

Andrei Martyanov: Iran & Russia Just Changed War Forever – Here's How

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#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today's Thursday, May 14, 2026, and our dear friend, our brother, Andrei Martyanov, is here with us. Welcome back, Andrei.

#Andrei

My pleasure.

#Nima

Andrei, let's start with the meeting between Xi Jinping and Donald Trump. What we've seen so far was all about how China can buy agricultural products from the United States. It's soybeans, basically, where the United States was replaced by other countries like Brazil, for example, in the case of soybeans. And I think one of the most important things was this Strait of Hormuz. Donald Trump wanted China to do something about it. But they didn't say, they didn't mention anything about the toll system, the new mechanism of the Strait of Hormuz. They said it must be open — demilitarization of the Strait, which is basically the United States militarizing the Strait. Yeah. And how did you find it, Andrei? Because I would say the way China is today is so much influenced by the two wars — one in Ukraine and one in the Middle East — and it put China in a different place to meet Donald Trump in Beijing. Your understanding of what has happened?

#Andrei

My understanding is based also on this fact, which is, it's not a rumor. But there is a very interesting, so to speak, shuttle, you know, or solitaire, if you wish, in the sense that China actually was pressing Iran to conclude any kind of agreement with the United States in order to open the Strait of Hormuz, because up to 25% of the energy comes from China. China is in a precarious position here, because obviously, for all this, you know, bravado, the reality is China needs energy — a lot of it. Obviously, one of them is Russia — its gas and oil and all that — but still, what do you want to do? How can you replace one-fifth, essentially, of your energy consumption? And all this talk about China's coal —

I spoke about this with Garland Nixon yesterday — and I mentioned that China has very good quality coal. The problem is, it's over in terms of easy extraction.

You need to go deeper and deeper, and some of the mines are more than one kilometer deep or something like that. This is a horrendous depth. It's very expensive. And renewables, obviously, as I already stated yesterday, that anybody who comes in, "Oh yeah, China leads the way with renewables"—well, did anybody see the share of the actual renewables? Hydroelectric is considered renewable, but it's obviously a gigantic portion of those renewables. The overwhelming majority is hydroelectric. All this solar, wind, and what have you, it's all for the consumption of the public, which doesn't understand the basic physics. So China is in a precarious position here.

And if it's true, which I tend to believe it is, that China was pressuring Iran regarding some kind of settlement between the United States and Iran—obviously, we know it's Israel and the Gulf too—that's not very interesting. Let's put it this way: this is a very good indication of the actual position of China, in the sense that obviously they have to follow their own national interests, and it's obviously normal that they want to settle things down. But you do not go out and try to preach their, you know, all this gospel of, you know, the best man, you know, like a hippie—no, that's not how it works. And that is why you begin to see now a very interesting shift in Iranian rhetoric, which is becoming increasingly pro-Russian.

If you, I believe the recent statement by Arakcheev said that Russia is a guarantor essentially for the things of Iran—Selden says anything like this, you know. So, and then you begin to see the tremendous activity on the activation of the Caspian Sea route between Russia, which existed before obviously, but now it's evidently got a serious boost. So it's very complex dynamics. And again, make no mistake, I understand that for China, the most important question apart from energy is Taiwan. And guess what? Marco Rubio—and yeah, there is no... This is the funny thing. The United States officially recognizes China's sovereignty over Taiwan.

But it is one thing to officially do something, and totally unofficially—this is what the West does in the special military operation—support effectively their, essentially, well, irredentist movement, if you wish, you know, of the Taiwanese, and supporting all kinds of parties which are now opposing, you know, which was the originator essentially of Taiwan's sort of independence. So nothing has been resolved here. And Marco Rubio made it very clear today. You know, he went on the record, and you can listen to him today, and he evidently said, OK, we know their position, they know ours, that's it. No. And that is the issue. So no matter how many perks you will try to offer in terms of economics—which is important, of course, nobody says that it is not—but the reality is their overriding national interest, national pride, national whatever, and especially the cultural unity. What is Taiwan?

