

Patrick Henningsen: WAR DRUMS: U.S. & Israel's Iran Countdown

See Full Interview: https://www.youtube.com/live/yP7u_4HmjJE?si=wQswYIAwrig_Nt4h Follow me:
Substack: https://substack.com/@dialogueworks?utm_campaign=profile&utm_medium=profile-page
X (Twitter): 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

What we've learned from the Wall Street Journal today, there are two things, two latest pieces of news. 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 that Donald Trump, together with General Ken and Pete Hacks 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 it by 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 just controlled on the route, total control by Iran, and its 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?

#Guest

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, you know, they 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 sort of a day's bombing.

And there was zero pushback from any of the European countries, certainly from the United States. You know, generally, you know, 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. If one Israeli person is traumatized or dies in an errant 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 even 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 that 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. So we gave the – 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—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, 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 attack? 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?

#Guest

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 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, the only one hand to play 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 can choose to do—you know, 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.

And so they're not going to be able to sort of claim victory. I mean, in the short term, I think there's going to be more damage, and the United States will be forced to do something or other. 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 the 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 under the precedent of international law to manage their near abroad—in this case, their territorial waterways and security interests—as they see 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, which is 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 petro 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 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 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, 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, less 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 coming for the first Trump year, \$2.5 trillion. 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.