patrick**

Hmm.

**#Nima**

This was something he didn't—you know, look at the statement of the foreign minister of Iran. It wasn't that complicated, but the people don't agree with that, even that sort of talk, that sort of communication. They see that as a concession, you know. This is the mindset on the part of the Iranian people, and they're ready to fight back as long as it takes.

**#Patrick**

Yeah. It's a catch-22, Nima, because lower-tier powers have to go through the motions, if you will. They have to go through the pantomime of negotiations, because if they don't, they will be accused by the hegemon of refusing to find a peaceful solution. And then the hegemon will infer that they deserve hostilities at that point because they didn't want a peaceful solution. So that's the paradox in power politics — the weaker party must go through the motions of negotiating every time, even if it's not going to net anything. And everybody knows it's basically kabuki theater. They still have to do it, unfortunately. So for a frustrated public in Iran, I can see they just don't have time for any of that game theory.

You know, they're just like, no. And so it's good that they put that pressure on their leadership so they know that people are paying attention. That's important as well. But I think at the strategic level, I think the Iranians are very well aware, maybe not on the parliamentary side per se, but

certainly on the national security side or on the IRGC side, they understand the realities of the situation, and they're probably going to prepare accordingly, or the best they can. So the other potential X factor, which has happened before in recent history—if you remember, really, the Assad government was on the verge of collapse in Damascus in 2014 and 2015, especially since ISIS came onto the scene in July 2014. But something happened.

There was divine intervention, and that was that Russia entered the conflict in October of 2015. And that did change the course of that conflict, and it helped to stabilize the situation in Syria, and really it transformed geopolitics for a time in the region, because suddenly all major decisions had to go through Moscow, not Washington, in the region. I mean, Russia really moved in in a very strong way to stabilize that situation. So if there was some kind of intervention potentially in this situation from China or Russia along those lines, or even not only China and Russia, it could be from another actor as well, another country with some substantial weight in the international system, that would be a game changer.

Now, I'm not going to say Turkey is in that conversation, but the fact that Israel is regarding Turkey as an existential threat now, when Turkey hasn't really attacked Israel, but their leaders, including former Prime Minister Bennett, are saying publicly in Israel that Turkey is the new Iran. And then at the same time, Donald Trump is threatening to withdraw from NATO. And at the same time, whistleblower Joe Kent tweets out that the reason Donald Trump is trashing NATO is so he can temporarily withdraw, and that would relieve the U.S. of its Article 5 obligations in the event that Israel attacks Turkey. Then we have a very major situation on the horizon there.

So in terms of expanding this, that would invariably pull Russia and Europe immediately into the conflict, and probably half a dozen other countries as well. And it would also make Cyprus a focal point of a potential East-West major conflagration there. And there's a lot of military assets in Cyprus, British and American specifically. So with all that in mind, Nima, there's still potential that this could expand even further beyond the regional war that it already is. But I will say that it is interesting that the U.S. is sending strike groups and so forth into the region, but having to do so around the Cape of Good Hope on the southern tip of Africa and not passing through the Red Sea and the Bab el-Mandeb Straits. What does that tell you?

That's almost a de facto admission that the Houthis won the war against the United States last spring. Because otherwise, why wouldn't the U.S. be sending all their naval assets through the Red Sea? So there's already a level of deterrence in the region that's changed planning and geostrategic planning. This is all going to make it very difficult for the United States to continue doing what they're doing, trying to prosecute this war against the Iranians, as is the sort of insubordination, if you will, of Iraq politically as a country. So again, the attack vectors are narrowing there. The amount of available corridors that Israel and the U.S. have at their disposal are getting smaller by the day. So it's going to make their job much more difficult.

And let me tell you, Nima, it's only going to take one downed B-2 bomber, one downed B-1 bomber from Iranian air defense or Chinese air defense or wherever it's going to come from. And that will be a game-changer. That will change the entire— in fact, when that happens— I'm going to say if that happens or when that happens, that's going to be a geopolitical paradigm shift in history at that point because that just changes everything. But even if that doesn't happen, you can't bomb your way to victory. You can't kill your way to victory. Israel's already proved that. They thought they destroyed— wasn't it a year ago? Was it a year and a half ago? Hezbollah has been eviscerated, was the word, obliterated. They're extinct. Look at what's happening in Lebanon now.

So I guess that wasn't true, was it? So when the U.S. says, oh, we've sent Iran back to the Stone Age, don't believe them. But they will. They'll try it. They'll run a massive bombing campaign. They'll announce they've sent Iran back to the Stone Age, and Iran will not be in the Stone Age. They'll be with us here in 2026. But again, back to the original fear, Nima, which I share with Ted Postol and others, that the regimes in Washington and Israel are crazy, reckless enough, and depraved enough to want to use a tactical nuclear weapon to draw a line under this and as the ultimate intimidation move against Iran and to dominate in the region, to stamp Israeli and U.S. domination over the region through fear. That is a lingering concern.

