

# Iran's Strikes ELIMINATE US Bases as Trump Declares War OVER | Mark Sleboda

International affairs expert and military analyst Mark Sleboda joins the show to discuss Trump presuming the war on Iran to be over as new revelations about the damage of Tehran's retaliation sends a massive warning to the US empire's escalation plans. Mark's boosty <https://boosty.to/therealpolitick> LIKE the video and Subscribe for more in-depth geopolitical analysis! Leave your thoughts in the comments below! Support the Channel: Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong> SUBSCRIBE ON RUMBLE: Rumble: <https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong> Follow Me on Social Media: Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DannyHaiphong> Telegram: <https://t.me/DannyHaiphong> Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhaiphong> Substack: [chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com](https://chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com) Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritho> #trump #iran #iranwar

## #Danny

Welcome, everyone. Welcome back to the show. It's your host, Danny Haiphong. I'm joined by a friend of the show, geopolitical analyst, international affairs expert, and commentator, Mark Sloboda. Mark, good to see you again.

## #Mark Sleboda

Danny, thanks for having me. It's always an honor and a pleasure to be on the show.

## #Danny

Yes, everyone, hit the like button. Sorry for the lateness. That was my fault. I forgot to send the link over to Mark, so you can blame me for that. But do it—use your rage to smash the like button. That helps boost the show. Mark, I wanted to begin with this. Given your expertise on military affairs, and given that the Trump administration, Donald Trump, is rejecting any overtures by Iran to actually negotiate in good faith, and given that Trump has just told Congress that the war is, quote-unquote, over as he tries to sidestep this 60-day War Powers deadline.

I wanted to actually first begin with this investigation that CNN has done, which essentially revealed a lot of the things we've been talking about, that you've talked about on this show. But again, now it is being confirmed by the mainstream media just the extent of the damage that Iran has done to U.S. interests and U.S. assets in the region. And let's play this because I think it might provide some

context as to why the U.S. is in this—almost like this twilight zone—where it's both threatening escalation and at the same time continuing a fraudulent ceasefire. So here it is, let's watch just the first two minutes, but it's on 1.5 speed, so it'll go a lot faster than that. Here we go.

## **#CNN 1**

Camp Buehring, Kuwait. American soldiers enjoying a karaoke night at one of the biggest U.S. military hubs in the Gulf. That was then. This is now. A once-bustling American microcity in the desert, nearly empty and heavily damaged after a weeks-long barrage of Iranian missiles and drones. One of many U.S. military facilities in the oil-rich Arabian Peninsula, targeted by Iran even as the U.S. and Israel pummeled the Islamic Republic's large arsenal. So what impact have Iran's strikes had on America's footprint in the Middle East? A CNN investigation found evidence of unprecedented destruction.

We can reveal that strikes damaged at least 16 U.S. installations across eight countries. According to our analysis and sourcing, that's the majority of American military positions in the region, and some of them are virtually unusable now. A U.S. source familiar with the situation told us that they've never seen anything like this at American bases, that these were rapid, targeted strikes using advanced technology. Iran's main targets? Multi-million-dollar aircraft, like this Boeing E-3 Sentry, which gave the U.S. a huge amount of visibility over the Gulf. It's out of production, and in today's money, it's worth nearly half a billion dollars.

Critical communications equipment. Look at these giant golf balls. They're known as radomes, and they protect satellite dishes vital for data transmission. In this space alone, Iran destroyed all but one of the radomes less than a month into the war. And crucially, radar systems — highly sophisticated, expensive, difficult to replace, and critical to air defense. The second U.S. source, this one a congressional aide familiar with damage assessments, described these as the most cost-effective of the targets. Our radar systems, they said, are our most expensive and our most limited resource in the region. For U.S. allies in the region,

## **#Danny**

So that's essentially the summary, Mark. Maybe you can talk about how this context is influencing U.S. decision-making now on Iran, because there's both this contradiction of the U.S. supposedly building up — although some have argued that it might be a little slower than people like Robert Pape are saying it is — while at the same time, the U.S. is maintaining a very maximalist position in so-called talks with Iran that are really non-existent right now. So, your thoughts on the overall situation?

## **#Mark Sleboda**

Yeah, so first of all, let me just hash out a bit of that report there. Yes, by far the most significant, important, and expensive of Iran's strikes was their targeted strikes on advanced U.S. radar systems in the region, which they took out — essentially all but one in the entire region. This was huge. It had drastic effects on the U.S. ability to conduct both offensive and defensive air actions, you know, long-range strike actions in the aftermath of that, because it severely limited the information they had about incoming missiles and drones throughout the region, you know, in the aftermath of the destruction of those.

