

Escobar: Trump PANIC! Iran & China WIPED OUT His WW3 Plan

Pepe Escobar joins the show to discuss the massive fallout of Trump's trip to China which has sparked a mad push by the US empire to renew its war on Iran despite the devastating consequences this would bring to both itself and the world. Pepe Escobar is a geopolitical analyst and independent journalist. Follow him at Telegram: <https://t.me/rocknrollgeopolitics> and X: <https://x.com/RealPepeEscobar> Pepe's latest article: <https://strategic-culture.su/news/2026/05/15/trump-pays-tribute-to-the-temple-of-heaven/> PATREON.COM/DANNYHAIPHONG Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhai...> Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho> Follow me on Telegram: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> #iran #trump #china

#Danny

Welcome, everyone. Welcome back to the show. I am joined by geopolitical analyst and independent journalist Pepe Escobar. He is joining us from Shanghai. It is very good to see you, Pepe. Welcome back to the show.

#Pepe Escobar

Wonderful. An enormous greeting to you, Danny, and to all of you from Shanghai. It's 11 p.m., so the night's just starting. After our conversation, I'm hitting the night again. And this is the capital of the world. It's not even only the capital of Asia. It's absolutely outstanding. There are two capitals of Asia nowadays: Bangkok, in terms of soft power, in terms of service, in terms of the best gastronomy; and Shanghai, of course, all of that plus, of course, high-tech. And there's a rejuvenation of the city as well, especially alongside the river to the West Bund.

The Bund is where the whole planet knows about the Bund, but they are renovating other parts of the Bund. And it's absolutely outstanding. And, of course, rediscovering little secrets of Shanghai, especially trying to discover the new places as well. It's a full-time job. So it's an enormous pleasure. I had a frenetic week because, of course, Goldfinger and C.I.Dada. So from yesterday night to today, finally, I managed to relax a little bit. So you may notice that I am now extremely relaxed.

#Danny

Well, that's great. That's great to hear. Everyone hit the like button as you come on. That helps boost the show. And, well, Pepe, how about we get started with this? I know you recently wrote an article titled "Trump Pays Tribute to the Temple of Heaven" on the Trump summit that took place

yesterday in Beijing. And as this was going on, of course, there was a lot of talk about Iran. There was a lot of talk about pressuring Xi Jinping and China on Iran. Now that Trump has landed back in the United States, there are reports from The New York Times that Trump's advisers are drawing up and passing along all the plans to renew strikes. This despite the fact that Donald Trump just said, actually within the last, I believe it was the last 12 hours or so, that he didn't even talk to Xi Jinping about Iran and the Strait of Hormuz.

So I'm curious where you believe things are now. Leon Panetta, the former CIA head, just said that Iran has a gun to the United States' head in the Strait of Hormuz right now. There are moves to make the Strait of Hormuz toll into a service fee that's just simply going to be rolled into the daily ongoing machinations of their new mechanism. And it seems that there are not a lot of good cards for Trump to play. That's exactly what Panetta said in his piece to The Times. So, your thoughts on where things are here? It seems like China and Iran as well have played their hand very well when it comes to both the summit and the goings-on around it.

#Pepe Escobar

Well, Danny, this is all so boring. My first instinct is to say, who gives a fuck? Especially when you are in Shanghai. Especially when you are in the middle of the future. But okay, we need to do a little bit of a professional effort on a Saturday night to put this in perspective. So I'll try to be very brief about it. Essentially, Trump, in a matter of only a few days, got two cease and desist orders — first from Putin and after that from Xi Jinping. Did he register that? Obviously not. Okay, let's backtrack. Essentially, when Araqchi went to St. Petersburg, he met not only with Lavrov but with Putin, and he explained the Iranian position in full detail for an hour and a half.

That's minutes of foreign relations being received by the president of the Russian Federation. These things don't happen every day. Very, very important. So what did Putin do afterwards? He picked up the phone. He called Donald Trump. They were on the phone for over an hour and a half. And basically, Putin was explaining everything that he heard in detail from Araqchi firsthand. He is, among other things, he was saying, look, if you need me, I can extricate you from this mess. Obviously not in these words, of course, but this was the message. If you need your off-ramp, I can help you.

And I can help you to be the mediator with Iran. But that was the first cease and desist order: don't try to do anything funny in terms of renewal of the war, a new bombing campaign, bombing civilian infrastructure in Iran, not to mention some sort of ground operation. Obviously, Trump didn't register. So what happened this week in Beijing was part two. Very, very important. On Thursday, while Xi and Trump were discussing, that was the start in New Delhi of the BRICS foreign ministers meeting, which, to give you the short version, Danny and all of you, the audience, was a major disaster.

#Danny

It was bad, yes.

#Pepe Escobar

Chaos. It was as bad as it can get. And it pains all of us who have been following BRICS in detail for years, and of course staking our professional reputation on BRICS as the future in terms of the multilateral organization of the future. And I have to repeat this over and over again: BRICS remains in a coma. And it was not this meeting in Delhi that resuscitated BRICS. Lavrov was, I would say, uncharacteristically, almost like retracting himself from what happened. He was almost somber in what he said. There was no joint statement; there was only a statement released by the chair, India. And guess what Modi was doing immediately after this summit in Delhi? He is doing a tour that started in the Arab world and will go to Europe and struck a closer partnership with the Emirates, which, by the way, for all practical purposes, is at war against Iran.