Chinese people, that's who they are. I mean, they're Chinese, all right? So it's a very, very peculiar situation. And it's a three-body, if not five-body problem, let's put it this way. And nobody can basically predict right now. I mean, generally, you can kind of sort of get the general direction. But China is also facing some challenges, especially considering the fact that part of the Chinese party

elite, and especially the southern elites from the southern provinces of China, are very pro-Western and very liberal. They want to follow essentially in the wake of the United States. They admire the combined West, despite the obvious indications to the contrary of what is happening.

And so Xi has on his hands a very complex situation. There were obviously purges and all kinds of things which were cleaning up, cleaning the house, you know, essentially. But how much it's going to be in continuation once he leaves his post, you know? He's obviously a very powerful man, no doubt about it. But, you know, it's difficult to say. No matter how much corruption they clean, no matter how many of those people—some of them are downright prisoners, people they take out—you know, still they have... It's a gigantic country, and it is very non-cohesive, essentially. You know, there are all kinds of things happening. I'm not a sinologist. I am a specialist.

I don't read Chinese, so I cannot pass judgment here on my own. But what I heard from real sinologists, people who live there or who lived there for many years—they speak Chinese, they speak Cantonese, whatever the hell, you know, those dialects—and they say it's a very non-cohesive society, all kinds of ethnicities and things of this nature. And obviously, it's very difficult to keep this country together, as what Xi does and the CCP, the Chinese Communist Party, does. How long this course will continue? Obviously, there are some benefits to it for people. But again, as you know, especially in countries like this, the situation is not always what it looks like.

But we have Mr. Putin flying to Beijing very soon, and that will be the sort of touching base of what is happening, because Iran now occupies an equally important—well, not equally, but I mean, a very important, very close second place for Russia, because evidently something is happening in terms of their relations. And you have to understand, just to give you an example of what is happening: Chinese MANPADS have been spotted and have been taken from Ukrainian forces. China continues to supply the armed forces of Ukraine with MANPADS and all kinds of things of this nature. This is like, okay, you know, so yeah, there are questions there, okay? There are issues.

#Nima

He said, Donald Trump said that China, Xi, told him that they're not going to send weapons to Iran. But after all, they don't need Chinese weapons because, you know, it's just fighting its own war.

#Andrei

Yeah. And there are certain systems that have been delivered from China. We know that. Whatever was delivered—and again, we don't know what was delivered—we know what Russia delivered. That is, you know, pretty much obvious, because even the Iranians don't, you know, don't hide it. You have these, you know, evidently updated, upgraded MiG-29s, which are now upgraded to the much, you know, almost MiG-29 SMTs. They have this new Zhuk Beetle radar. They have the capability to engage targets at a very long range. You have Mi-28s flying there. You have Su-35s. So you can see it. You know it's there. You know that the things with China—you know that they have been flying

aircraft with something—but evidently, whatever was negotiated between China and Iran there, they want to keep it under wraps.

And the reason they want to keep this under wraps is because China still considers the United States not just competitive, but it is. And I don't want to be misinterpreted wrongly here, but I will use this term: China still is afraid of the United States militarily. And I know—actually, I'm not a sinologist—but I know quite a bit about the Chinese armed forces. So there are things which China needs to consider in this particular case. Despite some successes, they definitely move ahead with many things, you know, and some achievements there, no doubt about it. But China is very much aware that, let's put it this way, it's not as strong as it tries to portray itself militarily vis-à-vis the United States.

#Nima

But if that's the case, they need allies, they need partners who are...

#Andrei

Russia is, yeah, it's obvious. And then, do not forget—you know this probably—I was stunned when a few years back, very few, three, maybe two and a half years back, this started to circulate. Not obviously in the mainstream media—I don't even read them anymore—but actually in media from different countries, which are more or less objective. And this famous investment agreement between China and Iran, which was assessed at \$400 billion, which is very significant, very large. And there was actually resistance from the Iranians.

And the reason there was resistance there was because, obviously, China said, we will come in with this money. And China is a rich country that has a lot of money. But essentially, what was happening was that they wanted to remove, actually, whatever project they were doing there, to shrink as much as possible the Iranian participation. That was all about making money and making profit for China, not so much about Iran. Of course, Iran would benefit and what have you. And I understand, and I was reading this, including the Russian press—and serious Russian press, not some media.