And similarly, those radars are also, of course, used to map out the opponent as well. So it made it harder for them to identify the enemy air defenses as well. So that was a very significant both tactical and strategic target for Iran, and of course the most expensive. The estimates now that CNN is starting to talk about are a total of 50 billion dollars' worth of damage to U.S. bases, and I expect it to rise significantly more than that. I think we'll see. And most of those radar systems, they're not something that you can just pull off the shelf in Langley and re-erect in the Middle East. They take years to build these things.

They don't have a sitting supply of them. And oftentimes, they are accustomed to the environment and the position that they're in. So these were hardened structures. It is a significant amount of damage. Yeah, warehouses and runways and other things, that's minor. Radars, radomes, you know, these were the important targets, and they limited the U.S.'s defensive and offensive capability in the aftermath. There's AN/TPYs. Those are extremely valuable targets. And it raises a lot of questions. So, first of all, it raises the security question for the Gulf Arab states. Supposedly, the presence of the U.S. military in their states is supposed to be a security guarantor.

It is supposed to protect them, to deter attacks and protect them. And instead, it was the exact opposite, because the U.S. used those bases to launch an illegal, unprovoked war of aggression against Iran, making those bases, and thus the countries that hosted them, targets. It sucked them right into the conflict, whether they approved of it or not. So it was the exact opposite of security. It literally made them into targets. And in the aftermath, you know, the two questions they'll be asking are: if the U.S. can't defend its own bases, then how can it defend us? And is the U.S. going to be dragging us into more conflicts, not of our necessary choosing, in the future?

Do we want them back, especially now when we see how vulnerable those bases are? In fact, they give Iran something to hit. They were liabilities rather than strengths. And we were told in the initial days of the conflict, the Western mainstream media was trying to make it sound like the Iranians were targeting civilian hotels in these countries as well. In the alt media, the reality of that situation was called out almost immediately, but it took a couple of weeks for the Western mainstream media to admit it. The reason they were hitting those hotels is because U.S. military and intelligence personnel that they had evacuated off of those bases, because they were so vulnerable to the Iranian strikes, were moved into civilian hotels.

And that's when the Iranians found out about it and were, on several occasions, hitting them. Now, moving military personnel involved in a conflict, and we were told that they were working remotely from those hotels conducting the war. I mean, I want that job, right? Except that, of course, it made them targets. It's also a war crime, of course, because they are literally using those hotels, the people, the staff, and any other civilians, tourists, anyone else who might have been there, as human shields, right? Placing active military personnel in a conflict in that— I mean, it's not even their own buildings. It's tourist hotels, for Christ's sake. The fact of that being a war crime, of course, was not addressed in the mainstream media.

But I mean, there's literally no question about it. And it was admitted to by the government themselves. You know, the media reporting, and then the governments—yeah, we moved them in. Right. So that's hellacious. And they had to move them in there because they were incapable of defending them from Iran's long-range strikes—from their missiles, their drones. And we found out their aircraft strikes. We found that out last week, that Iran had used attacks with fixed-wing aircraft on at least one of those bases as well. And this is an old F-5 that they were using, a 1960s-era U.S. aircraft transferred to Iran during the period of the U.S.-installed dictator, the Shah of Iran.

And they were maintained amazingly in operating condition through the decades since. Now, Iran had other aircraft. Iran does not have the most powerful air force in the world. They've concentrated on missiles and drones, whereas Israel, for instance, concentrated on strike aircraft. And I think this conflict has shown what a wise and future-minded shift that was by Iran to focus on that over the last decade, and it has paid dividends. But they still kept up some of their older aircraft as well as having a few newer ones. And they've made deals with Russia, of course, for more advanced aircraft. It's not clear whether they've been delivered or not. But the F-5 was definitely used. Now, think about this.

They were saying in that CNN report that they were using sophisticated and advanced technology. And that's true when it comes to the missiles and the drones and everything. But they were also using antiquated technology that was also effective against those U.S. military bases. That is how shoddy their air and missile defenses were. The U.S. bases were hit by one of their own decades-old aircraft that was made literally before disco existed. Think about that. So that again, while it is true that Iran used advanced attacks, they also used some aging attacks as well. And those evidently were effective as well. So the Arab countries really have to decide whether they really want the U.S. there.