#Danny

And a big reason why there was this chaos at the summit, too, is because, you know.

#Pepe Escobar

And these are two full BRICS members. So I'm sure all of you can imagine the atmosphere at that table in Delhi when you had the foreign minister of Iran and the foreign minister of the Emirates face to face. And it was almost coming to blows territory. And obviously, who was doing the mediation? Essentially Lavrov, because of very good relations with both sides. Wang Yi, was he in Delhi? No, because the most important thing was to be side by side with Xi in Beijing, in front of Trump and the American delegation, because of the several messages concerning Iran that came from Xi. Very, very sophisticated and articulated, but quite direct.

And even considering that they were more or less, you know, oh my God, the emperor of barbaria is here, we have to appease him a little bit, even if he came here to pay tribute. Because the whole purpose of this trip was back to old dynastic China. This was the emperor of barbaria and his over \$10 trillion CEOs coming to Beijing with their hands like this and asking favors from the big panda himself. This is the headline of this trip. And I used Temple of Heaven in my column with several ironic overtones. I'm sure many of you have seen the official tourist photo of Xi Jinping and Trump in front of the Temple of Heaven. So he was given the courtesy, allowed to enter the Temple of Heaven in more metaphorical ways than one.

And, of course, he received a masterclass in civilization from the moment he set foot on Beijing soil, including that fantastic private tour of Zhongnanhai, which is true. And Xi Jinping said that not many people come here, and this is from the time of Deng Xiaoping. But he said, yes, but Putin was here. And obviously, Xi Jinping did the full tour for Putin, especially, you know, showing those trees. This tree here is 250 years old, as old as your exceptionalist nation. This other one here is 400 years old.

So this is how the Chinese do it, and with a lot of class. Obviously, this went over Trump's head because it's impossible for him to even understand that.

It's on the same level as Marco Rubio, like an idiot inside the Great Hall of the People pointing to the ceiling. Which, by the way, is something—there are tours of the Great Hall of the People. You pay 50 yuan, and you can do a tour of the Great Hall of the People and look at the ceiling yourself. So this idiot was trying to show two other mutts, Hegseth and Miller, "Look at this ceiling!" So typical barbarians when they visit the court. So the cultural humiliation of these Americans in Beijing was something for the whole world to watch. And everybody watched it, most of it. Anyway, the cease and desist order was, in many levels, coming from Xi.

Without saying it, that they have a strategic partnership with Iran—which they do, by the way—and without saying it, that the Strait of Hormuz for China is open, because this is a government-to-government deal and Chinese tankers can go back and forth in the Strait of Hormuz with no problem whatsoever. Basically, she said, yes, we agree that the Strait of Hormuz has to be open. We agree that Iran should not have a nuclear weapon, because this is one of the most obvious things on the planet. Every kid knows that Iran doesn't want to have a nuclear weapon since the first fatwa by Khomeini, 46 years ago, I think. But, of course, the cease and desist in terms of Iran was saying the indirect message.

Don't try to do anything to force the situation. And basically, as indirect as saying it, we are at this situation. You, the government of the United States, you are in this situation because you launched this war, essentially. So Xi didn't have to get into too many details about Iran. The cease and desist order was amplified to Taiwan because they can see what the Americans were trying to do in Iran and how this war is against Iran and also against China. And in the future, this can go through another choke point, Malacca, and then reach the South China Sea, and of course, reach Taiwan. So Xi reaffirmed over and over again that Taiwan is a red line.

And basically, he was telling Trump, don't try to pull anything fancy regarding Taiwan, including your \$11 billion weapons deal, which Trump, when he went back to the States, said, no, I'm still thinking about it. So did Trump assimilate these sequential warnings by Putin and by Xi these past few days? I think we all have more or less the answer. Not really. And do the Chinese and do the Russians care? No. Guess who's going to be in Beijing this Tuesday? Vladimir Putin, on an official visit. Do you think this is one of those coincidences of falling out of the Temple of Heaven? No. This was meticulously prepared because now Putin will listen from Xi, face to face, exactly what Xi and Trump discussed in Beijing.

So what all of these triangulations between the interlocking strategic partnerships — Iran, Russia, and China — are telling us is that they are forging their paths together. They don't care what the Americans are doing. Of course, they care to a certain extent in terms of the disturbance of their economies and of the global economy as a whole. But are they intimidated by this new version of American pressure on three different fronts? No, of course not. Because their decisions are

interlocked, and they discuss this among the three of them over and over again. And all these meetings these past few weeks confirm that. Does Trump understand this? Of course not.

Does Trump understand that, in metaphorical ways and many more ways than one, he was ritually humiliated? Maximum pressure during this trip. And the Chinese didn't give him anything apart from being treated royally. But that's typical. That's Chinese sophistication and class. That's different. Did he get anything when you read the transcripts from the White House, that they made zillions of deals? No, none of that. If you go to the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, they're not admitting that any deals were made. And in terms of the bunch of CEOs with zillions, trillions of dollars together in market capitalization, we still don't know. They may have some crumbs here and there. But Jensen Huang from NVIDIA is not going to get any crumb. Forget it.