## **#Nima**

Patrick, how did you find the meeting of European leaders we had yesterday? Starmer together with Macron, Meloni, and Scholz getting together to talk about this rate of performance. They're talking about making some sort of coalition to go. I don't know what that means and what the capabilities of those countries are. I would assume they're not talking about military. Somehow they're trying to do something politically, if that's the case, or strategically politically. And how is that going to help the United States? Or is it to help the United States, or are they trying to help themselves?

## **#Patrick**

I think to help themselves. I said this before when Macron made his dramatic statement. I said don't put any currency in that at all at the moment, because Macron has a record of flip-flopping on pretty much everything he's ever said about any major geopolitical flashpoint. There's no way militarily that any European countries can project any naval power in that part of the world. They don't have the support base, they don't have staging areas, and they don't have the sort of, you know, complementary support and protection required to be able to do that without putting their assets at massive risk.

I think the U.S. wants the Europeans in there diplomatically or militarily in order to extend Iran's target, and also to take some of the focus and heat off the United States and Israel. I mean, they want to drag some European countries into this conflict, there's no doubt about that. In the same way that Israel can't do this, they needed the United States to execute their ambitions in the region

and do the heavy lifting. Now that the U.S. and Israel are themselves depleted, they need other partners to come in and do the heavy lifting. They're not going to get them from the east; they're only going to be coming from Europe, unfortunately. I don't think there's any chance they're going to be successful here.

There is a diplomatic mission, though, from southern Europe, between Spain and Italy, opening diplomatic missions in Tehran. Okay, that's major news. So how earnest and honest they are in their overtures towards Tehran remains to be seen. But you could say it's a very positive step, but that's a break from NATO, the NATO consensus, the Brussels consensus on that. So that could be a positive thing if that's done correctly and honestly and conscientiously by the Italians and the Spanish. That could send a message to the rest of Europe, a very strong message, that there is no European solidarity behind Trump and Israel on this war, that two countries like that.

Italy is a G7 country. So this is the club of seven wanting to open up diplomatic relations with Iran. That says a lot. At the same time, the U.S. is attacking the Vatican. So in terms of Italy wanting to position itself with a more independent foreign policy, certainly there are a couple of good reasons for that that we can see now. So you never know that some of these moves on the lower mid-tier can affect the bigger picture if enough other countries come and bandwagon together with Italy and with Spain. So that remains to be seen. That's all happening in the political realm, and in the realm of media coverage and public opinion and things like that.

So, again, this is why we're not wasting our breath talking about these and looking at these issues, because that's all part of shaping this conversation. And that can have political outcomes, and those political outcomes can transform politics or create enough pressure to force the United States to adjust. And it would give Iran enough leeway to be able to find its feet, as well as any of its allies in the region. So we'll see. We'll see. I think there could be a major move by Russia or China on the horizon that would definitely transform this conversation that we're having right now and pull things back from the brink of potential annihilation. So that's becoming closer to a reality, I think, with each passing week.

## **#Nima**

Today I talked with Professor Morandi. His assessment of GCC countries was that it seems Qatar has decided somehow to get closer to Iran, to understand the Iranian position. There is some sort of sign that Saudi Arabia is going in that direction. The only country that somehow is getting closer to Israel and the Israeli position is the UAE, which in my opinion, after all, is not a very big issue within the GCC countries because Saudi Arabia and Qatar, together with, coming down to Oman.

Oman is important with the case of the Strait of Hormuz. In my opinion, Oman is of particular importance. And how do you see the behavior of GCC countries? Because the war is not just creating chaos, it's putting a lot of economic pressure on these countries. Not just economically—physically, they have been damaged. And somehow the leadership is so desperate with the situation they're in.

They're seeing the United States, Donald Trump bragging about selling more oil and gas, while they're not capable of doing that. And how is that going to change the calculation on their part?

## **#Patrick**

That's very telling. So Trump's attitude towards the Gulf, you can see that's the true nature of the relationship, actually. I'm just saying the obvious, that all of those monarchies, tribal chieftains that are princes and kings in the Gulf, serve at the pleasure of the U.S. Empire, as they did the British Empire before that. So that's the reality. And so the minute they become a liability to the United States and its allies, then those regimes are really living on borrowed time. They can be removed at any moment, very easily, in a military coup. It's not difficult. So it's going to be really up to those regimes that are not really, you know, they have to ask themselves the question: are they actually sustainable as state entities without U.S. protection? That's question number one. And the answer might be no.