And the U.S. also has to decide, do we want to rebuild those bases, considering how vulnerable we now know they are to Iranian attack, that they essentially give the Iranians something within range to hit back at? Right, fixed structures which are much easier to hit than, say, a moving aircraft carrier or something of the sort. So, I mean, there's gonna be a lot of soul-searching. Ultimately, I think that probably most of those bases will be re-inhabited. The Arabs have very little when it

comes to security options, and they just pissed off the largest and most powerful regional player, which, you know, as of the current moment, is in relative terms winning this conflict, and whose government, political system, and much of their military capability look set to survive the conflict.

So they have no good options when it comes to security and the aftermath of that, and they just have to choose among bad ones. And I think ultimately, with all the military and economic considerations, they probably will choose to keep a U.S. military presence there, unfortunately. But they're probably going to be looking for other options in the future—for security, for foreign policy—and it certainly is going to call a lot of their existing relationships into question, at the very least.

## **#Danny**

Yeah. And Mark, you know, Donald Trump was recently briefed by CENTCOM about what is being said will be a wave of short and powerful strikes at some point in the near future—could be imminent or could not be. But I wanted to play this from, I don't know if you remember, General Wesley Clark. He was the infamous former NATO general who talked about the “seven countries in five years” foreign policy that was going to be pursued by the United States following September 11th. Well, here's what he had to say about where the U.S. is, even beyond the bases, what CNN has covered. He's talking about now what the U.S. has left in its arsenal following the five or so weeks of active hostilities it engaged in against Iran.

## **#CNN 2**

And this \$25 billion number for what the war has cost to this point—help us understand that. Put that in perspective for us, if you could.

## **#CNN 3**

It's a substantial amount of money, but the money's less important than the actual assets that have been expended. And so we've lost radars from attacks. They're hard to replace. We're down to about 50% of our Tomahawk land-attack missile inventory. We've shot up maybe a third of our ballistic missile intercept capacity and maybe half of the very high-altitude THAAD missile inventory. These inventories on these missiles take, in some cases, several years to replace. And in addition, the ships that are out there that have them have to be replenished, and that's an operation in itself. So the money is important, yes, but it's less important than the actual production behind it, Pamela.

## **#Danny**

So those numbers are somewhat bigger than even some of the other estimates I've seen by mainstream media. But your reaction to this, given that it appears the United States is choosing

between short and powerful strikes and some kind of diplomacy kabuki theater, which I guess is not the most powerful position to be in, or at least to demonstrate to the rest of the world—your thoughts?

## **#Mark Sleboda**

First of all, I think it's important to recognize that when he was talking about that they've used 50% of their inventories, that means they were using 50% of what were already critically low inventories that the Pentagon had already put out months ago. The inventories of these interceptors and several standoff munitions were below their minimum contingency operating levels that they wanted to have. So that tells you. Now, I, myself, and many others—Brian Berletek is another one—have been talking about this for a long time. I did videos months before this attack occurred on how the U.S.'s air and missile defense, their capacity, but also their production of interceptors and, you know, the levels of them that they had in inventory, was the U.S.'s Achilles heel.

And I, in fact, I was shocked when Israel and the U.S. attacked Iran last year, in 2025, because I said they don't have the interceptors for a long war against Iran. Unless they take them out in a few days, they're going to run into problems. And, you know, there's a reason that that war only lasted 12 days, and the U.S. came in, dropped some bombs, declared victory, and demanded a ceasefire that the Iranians gave them at the time. And that's because of the shortage of munitions, of air defense interceptors for the Patriot, the THAAD, and the naval interceptors, the SM-3 and the SM-6, and of Israel's own missiles for their air and missile defense systems. You know, the infamous David's Sling, perhaps better known as the David's Boomerang for its firing back on itself.

But they were short of everything, and that's why they had to end that war early. And then, I was even more shocked when they launched this one. Everything was betting on this decapitation strike, and the CIA and Mossad sparked insurgent arms and provoked an insurgency, which failed before the military assault was even launched. And then the decapitation strikes, you know, they didn't know about—they didn't know—the stability of the Iranian government and society. They had bad experts who were telling them erroneous information because all of their experts, right, in the blob, in the U.S. deep state, are anti-Iranian, anti-Russian, or anti-Chinese, or all-of-the-above ideologues.

And they all have caricatured views of these countries that have very little to do with reality. Because what they're most focused on is regime change, not the reality of the situations. They lack the absolutely critical ability in both, I would say, international relations and strategic studies to put yourself in the shoes of your opponent, to thus be able to consider their options and how they're conducting decision-making. If you can't do that, then you've already failed. And the U.S. critically lacks that ability because all of their experts are manufactured in this hegemonic ideological atmosphere.