#Danny

He's having a good time, though. I'm sorry? He's having a good time. Exactly.

#Pepe Escobar

Musk apparently enjoyed his dinner a lot, as we could see in the footage. But nothing is going to change much. By the way, their major Tesla Gigafactory is here. It's in Shanghai. Nothing is going to change. So, in fact, Musk has to lobby Trump not to slap extra tariffs, because then his business with Tesla in China is going to be in major disaster. So not much has changed. Okay, if they're considering buying some Boeings, why not? That's a goodwill gesture. And they're considering buying more soybeans. Okay, it's okay. It's not going to cost them anything. And it's something that they have. Okay, we give you another favor, so you have to give us something later on. And it's a personal favor to Trump. Buy more soybeans means buy extra MAGA votes in the Midwest. The Chinese know exactly how it works, and they know that they will be doing a personal favor to Trump.

But apart from that, anything out of the ordinary? No. No. Nothing happened. And of course, the contrast between the sophistication of the reception and the rituals per se, and this American delegation basically behaving like a bunch of hicks. Yes. Yes. Like literal barbarians. Literal barbarians. And here in Asia, Danny, and all of you, this is the first thing that people all over Asia pay attention to — how you cannot lose face in the middle of pomp and circumstance or behave like a barbarian, which is exactly what happened. And some extra details which are quite telling: at the state dinner, at each table, there was a mix of Americans and Chinese sitting at the same table. Did you see any of the Americans even trying to make an effort to strike conversations? And these people who were at the state dinner — this is the top of the top of the top of the Chinese leadership and also business.

#Danny

No, Trump and his people wouldn't even use translators. First of all, there were translating devices, and there were people there ready to translate.

#Pepe Escobar

You're right, Danny. And even if they needed translators, there were plenty of translators in the room.

#Danny

Very, very easy.

#Pepe Escobar

And, of course, many of these Chinese officials speak quite decent English. But the Americans, they were huddled like in a little club from the provinces. They didn't even try. They didn't even try to network, to work the room, to talk to their Chinese counterparts. Nothing. So, you know, more provincial than that, I cannot see it anywhere. But it was a very telling spectacle for everyone. They don't even know what they're doing. It's too much. It's over there. It's not their pay grade. It's way above. They don't qualify. So it's no wonder that nothing happened. But in terms of how China is engineering itself to be at the absolute center and heart of the drive towards a multipolar world and bypassing the Americas in each and every corner, this has been more than clear these past few days. And having the president of the United States and the president of the Russian Federation coming to Beijing to talk to the big panda in the interval of five days, that seals the deal.

#Danny

Yeah, and you will see the difference for sure in the optics of it all, because Vladimir Putin does not act like Donald Trump. Donald Trump, even at the Temple of Heaven during that footage, when Xi Jinping was telling Trump that no real diplomatic or leader meetings happen here, we don't do that here usually except for Putin—Trump was not even... he doesn't even know how to use a translator. You're supposed to look at the—this is the president of China—you're supposed to look at the person as you're asking the question, and the translator. You're not supposed to ask the translator to ask the person. It just blows my mind that this is how American leaders act.

But at the same time, I'm not surprised because of the hubris, which then gets me to this, Pepe. Did the U.S. delegation even realize that they were going in with very few cards to play, and that all of this talk about pressuring China on Iran only led to Xi Jinping and the rest of the Chinese brass reciting their actual position on the matter, which equates to... end the war and everything gets better? And to me, it seems like that spells out the landscape, right? If the U.S. wants this, you know, global war, the third world war, China topples all of its so-called adversaries that form an

alternative to it. We see now China and Iran stronger than ever, really. And that's... do they even realize this, Pepe? I don't know, but what's your thought on this?

#Pepe Escobar

No, no, no, absolutely not. They are not mentally and intellectually capable of even doing the previous homework to start to understand what the Chinese are doing. I want to concentrate here on... this is what I think was the most important. Xi Jinping said many things that went straight to the point. But I would say the most startling thing that he said in his inaugural speech—it was not even later, when he was addressing Trump and the American delegation—basically, he outlined in three words, with something very Chinese, his vision for U.S.-China relations, as he said, at least for the next three years. So this is the Chinese thinking about the rest of Trump 2.0. It's not that they are thinking this is going to be the rest of the century.

No, not like that. And the slogan is a masterpiece, especially a masterpiece in terms of the Americans simply not understanding what he's talking about. The slogan is Constructive Strategic Stability. Okay, let's speak one by one. The empire of chaos, lies, plunder, and now piracy. Not now—it started already with Venezuela and continues with Iran. It's not constructive, as we all know. It's destructive, inherently destructive. It's not strategic, as we all know as well. At best, it's tactical, but crude tactics—tactics that change all the time, tactics that come out of the mind of the President of the United States at three in the morning. He posts about it, and I already forgot about his latest tactic.