I'm talking about analytical materials from Russia, analytical sources I respect, and I know they're the real deal. They were saying the Iranians were actually kind of pushing back because they were like, you know what, oh, it's fine, but what about us? What is our participation? And China was like, no, no, no, no, we will do it on our own and we will own it, essentially. This is what this is all about. So in this case, that is why, if you listen attentively and you follow the press and, you know, news and what have you, then this breed, you know, this road, this new Silk Route of China, is kind of—it's still there.

But not quite. Just to give you an example, the final, the terminal, terminals for this new Silk Road were obviously Europe, which at that time was projected to be what? Solvent and high, you know,

society of the first world, with the expenditure which would support this type of excessive manufacturing capability of China. Well, guess what? Europe is becoming poor. Simple as that. I mean, this is just unbelievable. And so China is easily left here with this serious problem because, of course, they need to shift now to Eurasia, which is developing, and the Eurasian continent is going to be more prosperous than Europe within some decades. But that was one of the things which was foundational for the Chinese economic expansion. And so there you go.

And this dynamic, you will not find anything about it. Well, except for them trashing China. They love to trash China. I don't. But I have to state here that there are problems. There are issues. And Vladimir Putin obviously flies to Beijing. Not only because, obviously, we know that Trump wanted China to facilitate some kind of agreement between the United States and Israel, right? And Iranians. Iranians already stated it's a no-go. And that was a slap to China because China wanted to insert themselves as the broker. No way, and Iranians have been very clear on that. And what can I say? It's a five-body problem, okay? You have to juggle this whole thing. What is going to happen? What's going to happen? And that's the situation. And obviously, their situation with Taiwan, and essentially failure with Iran—Iran obviously is not going to compromise on its control of the Strait of Hormuz.

And I believe it was Araghchi—no, it wasn't Araghchi, it was somebody, one of the generals from basically the Revolutionary Guards. He said, we're going to make on Hormuz trade more than we make on selling oil. And this money stays within Iran. So there you go. And here's the thing: Russians don't care about sanctions. Russians broke through. They don't care. They say, "Oh, yeah, you cannot do." "Oh, yes, we can." China still plays with the sanctions.

#Nima

Actually, China paid, Andrei. They were talking about the toll system in the Strait of Hormuz. From Iranian sources, we've learned that there were multiple Chinese ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz before the meeting between Donald Trump and Xi. They paid the fee, but they call it environmental and logistical upkeep costs. They put a name on it.

#Andrei

Iranians know. Iran definitely does know the spread. Iran does know the score. Iran is in the middle. It's a pivotal country there. And that is why, yeah, we have to keep in mind, or have an eye on the whole spread, so to speak, this larger picture. And it's not that black and white at all. There are so many shades of gray. There are all different colors there. And again, do not forget, that's what people do not understand. What happened with North Korea? Russians said, screw your sanctions, and they just broke through, period. They said, we don't care. Same is happening now with Iran. We don't care. You can impose sanctions.

Russia has, what, 26,000 sanctions on it now? So Russians don't care. Iran is the neighbor. Iran is the ally. Let's do it. Don't even look at it. Iran, what do you want in terms of weapons? Okay, there you go. Inked. That's it. Doesn't matter what the Combined West says anymore. China still continues to abide by, largely, not all, but many things which are related to sanctions. And that is why there was a negotiation where China said, we will continue to buy oil from there. But again, it's not negotiable. With Russia, you just cannot come and say, we don't care, go screw yourself. No, China wants to settle it.

What they do not understand, the moment you begin to discuss this issue as if looking for approval, you immediately exhibit your weakness. Just do it, don't ask. You are big enough, you are powerful enough to tell the United States to go pound sand, you know. But China very much is dependent on the West, and again, I want to stress, especially this guy, whatever this—good lord—this idiot from the European Council on Foreign Relations. He organized it in 2007 on George Soros' money. You know what happened. China was denied Pratt & Whitney jet engines for its... You're talking about Josep Borrell? No. No, no, no, no, no. Lazarus, whatever the name of the... something like that.