Whether we're talking people in, you know, government institutions, the intelligence agencies, the State Department, the military, or the broader blob in the think tanks and the universities, I know,

I've studied with them. They all have batshit crazy assumptions and caricatures of the U.S.'s geopolitical rivals around the world. So they believed the Iranian government would fall after they dropped a few bombs because the people would rise up and seize their freedom, blah, blah, blah, which tells us so much about their hubris, about America's own military and narrative power, and their critical misunderstanding of their opponents. It's just like in the start of the proxy conflict with Russia in Ukraine that they provoked.

They believed the Russian economy would collapse. The Blinken and Sullivan administration believed that the Russian economy would collapse within a couple of months as a result of U.S. sanctions. And instead, the Russian economy actually shrugged it off and, by many measures, actually became stronger and more resilient as a result of the decoupling, the forced decoupling from the dollar and from the U.S. financial system. So those same mistakes were made with Iran. And they launched this, you know, knowing that they had low inventories, on the belief that it was going to be quickly finished off because of bombs, decapitation strikes, and regime change ops. And so they didn't have to worry about the low levels of their munitions, and they didn't have to worry about Iran closing the Strait of Hormuz.

At least that's what Trump believed or chose to believe. And they've paid the price for it now. And we heard last week in, I don't know, the Financial Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, the New York Times, they were all talking about how already, even if Trump doesn't go for a round two or a round three, depending on how you count it now, a final blow to the regime, as they're calling it. Even if they don't do that, the level of—the critically low level of these air defense interceptors—and of their offensive standoff munitions, principally the Tomahawk, the JASSM air-launched cruise missile, but also the new Precision Strike Missile, which is supposed to replace the ATACMS, which is no longer in production, fired out of the HIMARS, because they used quite a lot of their very small inventory of those as well.

And now they're even talking about the Pentagon. Bloomberg tells us the Pentagon wants to test their unfinished Dark Eagle, supposed hypersonic missile, on Iran as well. And I think they have the capability, theoretically, of making like one of those a month, even though they aren't officially approved. So, you know, very low levels. This is all hard work—geopolitical limits on what the U.S. hegemon is going to be able to do to project power against not only its main geopolitical rivals, Russia and China, and any future conflicts with Iran, but even regional powers in the next years, because they don't have the standoff munitions. They don't have them, and it will take them years—five, six, seven more years—to rebuild those stockpiles, even to a low level.

And there are potentially further problems with this, because China has started putting restrictions on the rare earths and other associated valuable minerals and chemicals that are critical for high-end semiconductors, like tungsten and other things that go into these, and has begun to put restrictions on the Pentagon, the U.S. military-industrial complex, to buy them, and also put end-user agreements on their sales to others so that they can't then be transferred to the U.S. So there are real questions about their ability to rebuild these stockpiles, even at the current rate, much less

ramp up production as they hope to be able to do. But even then, it will take years and years. And they openly admitted, if China had the desire to militarily reconquer control over their U.S.-supported separatist island province of Taiwan, then there's nothing the U.S. could do about it now, for years into the future.

I don't think that they could have done anything about it already, to be perfectly honest. I mean, there was already a missile gap. We're talking about going to war with the world's by far largest manufacturing power, by orders of magnitude over the United States, in what almost certainly would be another attrition war—another long-range strike attrition war—in China's own backyard, off of their own coast. All the war games in recent years conducted by the U.S. show the U.S. losing that conflict, and sometimes losing it badly. So I think they were already—now there's no question—the U.S. just blew their load, right, to put it in layman's terms, on this conflict with Iran that still failed to achieve its objectives by far, right?

They did not get the regime change. They did not stop Iran's nuclear enrichment program. They didn't get the nuclear deal program that Trump wants. They didn't destroy Iran's long-range strike missile or drone stockpiles. They didn't destroy their capability to produce more. And Iran is still in control of the Strait of Hormuz, which they weren't before the conflict began. So they blew it all and they didn't achieve results. And they still have fantasies that they could bring the war to Russia and China—they couldn't even deal with Iran.

Now, I mean, Iran, of course, is nothing to sneeze at, and I don't want to claim that, but we all understand that Russia and China have far larger and more advanced militaries across multiple spectrums than Iran does. And, of course, they're all strategic partners together and cooperating, and that's one of the things that the U.S. politically believes—and increasingly militarily. Dan Kaine, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, was bitching and griping about it the other day, about the support that Russia is providing Iran in all of this. And why shouldn't they? You know, the U.S. has been exacting a toll in blood and treasure on Russia for the last four years, five years, with the proxy war on Russia in Ukraine.