And of course, it's not an empire about stability. It's about deploying, instilling, disseminating chaos, lies, plunder, piracy—all of the above. So how can not only Trump, but the U.S. ruling classes, the people who run the show in the U.S.—how can they possibly understand a concept like constructive strategic stability? Absolutely impossible. So on top of all that, Xi said rationally—in fact, he didn't say it, he was thinking rationally, rationally—how can I expect cooperation from these people as, in his own words, the mainstay of the relationship? And once again, in his own words, healthy stability with competition within proper limits. For the Americans, there are never proper limits.

And on top of it, they don't respect anything that is mutually agreed or in writing. To come back to our friend Grand Master Lavrov, the United States is non-agreement-capable. So... is this China proposing to the U.S. a structural reset? Yes, it is. Is this the U.S. not understanding that they have to accept a structural reset? Otherwise, it's going to be war against China. So the Chinese are saying, look, let's try to have some cooperation. And if we keep going on with, let's say, managed competition, it's fine—but managed competition. And in the end, we could have something resembling peace. Danny and all of you in our audience, can we realistically expect this Trump administration to follow this road?

#Danny

Chirp, chirp, chirp. Crickets. No, no, we cannot. We cannot. And it's so interesting because what you just outlined there—China was the one to release an actual vision for how to move forward. The United States had zero. And usually, the U.S. does have a posture toward China that they are already ready to articulate. This Trump administration has avoided this at all costs in this current iteration and even tried to ignore, in the national security strategy, any kind of direct policy toward China. And everything was really about China, but focusing elsewhere.

And I think here, Pepe, what you just outlined with China's vision, it really seems like China is offering the U.S. an opportunity to roll back and scale back many, if not all, of its—if we're being ambitious—but giving the opportunity to roll back these self-destructive policies that only harm the world and, of course, harm the United States far more than they've harmed China. And I think that's a very interesting power dynamic that's probably lost on the Trump administration, because all U.S. administrations, they always come in very high on their own supply. They think they're the biggest and the baddest and the best, the most exceptional. But even for, I think, many people observing, it might be difficult to see how that just happened. And it really marks, I think, a massive shift in the world. But your thoughts?

#Pepe Escobar

Absolutely. And this is how the two key powers driving change—this long and winding road towards multipolarity—how they are so intimately coordinating the whole thing. And this trip to Beijing on Tuesday, it's part of the whole show, let's put it this way. And of course, when we look at the parallel events, why it was a major disaster—they already knew, Russia and China—that the India foreign ministers' meeting would be a major disaster. So once again, it's going to be up to them, Russia and China, to put the BRICS Humpty Dumpty back together. It's going to be very, very difficult. Because now we have an India-Emirates problem at the heart of the ten BRICS members. Partners is another story. If they were partners, this would not be such a big deal, but they are full members. So when you have these two BRICS full members totally aligned with Israel, and we have this... okay, we can try a short definition: Zionist-Hindutva-Wahhabi connection.

#Danny

Yeah.

#Pepe Escobar

And Wahhabi with the ISIS overtones.

#Danny

Now, that's a horrific triangle.

#Pepe Escobar

Yes, but this is as toxic as it gets in terms of triangles. So how Russia and China, which, by the way, have good relations with all these three—but how... this is going to blow up the BRICS construction from the inside. So I interpreted what Lavrov said, which was, you could see that it was not the usual enthusiastic Lavrov when he talks about BRICS. Basically, he was admitting, oh my God, we have an uphill struggle in front of us, but it's inevitable. And if it's not us, nobody's going to do it. And obviously, this will be discussed on Tuesday between Putin and Xi. And obviously, they have to think about what Russia and China can do in this next, what, three months? Yeah, three or four months before the summit in September in New Delhi.

If nothing is done, BRICS arrives at the summit in, you know, in September completely blown up from the inside, which is the worst possible outcome. But if we can have a sort of parallel strategy by Russia and China inside BRICS and with some of the BRICS members, I could venture maybe Brazil will be part of it, depending on how Lula feels that he can win the next election. And then his vision for BRICS long term continues. And the fact that he has very, very good relationships concerning BRICS with both Putin and Xi. So, okay, now we coordinate how BRICS is going to evolve from now on. And the other ones, they may sit at the table, but they won't be part of the key decisions. But that's an enormous step ahead because, theoretically, and Lavrov was the first to say it, over and over again.

This is a table where everybody has the same voice, is equanimous, et cetera. But there's got to be some sort of hierarchy inside BRICS. Otherwise, what the rest of the Global South, starting with the 10 partners plus everybody that is on the list—it's still 30-something countries that are still on the list because they want to become partners or full members—what they have achieved since the summit in Kazan in 2024. And it was not so bad, at least at the last minute, the summit in Rio last year. It was going to collapse completely. And unfortunately, the leading multilateral organization in terms of formalizing this path toward the multipolar world, it's not the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, it's BRICS. So that could lead us to the possibility that maybe in the midterm—and the first one who actually saw this coming, Lukashenko—they should merge.

And if they merge, it would be something absolutely fascinating, because then we're going to have the whole of Central Asia—not only two partners, but the rest of Central Asia. And we're going to have Pakistan at the table as well, which is something that's starting to be discussed seriously today by the Chinese, by the Russians, by many members across the Global South. They are looking at this new Sunni, the four Sunnis—let's put it this way—sort of alliance in terms of finding a solution for the U.S. against Iran. Who do we find? We find Egypt, which is already a member of BRICS. We find Pakistan, which could become a member. We find Saudi Arabia, which is still on the fence. Are they inside BRICS or not? They still don't know because they are hedging all the time.