No, no. The guy who actually organized the council. He's a big country guy and he's a globalist and, you know, whatever. And he... Two days ago, he published a piece, and it was covered by all major European media. He said we need to also ground all commercial, more than 500 Airbus aircraft, which China flies. So you have to understand what is going on. China doesn't have a modern jet engine for commercial aircraft. That is why they went to Russia to ask for PD-14. But this is the thing people do not want to see. They don't want to discuss it. But what happened? Trump stopped their delivery of the Pratt & Whitney jet engines. And guess what?

The new project of theirs, which is not really Chinese—it's essentially a Western aircraft, the Comac 919. Guess what? It's totally grounded. It's not moving anywhere. They cannot remotor it with the Chinese engines, which are much inferior. And so suddenly this whole project went out of the window. So now you have these guys, and he is—you will find it, the name of him—and you can find this article in The Guardian. It was all over the place in the European press. And he wrote that we have to behave like Chinese Europe, that we have to ground all those 500 Airbus planes which China flies. That's a catastrophe, actually, you know. They did it to Russia, but Russia has its own, so Russians did fine. China cannot do that.

#Nima

I think China has seen what has happened with the case of Russia and Iran. Both countries wanted to negotiate with the United States, but it doesn't matter how big or little the issue is, they're not going to give up on their objectives. When you see... I think Taiwan is so important for the United States right now because they, as you mentioned, have an official sort of policy. Unofficially, they just want to send more than \$11 billion of weapons. They're talking about sending them to Taiwan.

#Andrei

What is that? I think—well, this is the thing the United States thinks it is free to do. And you have to understand that's the whole thing. Obviously, the United States needs China, no doubt about it. And essentially, the United States and China are still kind of joined at the hip to a degree, despite the fact that China dramatically reduced its holdings in terms of treasuries, and it's dropping them. Obviously, Trump went to China because he wanted China to finance the United States, basically by buying the treasuries, which are worthless papers nowadays, you know. And also, yeah, the agriculture—soybeans—as you correctly stated, the United States was the major provider of soybeans.

And so there is a mutual interest. And what can I say? The United States thinks that it can offer some kind of, you know, privileges and trade them in for those privileges, which are, of course, absolutely worthless. The Russians understood it from the get-go. They told the United States to go pound sand. But China will negotiate. They will negotiate in the sense of, let's kind of find something—how can we both benefit from this? But the United States doesn't care, because it is the state of mind in the United States that we are so great, we are so amazing and shining, that even though we are becoming poor, we still think that we are so admired around the world, which is absolutely not the case anymore.

But in China, as I already stated, there is a very strong, very powerful pro-Western and liberal, so to speak, strata. And it's not just party bureaucrats or military bureaucrats or intelligence bureaucrats, what have you. It is also a very large strata of the population who still, you know—listen, China actually is so enamored with Europe that they actually built a mini Paris. You probably don't know it, but there is literally a city that looks like Paris, with an Eiffel Tower and things of this nature. This is how it happens. So there is still this, you know, pretty peculiar Chinese attitude towards the combined West.

And again, this partially was spurred by the fact that they saw Europe as the main consumer of Chinese goods. And this is essentially what is happening. China is dumping, so to speak, on Europe many things. And let's put it this way—very mediocre, to put it, automobiles—but they are cheaper. They also want to get, which is happening, Germans moving a lot of production to China, you know, in terms of the automobile industry and things of this nature. So it's a complex, again, it's a complex interaction. It's not like one or two things; there are a lot of gears, so to speak, which basically turn there.

And, um, again, as I already stated, we need to wait for tomorrow's communique. I think they should come up with the final statement upon the completion of the visit. It's a state visit, so they have to come up and make the press here together. They have to, you know—but the Chinese will always be pretty much the same, like, you know, general terms, platitudes to cover things. And I

don't think Trump is capable of patching up anything, including with China. But again, as I already stated, the Chinese, as you correctly stated, saw what the United States does in terms of the sanctions. And unlike the case with Russia or Iran, China is kind of on the edge with all that.

#Nima

Andrei, when you think about the Trump administration—because we know that China doesn't want the United States to get more influential, to get more powerful—if they play that game, it's not going to be against... you've mentioned... I don't know, are they providing arms to Ukrainians, or are they providing something else? Maybe some third countries are buying these sorts of things from China and then sending them to Ukraine.