Of course, Russia is going to want a little payback. And this provided them with the, you know, opportune, um, opportunity to do exactly that. And then this leaves the Trump administration right now in a very bad place, right? To use the chess term, it's zugzwang, right? They have no good options, only bad options. And we heard in the Western media three ideas that were floated, slash leaked, quote-unquote, in the last week in the mainstream media. The first one we heard was Trump was giving orders to the U.S. Navy, to the Pentagon, to prepare for a long, protracted, B.S. bombing, largely ineffective counter-blockade of Iran's ports, which they have kept up for a little over a week now.

And the last count I had by Kepler and others was that at least 50, mid-50s number of ships had gone in and out of Iranian ports in that period of time that the U.S. blockade was not able to stop. They've only got 16 ships sitting far off the Iranian coast, more than 350 kilometers outside of Iran's



anti-ship missile range. And they've got to, what, chase dozens of tankers across the Indo-Pacific, scattering the relatively small naval forces they have. No, they can't do that. It's absurd. They can make a few demonstrative interceptions—they have to, four or five, right? But many, many more getting through. But to extend this blockade, I don't know why, because it is extremely ineffective, right?

If we take a look at that as dueling blockades, or better, I think, a geoeconomic game of chicken, right? Where you've got Iran in their speedster and the U.S. in their speedster. They're driving the global economy. Iran is driving their own economy, hurtling, you know, like testosterone- and drugged-up teenagers toward the precipice overlooking, you know, the bay or whatever, right? And who's going to veer first, right? Who's going to take their own economy, or the economy they represent in this instance, to destruction? And my bet is on Iran outlasting the U.S. in that category. They've...

They've suffered under maximum pressure sanctions, right, that are much worse conditions than they've had recently. And this blockade is not very effective. Pakistan has just opened up new overland routes for them. All they really have to do is hug their own coast where they're safe, enter into Pakistani territorial waters, where the U.S. is not going to go after ships in Pakistani territorial waters because of the diplomatic problems that would cause. They can either unload onto other Pakistani ships, you know, do this sleight-of-hand thing, or they could just go around and enter Indian territorial waters and then skirt around India, and they're already at the Strait of Malacca.

I mean, it's really just kind of silly, the whole thing. The U.S. counter-blockade is largely a PR maneuver. It's a fiction. There's very little reality to it. So the U.S. would definitely lose that game of chicken, right? Because the global energy crisis is—I mean, it's just getting started. It's actually baked in. It hasn't even—The Economist had a piece out this week that the markets are still in la-la land because they haven't factored in the damage to the economy that has already been accrued because of Trump's ridiculous social media manipulating of the market, you know, talking about talks every other day or whatever. And first of all, that tells us how stupid—I mean, just how inane—the entire logic of the markets is.

## **#Danny**

Right.

## **#Mark Sleboda**

They're like chickens running around with their heads cut off. And how bad it is to plan our global economy on the reactions of a bunch of stock traders, commodity traders. So that is not a good option, right? It leads nowhere for the U.S. and to potential global depression. Right. Not far off. The second option presented to us by Reuters was that U.S. intelligence agencies were considering the option of Trump declaring victory and going home, just going home like he did with the Houthis.

## **#Danny**

Right.

## **#Mark Sleboda**

Over a year ago, Trump seems to be good at that. And he's got enough MAGA cultists who will believe whatever bovine feces he shovels them. And the Western mainstream media, you know, occasionally lifts up their head and calls out his BS, but then gets beat down by him screaming about fake news every bad article that declaims the emperor-with-no-clothes narrative about this conflict and about everything else that he puts out there. So I don't think that that is a real option either. Maybe if Iran didn't have control and insist they're going to maintain control, and the U.S. inability to reassert or to change that control of the Strait of Hormuz, maybe that might be more possible.

More people might be able to be fooled by that, by him just— But how could he possibly do that when the Strait of Hormuz is still completely controlled by the IRGC Navy? And they're charging a toll to anyone who wants to go through, and Israelis and, you know, Gulf Arab states, you know, not invited. That is also interesting—an unacceptable bad option. The third option is renewed strikes. I mean, and this is the classic U.S. problem. They've got a hammer. The hammer is actually looking pretty shoddy these days, but everything still looks like a nail. And then the U.S. just—if we drop a few more bombs on it, maybe it'll submit. That's their strategy. A few more decapitation strikes, right?

Take out a few more supreme leaders and IRGC generals, and that'll be it. That's the only hope they have right now, this final blow that they're talking about. Meanwhile, the U.S. media is starting—you know, has started over the last couple—to admit, "Oh, actually, it looks like the Iranians have like 60–70 percent of their launchers and drones and missile inventories and productive capacities still," which, if you do the numbers math, they're looking pretty good on munitions against the United States, right? Jeremy Scahill did an excellent piece in Dropsite this week talking about how the Iranians are very confident diplomatically right now.