And we have Turkey, who's dying to get into BRICS. But, of course, nobody trusts Erdogan. This already exists. It's very, very interesting, and this is something that I heard from some of my

Pakistani sources. They are treating this very, very seriously because they do want to get inside BRICS, and they think that now they are earning their stripes because of the mediation. They earned their stripes, and they said, oh, look, inside BRICS as one of the leaders, we are trying to position ourselves as one of the leaders, not only in South Asia but across Asia, and we are a nuclear power on top of it. BRICS is natural territory for us. What is that Hindutva-Zionist alliance going to do about that? So, you know, everything can be turned upside down in a matter of days, in fact. But the possibilities are fascinating, and they are realistic. They are realistic. But once again, in the driver's seat, we're going to have some extra details, maybe not leaked this Tuesday. Once again, Russia and China.

#Danny

Yeah, well, the Pakistan question is very interesting, given that the CPEC is very big—very big—the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. And what Pakistan has already done to ease the, I guess, the relative pain of the blockade for Iran with the land routes, and it being very public, right? I mean, it's one thing for that just to exist, but it's another thing for it to be a very public showing and Pakistan not complaining about it, unlike what we've seen with the UAE, which—the UAE may very well further diminish not just the U.S.'s position, but also any of these monarchies that want to hedge too far to the U.S.-Israeli camp, in that now the UAE is complaining.

I don't know if you saw this—complaining that Israel has leaked all the secrets of their canoodling and planning and everything, and all of these meetings, a secret meeting from Netanyahu to broker this war. Now we're hearing rumblings that a lot of these monarchies are not happy with the UAE, and Saudi Arabia is not happy. Kuwait, for whatever that's worth, is not happy, and they're not happy. They're not loving any kind of mending of ties, especially Saudi and the UAE, which are very bad already. But they're not loving what the UAE is doing.

So this—it's causing a lot of problems within BRICS, but also it seems like it's a very desperate situation. You know, Trump is looking for big wins now, or the optics of a victory. He just bombed Niger—some ISIS leader that colleagues at DD Geopolitics say might not even have been alive already. And of course, you know, with all these rumors about bombing Iran again, it's obvious the U.S. is feeling very insecure. And I see this gamble on the UAE as like the big proxy for the U.S. to administer any kind of regional hegemony. It's super desperate and seems to be a recipe for disaster. But what are your thoughts on this?

#Pepe Escobar

Totally desperate. And they put all their cards on MBZ. So MBZ is going to be their proxy in the Persian Gulf. They looked at how Saudi Arabia is hedging. For the moment, they are not doing anything against Saudi Arabia because MBS is wise enough not to directly antagonize the Americans.

But very, very important—their foreign ministers, Saudi Arabia and Iran, they're talking. Extremely important. Let's say the coalition of the four Sunnis, let's put it this way, it's still there and it's solidifying itself.

And of course, they are looking at a place—a multilateral place for them would be BRICS—assuming somebody will trust Erdogan. Okay, nobody can bet on this one, right? But the way Pakistan has been helping Iran practically, in terms of opening the six overland corridors with Pakistan and even opening the port of Gwadar to Iran—Gwadar now is working also as an Iranian port—this is immense. Because until, what, a few months ago, two or three months ago, when we looked at the situation between the Sea of Oman and the Arabian Sea, we had two competing ports, 80 kilometers away. When I was in Chabahar, it was fascinating.

When I was discussing with the guys at the port, I said, yeah, Gwadar is our neighbor. They're 80 kilometers from here, and it's essentially a very important port for China. But then I looked around and I saw a few Chinese tankers. I said, okay, but look, what are these Chinese tankers doing here? And they said, yeah, of course, they come. Every week or every other week, there's one or two Chinese tankers coming here, obviously because the Chinese are already looking at Chabahar. I said, wow, let's turn this into a Chinese port as well. So from an Iranian point of view, not only is Chabahar going to be very important because of the International North-South Transportation Corridor, but it could even be incorporated into the Chinese New Silk Road.

#Danny

This is fascinating.

#Pepe Escobar

Nobody, Danny and all of you, could expect this to happen. And it reveals a lot of goodwill by Pakistan. And the relationship between Iran and Pakistan now is probably the strongest in decades. This is really, really good. And, of course, Iran is going to say, look, let's bring these guys into BRICS as well. It's something that China would say yes to, something that Russia would say yes to. Once again, what's going to be the reaction of the Zionist-Hindutva alliance?

#Danny

Yeah, India. I mean, the thing with that, too, is that's exactly what you were saying earlier about BRICS needing to drop this consensus model. Yeah, I mean, when you have India, of course, with Pakistan, relations are always... they're just not good because of that history and that current reality. Then you have the UAE, of course. Look at what we just talked about with the role that it's playing. Yeah, there are players inside of BRICS that are – they're spoilers. They are playing kind of – in the U.S. sense, we think of gridlock and blocking, which is that term that we use here, filibustering.