#Andrei

Yeah, well, that's the other thing. They have them. How did they end up there? I am not privy to that. But the point is, many of those MANPADS have been encountered there. They were taken, you know, as trophies. So it's, yeah, it's kind of really strange. But again, don't forget, China was also providing components for their UAV drones for Ukraine. So, you can make your own conclusion.

#Nima

But were they providing directly to Ukraine, or were some other countries like the United Kingdom buying them and sending them to Ukraine?

#Andrei

No, I mean, there were very many Chinese parts, and at some point in time, they were providing them directly. But that's why there was some conversation between Vladimir Putin and Xi. And we have to wait and see how it develops. Obviously, China is doing everything it can. They've tried to control it. But again, do not forget, as was the case with banks, when Chinese banks started to refuse operations with their, you know, and again, private banks, if you will. They were saying that, no, we're not going to be conducting any kind of operations with Russia. So that was like, hmm.

Then, of course, China always has an excuse. Oh, these are private banks, they do what they want. But okay, you know, so there are issues there. Okay, let's put it this way. Again, I'm not trying to exaggerate them, I'm not. But I also do not want to try to, you know, gloss over it, because there are some irritation points in those, so to speak, relations. And do not forget, a lot of it is built around Vladimir Putin's and Xi's friendship. They are genuine friends, they are friends, and they work hard. You know, Xi is a reliable partner. But Chinese society is very complex.

Okay, there are all kinds of things happening there, which sometimes not even he can control, you know. And that is why periodically things of this nature just pop up. And again, Vladimir Putin's flight

to Beijing — there will be the meeting of friends, they will be discussing their energy contracts, obviously, because most of the gas and oil will be transferred from the European direction to the east. It's already happening, it's been happening for a while now. So yeah, that's what will be on the agenda. So yeah, that's the world we live in — very complex. Andrei, coming back to the battlefield in the Middle East, Donald Trump is going to get back on Friday.

#Nima

And what is he going to do, in your opinion? There are two options or three options. One of them is mostly by the neocons. I'm sure that you've seen the article by Robert Kagan, the guy who is... yeah, one of the neocons. Yeah, he is one of the neocons. He's suggesting just leaving everything there because it's a catastrophe, what has happened so far for the United States. The other point is the neocons, other neocons, are suggesting that we have to pursue, you know, regime change. We have to send more weapons to Iranians, you know, to Iranian people, to the people at the border with Iran and those people who want some sort of change. And let's change the regime, the so-called regime. And the third option would be re-escalating or increasing the tensions and then the escalations and starting a new war and putting troops on the ground.

Because the Iranian — I was listening yesterday to one of the Iranian commanders — he said, basically, he said to a large audience, the question on our side is not if the United States is going to attack or not, because we know that they're going to attack. But we are thinking, is it going to be an assassination? Are they going to go after some sort of assassination, then attacks? Are they going to take some parts in the Persian Gulf, in the Strait of Hormuz with an invasion? Or are they going to just start bombing as they did in the last days of the second round of war, attacking hospitals and all these facilities in Iran? And what is your understanding of Donald Trump coming back to the United States? And what was the gain of this sort of visit to China for the situation that he's facing in the Middle East?

#Andrei

Well, you correctly described essentially three scenarios. First, we have to immediately discount any neocon calls for regime change and all this garbage. Neocons are utterly incompetent, including the generals who subscribe to them. Utterly incompetent militarily. They do not understand applied geopolitics. That's how stupid they are. Kagan, as much as I hate to agree with this neocon and war criminal, essentially, he is correct. Yeah, the most the United States can do is say, to hell with it, and just run, cut the losses and run. Now, obviously, it's humiliating, but again, what do you want to do? That brings us to the third scenario you described. The United States is desperately trying to refill, so to speak, restock its arsenals. But then again, we're looking at what can they produce. They produce about, what, 70 Tomahawks a year? About, I don't know, there was the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the article, the study by Mr. Kanchan and some other guy.