They're refusing to talk to the U.S. even, except on their terms, because they've got the three M's in their favor: munitions, markets, and midterms. And I think that's a nice, catchy summation way of looking at a lot of the salient factors here for the U.S. But ultimately, the U.S. is what they are, and Trump is who he is. They're not going to be able to accept a loss, because a loss to Iran would be such a critical body blow to U.S.-led Western global hegemony. Because a lot of hegemony is about belief. It is about narrative. And if that narrative is shattered in the real world by Iran's resilience and then asserting control of one of the major geoeconomic choke points, with the U.S. unable to do anything about it while declaring victory and going home, that whole hegemony is going to start, you know, shaking like a house of cards.

And then they will have lost several conflicts in recent years, right? The proxy war against Russia in Ukraine, which they've obviously all but given up on at this point, except for the CIA just trying to do as much damage for as long as they can through the Kiev regime and the Europeans. And their games of whack-a-mole against the Houthis. And, I mean, you could go back a little bit further to even the August war, where Russia very quickly defeated a U.S. proxy regime in Georgia that was also on the path to being dragged into NATO back in 2008. That's not a good string of, you know, hegemony-reinforcing exertions of power.

So, they'll roll the dice and take the high-risk, high-reward option of dropping some more bombs. That seems almost inevitable to me. Not because it's a good option, and not because I think it's likely to succeed. I don't. But because they don't have any other good options, and they are who they are. The U.S. is who the U.S. is, and Trump is who he is. So, of course, they're going to drop some more bombs. And meanwhile, at least mentally, in both the Kremlin and in Beijing, they've got big neon counters of the numbers of these munitions, of these standoff munitions and these interceptors. And they're racing towards zero ever faster—or not, maybe not zero, but a critically low level.

And you know, they're drinking some champagne, eating some popcorn, you know, some caviar on some black bread, you know, whatever it is that they do to pass the time while they're enjoying this show. Because this, ultimately, in geopolitical terms and for Russia in economic terms, as long as the Iranian government survives and continues, and as long as it doesn't end in global depression for everyone, then this U.S.-Israeli war—illegal, unprovoked war of aggression on Iran—is a victory for Russia and China, giving them huge freedom of maneuver for years into the future, and probably the biggest geostrategic blunder by the United States in modern history, making George H.W. Bush's overthrowing of Saddam Hussein look like a Mensa candidate in comparison.

## **#CNN 2**

Hmm.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, I mean, that's, I think, a great summary, Mark. And I think it's important to note that Iran is, I believe, since World War II, the only country in the world that has done this kind of damage to the United States directly on U.S. assets, directly on U.S. bases. So it's a historic moment in that regard. And then I'm curious about your reaction to—you mentioned them earlier—this whole Dark Eagle. It felt very random that the United States would put out there that they would use this new weapon, this so-called hypersonic missile. And I thought to myself, if this weapon is untested, there are only a few of them, and the other factor here being that Iran also has hypersonic missiles, and Iran probably has more hypersonic missiles, it seems like an escalation ladder climb that could end very badly. But what do you make of the Dark Eagle?

## #Mark Sleboda

Maybe you can help the audience understand what the hell this is and why the U.S.—so why was—okay, so this story was intentionally leaked to the media, right? This isn't something, right? Militaries in war experiment with things. Right. Oh, Russia and Ukraine are in a constant state of experimentation, evolution, and adaptation. Right. I mean, just constant, at breakneck speed. But, you know, in general, militaries are always testing during military conflicts. Right. That's nothing—it sounds bad, but it's really just what happens. But why are they making such a big deal out of it? Why are they specifically leaking? And I suspect it has far more to do with some pathetic attempted bluff, right, of suggesting that the U.S. has some card up their sleeve that is really just pathetic and lame. First of all, the Iranians are playing not just chess.

The Iranians are playing boxing chess. Have you ever seen that, Danny? Where it's literally a thing, like it's a sport. It was big among hipsters or something a few years ago. Yeah, where you'll play a few rounds of chess, and then you'll ding, ding, get up and punch each other in the face a few times, and then sit down and play some more chess, right? That's what the Iranians are literally playing. Meanwhile, Trump, of course, doesn't know how to play chess, and he doesn't really fit much for boxing, you know, whatever bravado and bombastic social media posts he might put out there. He's playing poker, right?