No one's giving a 23-hour speech or sitting at the podium for 23 hours, but they're trying to do a similar thing, which is to block any of this kind of progress. And Pepe, during this period of hostilities and war on Iran, I mean, the way Iran has been speaking about Pakistan and even the way Iran has behaved, the goodwill—like, Iran has likely engaged in more talks than they wanted to with the United States, in large part because they want to be respectful to Pakistan playing this role as mediator, because it gives Pakistan a lot of prestige and it elevates its role in the world. And I think Iran sees that as a very good thing too.

#Pepe Escobar

And of course, China was right behind it from the beginning. You remember, I'm sure all of you remember that after the four Sunnis met for the first time in Islamabad, the next morning the Pakistani foreign minister hopped on a plane to talk to Wang Yi in Beijing, of course. And the Chinese were right behind, looking and saying, okay, you have to try harder. And then we got to the Islamabad meeting, which, by the way, was completely fucked up by the Americans once again. But China, from the beginning, was supporting everything that Pakistan was doing in terms of establishing themselves as credible mediators. But then, the way it is now... we don't even know if the Americans are going to use the Pakistanis as mediators anymore. For all practical purposes, correct me if I'm wrong, diplomacy is dead at the moment.

#Danny

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, I mean, the U.S. is... What did Iran just say? That the United States is not being serious. If the U.S. is serious, then maybe talks could occur. But the U.S. is not being serious when they're constantly talking about bombing Iran. Now they're rehashing these same plans too, that they... oh, seize the uranium, okay, hitting the energy sites. It's like this loop that the U.S. is on. A loop. The last time we spoke, the U.S. now, if anyone pays attention to what the warmongers are saying, we have the Center for Strategic and International Studies talking about how the U.S. is completely attrited militarily.

And then you had Robert Kagan, the top neocon of the, you know, the Project for a New American Century campaign, outline in a piece in *The Atlantic*, of all places—you know, one of the top neocon rags at this point—about how the U.S. has lost. And it wasn't to push like John Bolton has been pushing for more bombings. It was to push for maybe you should, maybe the U.S. needs to think long and hard about how it moves now after all that's transpired, which Robert Kagan said has been a big blow, has been a checkmate for Iran. I mean, this is a different reality. I mean, this is a different reality. This is now having to be contended with. But your reactions to this, because it seems like this is playing a heavy weight on the empire of chaos's shoulders.

#Pepe Escobar

Danny, and all of you, to watch all this from here, from China and close to the Chinese point of view, it doesn't even qualify as pathetic. Of course, with tragic overtones. When we look at all the millions of deaths directly caused by the Project for a New American Century and these bloody neocons, of course. These are serial tragedies. But the way they are now scurrying away like rats because the plans, all their elaborate plans, collapsed like the end without The Doors soundtrack. And we have this guy married to the woman who basically organized Maidan in 2014. This guy who used to be an idol of Barack Obama, who used to parade in Washington carrying Kagan's books. But there's another agenda on it, Danny. There's another agenda on it.

Basically, they need to reformulate their plans for the forever war against Islam as a whole, not only against Iran. So they are still thinking how they're going to do that. So this may be, let's say, a temporary act of contrition. But never forget, these people don't do contrition. These people are killers. They are very, very dangerous. And they want to come up with something else, and they still don't have it in their hands. They know that this current war, at least those with an IQ over 50, like Kagan, they see this strategic defeat because it's obvious for a five-year-old already. But, okay, how do we reformulate the Project for a New American Century? They will never give up. Never, never, never give up. So we should take this act of false contrition with, I would say, barrels of salt.

#Danny

Yeah, I mean, it appears, you know, there was a narrative—I don't know if you saw—in all of the Western mainstream media covering the Xi-Trump summit, talking about China buying time, China's buying time. You know, in large part, I think it's the opposite. It's like China's having a good time. I don't know, like, when I was there—I was just there in the middle of April—it's like China's having a good time. Like, people are living life normally, their lives are getting better. All the things that I see every time I go to China seem to be the same, if not better.

But for the United States, it seems like that's what the U.S. is kind of doing right now. It's like they—I think there is some understanding among some of the Pentagon brass that renewing war with Iran will lead to disastrous consequences. And that's why there's this delay. It seems like every other day there's some market manipulation. We're going to bomb. No, we're not going to bomb. We're going to bomb. No, we're not going to bomb. Okay. But also with Russia and China and really the rest of this, even Cuba. I don't know if you've seen, there's a lot of hesitation about even Cuba. Robert Gates was just on, I believe it was Fox News, and he said,

#Danny

Oh, you know, Cuba, it's not...

#Danny

The only threat is if we destabilize Cuba, and then Cuba— a lot of Cubans will come here if they collapse. That's the big threat. But he played it off. This is the CIA. I mean, you know, playing it off is maybe not so much. The Republicans in Congress are worried about if Trump pulls the trigger on Cuba, because it might not go very well, and, you know, elections are six months away, less than that. So... I think there's a lot of the U.S. buying time here and trying to figure out how do we exactly, as you said, continue on this project of trying to knock out the multipolar world. I don't think they really know right now how to go about that.