And if the answer is no, then, well, that question is almost canceled out by the fact that—are they even receiving U.S. protection? And I think Iran kind of proved already that they're not, that actually U.S. protection, quote, is a liability to those regimes. So those regimes have to make a decision—ultimately, a long-term decision. Do they want to survive? Do they want to stay in power? Do they want to control their borders or not? Because if they want to stay in power and have dominion over their current borders, then they're going to have to rethink their alliances, and they're going to have to rethink their relationship with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Is it going to be a friendly, supportive, or adversarial relationship? And then the question is, what does the security architecture in the region look like around the Persian Gulf?

Is it going to be an architecture by the region and for the region, or is it going to be an externally imposed security architecture by the United States and a European colonial settler project, apartheid state known as Israel? That's the question the Gulf states need to ask themselves. And I think Jordan—that includes the Kingdom of Jordan as well—they fall into that category too. So the U.S. and Israel could want to have a type of al-Sisi situation, I'm sure, in Saudi Arabia or the UAE and Qatar, all of them pretty much. But they're going to run into problems with that, and I don't know if that's going to be viable. But those families that are in charge of those countries at the moment, it's not a fait accompli that they will be in charge of those countries forever, especially without the United States having a viable position in the region. So they have to really think about their long-term survival.

I'm hoping that factors into their head. The UAE is a write-off. It's a lost cause because the UAE, the Emirates, made a fundamental error. They allowed Israeli intelligence into their country. And Israeli intelligence has been able to infest, as well as the CIA, to infest the Arab Emirates and basically colonize them from the inside. And they're in the process of hollowing that country out as a sort of

working state. And I predict if this process continues, the current royal family will be gone in 10 years, or they'll be there as a figurehead like the Queen of England and Prince Charles or King Charles.

They'll remain there as a symbol for the brand of the UAE, the prestige of having a royal family, but in terms of the mechanisms of the state, it'll be hollowed out by then. That was a fundamental error, I think, the UAE made to normalize relations, to think that you could be an ally with Israel when, in fact, Israel has a long-term plan to take over the UAE and to take over its energy production as well. It's not that difficult for them. I mean, regime change in the UAE, it's not hard. Between the U.S. and Israel, it could probably be done in a matter of months. If they started planning now, they could probably do it by June or July. I mean, it's not difficult.

So I hope that they realize what a weak and precarious position, fundamentally, that they have. And I think Qatar realizes their inherent weakness in the large scheme of things and probably have made... I think Qatar have made the right decision in terms of their long-term viability and survival. I think they have. We'll see if they stick to it, but Saudi Arabia, it probably behooves them to begin to look east for their future and not west. But the UAE is a lost cause. I think Kuwait is also a lost cause. I think it's only a question of time before that fake state just completely collapses and ends up where it should be, which is part of Iraq.

## **#Nima**

Actually, they're not mentioning Kuwait anymore. Iranian officials don't consider Kuwait to be there anymore. I don't know what's happening. Yeah.

## **#Patrick**

Pretty soon the airlines are going to erase it from their map, like some of them are doing already with Israel. They've changed it to Palestine. There are a few airlines like that. When you zoom in on the world map when you're flying and you're looking, it says Palestine. Jaffa. We'll see. That's a big question. I think you'd be a fool to ignore the structural realities of what's happened over the last couple of months. There's no going back. There's no going back to the old Persian Gulf. It's not going to happen. And Dubai is not going to be the playground. It's not going to be the Las Vegas, the Disneyland for adults in Arabia anymore. I think those days are finished. And they'll still be there. They'll still have certain trappings. But in terms of that false, inflated economy that they've had, pretending that they're not in the Middle East while they clearly are right in the center of the region, those days are over.

## **#Nima**

Thank you so much, Patrick, for being with us today. Great pleasure, as always. And please go to [21stCenturyWire](#) and [PatrickHenningsen.substack.com](#). I'm going to put all the links in the description of this video, Patrick. Go ahead.

## **#Patrick**

Especially the YouTube channel. We'll put a link to our YouTube channel at [21stCenturyWire.com](#). We're so throttled on that platform. We really need people's help to like and subscribe to our channel and like the videos, etc. That would make a big difference because we've been throttled on that platform for over 10 years, and we're just now breaking out of the algorithm with the help of people out there. So we really appreciate any help we get.

## **#Nima**

Please go there and subscribe to Patrick's YouTube channel. I'm going to put all the links to Patrick's social media, Substack, YouTube channel, and his website in the description of this video. Thank you, Patrick.

## **#Patrick**

Cheers. Thank you, Nima.

## **#Nima**

Bye bye.