Because that's all he knows. And this seems to be more of another kind of bluff, and the Iranians have got to be like, you're kidding. You've got maybe a handful of these things. They're untested. They haven't exited production, because I did a report on these a few years ago. They've had so many problems with them. Meanwhile, Iran has their own hypersonic missiles, as far as the U.S. media really doesn't want to admit it. But there's more than enough evidence out there, written, you know, in big craters all over Israel, to demonstrate that at this point. Why would they be scared of that? I don't know.

We found out over the last two months that all of Iran's big launch capabilities, missile inventories, even their aircraft, their speedboats—they're all in super deep, fortified underground complexes, often hidden below granite mountains that even the U.S.'s biggest massive earth penetrators couldn't dent the surface of, right? You know, maybe take out a tube that can be dug out, you know, but affecting nothing of the underlying facilities, with entire metro systems for moving missiles around to different locations. But, I mean, it's total... I hate to put it in those terms, but it's total James Bond supervillain stuff, right?

And they've got like 30, 20, somewhere between 25 and 36 of them. So what is a hypersonic missile going to do against that? Nothing. It doesn't have penetrative power. It's not going to blow through a granite mountain. So... what would it do? Nothing. Nothing in military terms. And there's no reason for the Pentagon to make a big PR deal out of announcing the testing of it, especially if it doesn't test well. So we have to assume that this is some type of bluff. And it's a bad one. But again,

the Trump administration is not playing 5D chess here. They're not playing boxing chess. They're flailing around. They don't know what to do.

They bit off more than they can chew. Trump ignored advice from his top generals and intelligence people, and instead he chose to believe what Netanyahu and Kushner and Witkoff and Hagseth and, I don't know, Jack Keane and other lunatics were saying. And now they're paying the price. And he's in this position where he's got no good options, and he is desperately trying to maintain the narrative of winning because he's so afraid to be seen as a loser. And, you know, putting out memes of the Strait of Trump, you know, when the situation is so far from that, I mean, I don't know how else to put it.

It is literally the emperor with no clothes thing, right? And Trump doesn't look too pretty with no clothes on. And I hate to give you all that mental image, but I mean, that's literally what we're dealing with here. The U.S. military is, you know, on paper, the most powerful military in the world, right? But it's stretched out all over the world, and it's got numerous commitments everywhere. And there are only so many resources that it can bring to bear in any particular situation at any time. And it's fought too many conflicts and has a military-industrial complex that is simply outdated. It is a dinosaur. It has not kept up with the times. It's bloated.

It's practically monopolistic. There were two pieces out by the New York Times in the last week or so. The first one—well, actually, it's the second one—but the first one, the New York Times, by the editorial board, said the U.S. military was losing its edge after Iran. Everyone knows it. This is a huge admission by, what, the preeminent paper of record in the United States, right? That the U.S. spends a trillion dollars or more a year on its military, and that it's not fit to task, that its military-industrial complex is not fit to task, that it has not evolved with rapidly changing military technology—drones, AIs—that it is too monopolistic and unadaptive and just incapable of manufacturing and production to scale. A huge admission. And then they had another piece out, the New York Times: "Russia Is Building Tomorrow's War Machine."

And this is the exact opposite of that. They here admitted that Russia has developed the exact opposite—that they have a decentralized, innovative, rewarding military-industrial complex that focuses not on what looks great on paper, right, or brings the most money for a military-industrial complex conglomerate, but is the most pragmatic and capable of production-to-scale military equipment, and how their innovations with drones, with AI and AI targeting, are just leaving the U. S. in the dust. Much less, you know, then we want to talk missiles and hypersonic missiles and these new exotic strategic components like the Burevestnik and so on. It's damning. And so the New York Times, in the space of a week—alright, and we can extend this to Iran, right?

Because a lot of Russia's innovations that they talk about, and Russia's own wonder weapon, the Geran, are based on an Iranian design provided as part of their strategic partnership to Russia back in 2022, at the beginning of Russia's intervention in the Ukrainian civil conflict. They have then mass-produced it themselves and, according to this article, had 30 major innovations on that in the last

five years that have been produced to scale, creating a whole range of Gerans with different, high-end capabilities. And we're told that Russia has provided advanced drones and the tactics for using them back to Iran to pay them back. And that has been one of the things that has been damaging those U.S. military bases and taking out radars and so forth.

This is a huge admission—that the hegemonic giant is down on one knee. It's behind the times, right? They say it right out. Russia has a future war machine, and by extension, Iran is obviously well in that direction as well. And we don't even want to talk about what the Chinese are doing. And the U.S. is an aging dinosaur, right? It's a Tyrannosaurus Rex with arthritis that just looks outdated in an age of small mammals. It can't compete in the post-meteor, if you want, you know, in military technology changing terms that have affected, you know, the global environment now. This is huge coming from a major publication like this in rapid succession, admitting the weakness of the U.S. military and admitting the innovation and strength of its opponents' militaries. Wow. Who knew? Who knew the New York Times would catch up with us a few years later?