#Pepe Escobar

They are absolutely clueless. And especially after the master class of civilization that they got in Beijing, which was basically a very, very elegant slap on their barbaric faces. They will not learn. It's inherently impossible—psychologically, culturally—this toxic mix of ignorance and arrogance, which perpetuates itself all the time. It's impossible for them to understand it. And it's not an accident that the president steps back inside Washington and they start talking again, "Okay, we need to start bombing Iran again." This is completely nuts. Completely nuts. It proves that nobody understood what Xi Jinping was telling them, obviously, and before, what Putin was telling them as well.

#Danny

Yeah. Well, the actions of people... I'll continue—sorry.

#Pepe Escobar

Yeah, so we all continue... When I say we, in fact, we—the global economy, independence, the global South, and a great deal of the global North as well—we continue to be hostages to these barbarians. And some of them now are trying to say, look, it's not exactly what we want—the Kagan affair, right? But my perspective at the moment, because it's so... it's like from another planet. To watch all these American machinations and imperial machinations from China, it's another galaxy, in fact.

#Danny

And they don't care.

#Pepe Escobar

And that's even better. What they are discussing here is how we are going to implement the targets of the five-year plan, which starts this year. This is the only thing that they are discussing. I had a business discussion at the Bund Finance Center here. I don't know if you've been there, Danny. It's fantastic. Absolutely outstanding. And they were saying, look, we really don't care about all this. We have all these domestic reorganizations in terms of productivity, in terms of incorporating artificial

intelligence in every sector of the Chinese economy. But we have to think about the fact that we cannot have zillions of people losing their jobs. How are we going to train these people for the next jobs, et cetera? So this is what they're thinking about.

And when you talk to younger people, I had a striking experience that I will need time to process. I was talking to a stunning, stunningly beautiful young Shanghainese. And then I asked if her opinion reflects the people, the circles where she goes, her friends. She said, yeah, absolutely. What I'm telling you is what all of us discuss all the time. They think that the government doesn't pay attention to them. This is extremely serious because we are talking about the cultural and business capital of China. So if we have well-informed members of the next generations in their early 20s now thinking that the government is not paying attention to them, wow, they're going to have a huge problem ahead. So these internal contradictions, this is something that the Communist Party will have to address seriously.

And of course, business people say, look, there are lots of internal problems in China, but this next five-year plan, we're going to streamline all that because we'll be paying more attention to what we need to do internally compared to foreign policy. Foreign policy, they know, look, our only problem is those barbarians in the U.S. But we know how to manage them from afar, as long as they don't come here to make trouble. And that's exactly what, essentially, Xi said to Trump: Taiwan is an absolute red line. Don't even think of doing anything about it. That's it. The rest is okay because they have excellent relations all across the Global South. Even with the Europeans, they know the Europeans need China. So they're not worried. Their foreign policy is, you know, it's a steady drive.

#Danny

Yeah.

#Pepe Escobar

And their occupations are all domestic.

#Danny

Totally. I mean, every time I'm there, that's the narrative I hear, you know, because it's partly because China's development has sped up so fast, and certain areas like tech have become so immensely competitive. You have this drive where all young people want to be in the high-tech field, and that is becoming just a glut. And so you have all of these young people in there, and there now needs to be attention. I mean, China is talking about quality development all the time, right? Quality over quantity. Now there's this push toward quality development.

And I think that's where the push is going to have to be, is now young people are going to have to be convinced that there are other places to go that are just as lucrative, or maybe not as lucrative,

but just as important to plug into. That's the big problem I see with Chinese young people. They always say, not enough jobs, not enough jobs. And a lot of it is, yeah, they don't want to work the jobs that their parents worked anymore. They don't want to do that. They don't want to work at the factories, even though factories are okay to work at, but they don't want to work at the factory. They want to be, you know, at Tencent or, you know, Ant Group or whatever, but not everyone's going to be there. You can't do it. So it's a big struggle, a big struggle that will have to be.

#Pepe Escobar

Danny, I don't know if you've seen it, there's a clip of Jensen Huang. Somebody shows him the Huawei.

#Danny

The Huawei phone.

#Pepe Escobar

The Huawei tri-fold phone. Which, by the way, I was here last year. It came out last year, so it's very old news. He was stunned when he saw the Huawei tri-fold.

#Danny

This is NVIDIA's CEO.

#Pepe Escobar

He was like, "What is this?"

#Danny

Incredible. No, it's incredible. It's incredible. Pepe, we have one question from the audience I think is a really good one because it's something that I think needs to be addressed more, and then we can head out of here. Richard Adams asks, is there any plan? Yes, U.S. diplomats in the U.S., if we can call them diplomats, but yes, the U.S. delegation looked dumb. But Chevron and ExxonMobil and BlackRock are making record profits, and now there's this argument—because that is 100% true—there's this argument that, you know, what the U.S. is doing is succeeding because of the blockades and the oil markets.

You know, there's a tax on Russia's oil, there's a tax on Iran's oil, Venezuela, of course. And that's succeeding. That's success for the U.S. because they're making record profits. And, you know, with the LNG, and of course BlackRock's always making record profits. But what are your thoughts on this? Because... well, yes, under global monopoly capital, profits are indeed the only thing that

matters. But I think the contradictions are a little bit more complex than this. What are your thoughts on this question?