And they were talking about the stocks and arsenals that, prior to the New York Times and Washington Post publishing that, well, actually, we are pretty much dead in the water. We have very little left. And American commanders coming out, "Oh, we didn't use the, you know, bunker-busting bombs because we don't have enough of them." So they suddenly need to do something. But how many years will it take to create a required force, a required set of means, so to speak, strike means, to do anything about it? Years. So, and what do they have? They have probably the last salvo, which is gonna last, what, two weeks? After that, it's gone.

You have nothing left because Iran will immediately reinitiate the attacks on, especially, those Gulfies and whatever—Ben Gurion Airport, which is staffed with KC-135s right now, as we speak, tankers doing whatever. And actually, there are complaints from Israelis that now they basically, well, interrupt the air traffic essentially. So when you look at this, sure, let them start again. They will run out of standoff weapons. What will they have to do after that? They will have to go in and use this—well, you're required to reach really deep into Iranian airspace if you even want to launch this JDAM, which has about, well, up to 100 kilometers maybe range with the, you know, gliding bombs and things of this nature. After that, what?

You are immediately in the, well, actually, target essentially of the Iranian air defense, which is fine and doing okay, and you're gonna lose more planes. You're gonna, what, conduct another disastrous operation of, what, extracting their, whatever, shot-down pilots or something like that? It looks very bad. So what's left? Okay, they will be buying time, but the point is, again, the United States is incapable now of buying enough time to replenish those arsenals. Granted, they were not effective to start with. And then what? What will you have to do? You have to bring your assets again closer to Iran. What is bringing your assets closer to Iran? Some people say George Galloway—don't ask me, don't quote me—he says, and the other people, there are very many KIAs in the freezers in Germany, in the morgues. They cannot just let them in, you know, in the United States, because it's going to be a catastrophe for Trump and his administration. So the real numbers there—only an idiot buys their "oh, we lost seven people." Really? I mean... But then again, the United States invented the American way of war, which is primarily in the media and PR, you know, not real action on the ground.

And so what we have is a Catch-22 conundrum. Damned if you do, damned if you don't, you know. So Iran itself, the Iranian administration, it and its Israeli handlers, ran into this dead end. And what are you going to do? I don't know. We can expect all kinds of bizarre developments, you know, but again, Iran is unshakable in its conviction, including the situation with Lebanon. Israelis do what they always do — they bomb civilians. That's what they're good at, only. And so, the United States sustained a catastrophic, humiliating military defeat there in Iran, and any attempts to restart the war — the United States simply doesn't have the resources to restart it. I mean, it can restart, but two weeks on a country the scale of Iran and with a capable military... But here's what you mentioned from the guy from the Iranian military.

Yeah, they will always try. They are... Again, you have to understand, they are... In terms of Russia, they will try to, but at least they know if they cross some kind of real serious red line, escalation in the United States ceases to exist. Here you have to understand they are not motivated much by the fear that the United States proper will be attacked. They know Iran doesn't have the capability. So they will try to continue all kinds of nasty sabotage, diversions, kidnappings, killings. But from the purely military-industrial point of view, with what you know, that's the question. You know, the Financial Times reported that Saudi Arabia wants some sort of pact with Iran, between Iran and Arab states, about a non-aggression pact. Oh, good Lord.

#Nima

But what is it? I think it doesn't make sense after all, because when you have Israel deciding about everything, it doesn't matter if you don't want it. If they fly over your country, they're using your airspace. What are you going to do about that?

#Andrei

Yeah, and it's not only that. We know that the Gulf is already completely on their own, attacked Iran. You know, those Qatars and Kuwaits and Saudi Arabias or UAEs of this place, you know, it was reported Saudis secretly attacked. So it's ridiculous, especially when you talk about Arabs being controlled by Israel, period. I mean, it's as simple as that. And that's what Mr. Lavrov stated today. He was stating this on the, or yesterday rather, at the meeting of the foreign ministers of the BRICS countries. He stated very clearly, one of the major factors and considerations in all this discussion cluster coitus, which the United States and Israel unleashed there and have been defeated, was to, alternatively, prevent any kind of rapprochement between Iran and Arabs.

They didn't want any kind of more or less, you know, neutral relations between Iran and Arabs, and they needed to prevent it. That was one of the major reasons why this war was started. And Israel doesn't want to lose control over Arabs. This is the only way they can actually survive. They control corrupt Arab governments. All of them are utterly corrupt and utterly compromised. Be that Saudi Arabia, be that UAE, be that whatever, Kuwait, and let alone Jordan, it's altogether vassals of Israel. So, simple as that. And again, don't forget, those monarchies care only about how much money they have.