## **#Danny**

Yes. Yeah. I mean, it certainly is, I think, a very interesting moment in history. And my last question to you, Mark, is this: you know, Trump is doing a dance with Congress, of course—at least that's what we're seeing with regard to his pronouncement that the war is essentially over. The ceasefire means no hostilities, so no more war. Of course, we've seen the moves too. I think Israel is reporting that they've received six times the munitions from the United States in recent weeks. I think there was some emergency \$8.6 billion worth of weapons sent also to the region.

But I'm curious if you think that Donald Trump, flirting with termination of the war as he's called it—hostilities being over, the war being over—do you believe he might be flirting a bit with what you were talking about earlier, where there's almost like a walkaway moment coming, especially given the fact that the longer this goes on, the graver the impact, especially on the world economy, is going to be? And we're seeing how really devastating it is now, with gas prices up well above what they were even at the worst points of the active attacks and kinetic attacks by both sides.

## **#Mark Sleboda**

I think he is a desperate, frustrated, scared, unhinged megalomaniac in a bad position. He literally doesn't know what to do. And despite his lame social media attempts to present the Iranian government as in disarray and unable to come to a decision, that's actually a better characterization of himself and his own administration. That's pure projection on his part. Right. Do I continue the blockade forever? Do I declare victory and walk away? Do I double down and roll the dice on a quote-unquote final blow? He doesn't know what he's doing. He is obviously considering all of these things. And I would assume that there are different people within his administration pushing different of these options.

And he obviously doesn't know what to do yet. That is clear to me. He's not some 5D chess plan here. He's desperate. He's flying by the seat of his pants. He is emotionally unhinged. There was an article, I believe, in the Washington Post a little over a week ago about Trump's fears, where, hidden in that article, they admit that during this BS, quote-unquote, "Saving Colonel Ryan," the weapons systems officer—totally not a failed special forces, nuclear-enriched uranium snatch-and-grab operation—that the Pentagon asked Trump to stay out of the Situation Room because he was too emotionally and mentally unstable and would just mess things up. That's... think about that. Think about what they just said.

And if he is not fit to be the commander in chief in the Situation Room in a major event, when is he fit to be the president? I mean, that's the question. When is he in a mental and emotional state where he is someone rational that you want in charge of nuclear codes? Or at least, you know, there are other stories that he has tried to get control of those, and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs prevented him. But anyway, he doesn't know what he's doing, is my point. He doesn't know what he's doing yet. And he is basically playing it by ear and letting events and people push him one way or another. And that's why he's got these three bad options, right?

And I can't see any others out there lurking in the winds, and whichever one that, you know, gambling wheel lands on at the end is as good a guess as mine, because I don't think Trump himself knows. Ultimately, you know, I got a knee-jerk—it's the U.S. and Trump—they're going to just try to drop some bombs instead, because they just can't take the L. They can't accept it. And that's really the only other thing that they have. But, you know, we'll find out. If they do, then it will be doubling down on their epic failure, their geostrategic blunder. And it will just hasten the growth of the multipolar world and the erosion of the hegemon, maybe to a degree that no one could have foreseen even a year ago.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, well, those are great points, Mark. You know, I think it's a great place to stop. I wanted to make sure people knew that in the video description below, after the show, they can check out your Boosty account and support your work because you do a lot of independent work yourself. So definitely do that. Mark, do you have anything you want to say before I, you know, thank Super Chatters, viewers, all that?

## **#Mark Sleboda**

Nope. Thanks, everyone, for listening to me rant and not giving Danny a word in edgewise for the last hour. But, you know, hey, that's me. You know what you're getting.

## **#Danny**

Well, if I didn't like it, I wouldn't bring you on, Mark. So it's always a pleasure. And, of course, I think we have gotten a lot out of this last hour, updating as we have been doing on this war and the geopolitical fallout from it. I want to thank everyone for watching. Of course, I want to thank those who have become members, given Super Chats. So thank you, Sneaker Dad. Thank you, Farzana, Nadim, and Harry. And then, of course, thanks to all the moderators who are helping out today. Thank you to all the viewers. And without further ado, everyone, hit the like button before you go. That helps boost the show even after we are gone. Of course, the video description has Mark Sleboda's Boosty account where you can support all of his independent work and all the places to support this channel, too. I'll be back again soon, and I will announce when the next program is. Until then, see you next time. Bye-bye.