#Pepe Escobar

Well, basically, in hypercapitalism, the only thing that matters is profits. And the only thing that matters for them is Wall Street. Absolutely. So why was Larry Fink in this delegation that came here? Because he wants to open up the Chinese market for BlackRock and for Wall Street. The Chinese didn't even bother to talk to him in detail. And one of the business people here said, ah, maybe the Chinese are going to open an office of BlackRock on Hainan Island. Okay, you stay here, you do your business here on our offshore island, and that's it. Forget about getting inside the Chinese financial markets. They know what BlackRock means, of course.

But the only thing that matters for all these people, yes, they are making a lot of money everywhere. No question. And that's the difference between these American oligarchic corporate giants and the Chinese giants. The Chinese giants, they're looking globally, of course, and now they have penetration in every continent, but their focus is still the domestic market. And it is absolutely mind-boggling. I saw one of the state-of-the-art SUVs yesterday. I saw... wow, you are already in 2030 when you see something like this. The Western people don't even know stuff like that exists. And it's already here, and you see it in the streets of Shanghai, you know.

#Danny

Yeah. And now we're seeing in the streets of Pyongyang and the DPRK, Reuters had their mind blown that there are electric vehicles everywhere and they're all Chinese. It's like, whoa, what? The countries that border each other are just trading in automobiles. That's like, that's so wild. But yes, that is happening. And a lot of the world is benefiting from Chinese EVs, and the U.S. is on its island over here, terrifying itself out of the market. Yeah.

#Pepe Escobar

That border on the Yalu River, Danny, soon the North Korean side is going to look like China. I did that by train, 2010, a long time ago. In 2010, we took the train from Pyongyang and we crossed the Yalu River, and then you have to change trains to go all the way to Beijing. On the North Korean side, there was nothing. And on the Chinese side, of course, the typical Chinese megacity. Soon, you're going to have that on the North Korean side as well, because that border will not be a border anymore. It's going to be business back and forth. Absolutely.

#Danny

That's great. Yeah, no, it's incredible. And I've been to Jilin. I didn't get close to the border, but I've been to Changchun and Siping. And yeah, no, I could see it. I can see it. And, you know, that's the

region, too. I mean, it used to be an incredibly poor region. But now it's the site of a lot of the transportation infrastructure. That's where a lot of it is built, actually. Yeah. Makes a lot of sense for the DPRK to get in on that, especially at premium prices, which that's the benefit. I mean, that's why China is blowing up.

#Pepe Escobar

And coordinating with Russia, Danny, as well. Oh, yeah. Russia and China are coordinating with North Korea. So they're going to electrify North Korea. And sooner rather than later, I would say, it's going to be high-speed rail all over. And don't forget, the border between Russia and North Korea is 120 kilometers, in fact, from Vladivostok. It's literally around the corner. This is something that they discuss every year at the forum in Vladivostok. Some of the most interesting roundtables in Vladivostok are about, okay, let's do our connectivity corridors here. And that is essentially North Korea, China, Russia, the Russian Far East, and then all the way via the Trans-Siberian or internally to Western Russia. So this means North Korea will have the Russian market for them and even beyond if they want to export. Fantastic.

#Danny

Well, I'd say that's the plan. The plan is there's, you know, BlackRock, Chevron, ExxonMobil. Yeah, they'll do their thing. And that's a lot of Americans are going to have to take care of business and address that. But, you know, China and Russia are the actual pillars of the multipolar world. They're going to take care of their own business. And I think that's really the plan, to do that so you can become like Iran has now become in many ways. But China even more so, just, you know, countries that are incredibly difficult to defeat militarily, which is all the U.S.

#Pepe Escobar

Exactly, because they are independent and sovereign. Two key words mentioned by Vladimir Putin when he was addressing Araksi in St. Petersburg. Sovereignty and independence. That's it. That's the definition for a Global South that works, that has punch.

#Danny

Well, Pepe, this was a great conversation. I want to make sure everybody knows that the article that you wrote on the Xi-Putin summit—Xi-Trump summit, I already have that summit on my brain—the Xi-Trump summit is in the video description, as well as all the places to find Pepe Escobar, including his Telegram and his X account. Thank you. Everybody, hit the like button before you go. I'll be back tomorrow with our mutual friend Mohamed Marandi at 12 p.m. Eastern Time. And I want to thank everyone who gave super chats. I want to thank everyone who watched today, moderators. All the places to support this channel are in the video description as well. And until next time, Pepe, any last words?

#Pepe Escobar

Well, from Shanghai, it's great because I'm going to spend some time here before going back to Moscow, or maybe to the St. Petersburg Summit, which is in early June. So I'm going to be here until the end of the month. And it's great because I can explore areas in Shanghai that are developing fast, new ones, what the local government is doing and all that, and be very, very far away from all these horrors in the West. Not to mention the gastronomy. I just came back from a ridiculous xiaolongbao dinner. There you go.

#Danny

No, there are fewer places in the world farther away from the West than Shanghai. So you are safe there. All right, everybody, hit the like button before we are out of here. See you again tomorrow, 12 p.m. Eastern Time. Bye-bye.

#Pepe Escobar

Thank you. Cheers.