Those monarchies grew out not only on the oil wealth, which of course is the case, but also on slave labor. Nobody even cared that during the World Cup 2022 in Qatar, which was the most preposterous decision to start with, most of those stadiums and facilities were built by slaves—literally slaves, I mean, from India, Pakistan, from whatever countries in Eurasia. And so, yeah, that's fine, you know, what, something like a thousand people died just building them. Yeah, who cares, you know? It's just unbelievable.

And so Iran, yeah, Iran is very steady in its demands. And it's because of the position of power that Iran is in, the position of strength. And now, yeah, we have something which is, I already mentioned it, we do have activation between Russia and Iran in a number of aspects. And so, what can I say, we'll have to wait and see again. China is definitely there too, you know, but whatever was happening, it will take some time before we know and have the full picture of what Iranians did in terms of other things, apart from what is obvious or obviously striking Israel and American assets in the area.

#Nima

Andrei, I think you've mentioned the case of Lebanon. Lebanon is Hezbollah just hitting targets in Israel. They're hitting, Andrei, they're hitting Iron Dome batteries.

#Andrei

I know. I saw it. It's like useless technology, and again... Oh, good Lord. The late Colonel Lang—he died a few years back—and he had a very famous blog. He was in the DIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency. He was dealing with a lot. He spoke perfect Arabic, and he was involved in all kinds of things happening in the Middle East, including in Israel. He knew very many people from military intelligence there, Mossad, what have you. And he already then stated, it's not a real army, it's a gendarme force with heavy equipment, period. And everybody saw the pathetic performance. So this is ridiculous, you know, this is just... I cannot even explain how ridiculous it is. And yes, they're hitting—we don't know how many Merkavas they burned—a lot, dozens upon dozens.

Their equipment, other equipment, including infantry fighting vehicles, those bulldozers which are critical for their operations, they're being hit left and right. Iron Dome is being hit. And now northern Israel is actually, well, basically burning. And yeah, that's what we needed to know. We now have the empirical evidence of this. It's all PR, always was, that we are the greatest. And I repeat it again, and I know that sounds very satirical. But the United States and Israel have been in a Dutch rudder with each other, you know, speaking about how great militarily they are. They haven't been. And so this was all self, so to speak, you know, a perpetuating myth of how great militarily those finest fighting forces and things like that.

In reality, it's second-rate armies, you know, which do not really have an understanding of operations. They don't understand the technological aspect of the new, well, basically paradigm, which unfolded already in the 2000s. And so, but what can I say? You can see those indications. These are those fires which you can see all over the horizon. And these are manifestations. These are symptoms of a collapsing civilization. And we're talking about Western civilization, which is imploding. And these are this instability, volatility, and what is happening in the United States. And

my gosh, it's just unbelievable. And now, yeah, I put a tank of gas into my car, \$55 two days ago. Wow. It's not full, actually. It was, I would say, 60% of the gasoline in my tank. I still had some gasoline left. \$55. \$55.

#Nima

Andrei, we learned that the CIA has raided Tulsi Gabbard's office. How is that going to happen? Because the head of the DNI is above the CIA.

#Andrei

Well, the United States is ungovernable. It's as simple as that. I've been on record for this for a long time now. It's not run by competent and honorable people. And yeah, so what can I say? There's evidence that she had files on JFK. She wanted to, and obviously it was clear, it is clear, everybody knows the CIA killed JFK, you know, and it was on behalf of Israel, which JFK promised to shut down, the Israeli nuclear program. And so, yeah. I mean, come on, everybody knows everything, except for the hoi polloi, who are completely brainwashed, and especially Christian Zionists, they will applaud this.

But this is what the United States has become. Anybody who talks today about democracy and liberties, they... they are being laughed at. The United States is going the way of Europe. It will become essentially totalitarian-controlled. Oligarchy controls it. And in this particular case, with the United States, a heavy case of the Christian Zionists. The United States doesn't have a U.S. Congress. It's Knesset 2.0. And we have the most Israeli president. We have the Israeli president in the United States.

#Nima

Actually, Mark Levin, he said that the first, you know, Zionist president.

#Andrei

Yeah, this is, there you go. We can thank all kinds of those people, especially the so-called Christian Zionists. They're not Christian, they're just Zionists. You know, those evangelicals, those fundamentalists who are brainwashed to read this garbage of the Scofield Bible. And so, yeah, let them. You know what? In the end, when this whole damn thing collapses, which now looks possible, it's going to hit them too, you know, so they're not going to escape, and they will see themselves how they will be actually, well, if Israel exists like that. So yeah, the country is now in the process of, in many respects—I wrote this book in 2021, it's called **Disintegration**—and all indicators are now in place. And well, we can thank the Trump administration. They accelerated the process greatly. Let's put it this way.

#Nima

Andrei, do you see the possibility of Donald Trump announcing a national draft for the war in Iran? Because it's somehow, you know, I don't know how the society is going to behave, going to react to that sort of policy.

#Andrei

Reinstating the draft will be a catastrophe for the United States. And another catastrophe, you have to imagine—and this is what many people don't, the Pentagon doesn't understand it either—because they haven't encountered a real war they could lose. And obviously, they don't understand what it—well, some do, others don't. They think that, oh yeah, we're going to build, you know what, let's get one and a half million people, let's say this, and let's go and break through into Iran and somehow, you know, do the war there. They have to understand this is not even Vietnam. Vietnam will look like the easiest stroll in the park compared to what would await them.

And so the number of casualties will be catastrophic. And how to say it? In the end, even the instinct of self-preservation, if it's still left in American society, will create, well, basically discontent, which would lead, if not to some kind of riots and uprising, then to disintegration of the country. And that's what you have to understand. When we talk about American politicians, the modern crop, especially modern Europe, they are militarily and geopolitically ignorant. If you look at the Council on Foreign Relations in the United States, most of those people are clueless pretty much about anything, including those, oh yeah, I graduated from the U.S. Army War College.

I look today at the deposition of this commander of CENTCOM. He has their number of whatever, the stripes, you know, the medals, orders, and I mean, dude, where have you fought? What did you win that you have something which covers all your, essentially, left side? I mean, what kind of merits are those? Show me. I don't understand. But that's what he carries. He looks like a freaking—I don't know. And he talks about, obviously, that, oh yeah, he's essentially blood liable. He made sure that everybody knows that Arabs helped the United States. Now there is no going back. I mean, so, but yeah, you look at this guy, what did you fight? What did you win?

Oh, you saw the, you know, the police operation in Afghanistan. Wow. Well, the Iraq war is lost, you know, and again, you look at this, what else—Vietnam, Korea, well, Panama, of course, Panama was a great achievement, Grenada, and so on—and you look at this, do people actually understand what is happening? They have been fooled by the fact that Venezuela sold their president. They sold Maduro, simple as that. That is why, oh yeah, magnificent operation. Not really. We just bought them. The CIA bought them. That's how they bought the Iraqi army in 2003, too. You know, that's what they do.

But then again, they encountered—and the United States has been demilitarized in the special military operation, which consequently led to the defeat by Iraq. And I've been on record for many

years, many, many years—decades, really—in which I stated many times: the moment the United States gets from behind the backs of its proxies, where they usually hide, and goes toe-to-toe, head-to-head with any enemy that fights back, that's it. And it happened. From 2022 to today, you can see for yourself a complete demolition of the American military mythology because, I mean, the United States can still kill. It still has nuclear weapons.

But the point is, you look at this and it's just like, this was done by amateurs—these technological procurement policies and things like that. Good Lord, people, what you were basing those things on was obviously complete ignorance of the world outside and what is happening, including military history. And so now they encountered, in the open fight, they cannot hide anymore behind the backs of their Ukrainian cannon fodder, which is two and a half million KIAs. These are numbers no American general can comprehend. They don't—the United States has no experience with that in its history. And so they got into the fight with Iran, and you saw yourself. Everybody saw.

#Nima

Yeah. Thank you so much, Andrei, for being with us today. Great pleasure, as always.

#Andrei

Bye-bye. Bye-bye.