

Iran SMASHES Trump's Threat, Drones RAIN Over Gulf, World War 3 Blows Up | Noh

Geopolitical analyst KJ Noh joins the show to discuss the US and Israel's imminent return to war with Iran as Washington's weapons rush to the region and mysterious drone attacks provoking military escalation. World War 3 is getting worse and this stream covers it all. LIKE the video and Subscribe for more in-depth geopolitical analysis Leave your thoughts in the comments below! Support the Channel: Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong> SUBSCRIBE ON RUMBLE: Rumble: <https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong> Follow Me on Social Media: Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DannyHaiphong> Telegram: <https://t.me/DannyHaiphong> Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhaiphong> Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritho> #trump #iran #china

#Danny

Welcome, everyone. Welcome back to the show. The show's Danny Haiphong. As you can see, I am joined by geopolitical analyst and commentator and longtime friend of the show, KJ Ngo. KJ, good to see you again. Good to see you, Danny. Yes, everyone, hit the like button as you come on as we get started with this hour, the geopolitical power hour here. Let's begin first with the news, KJ, that in the next 48 hours there are likely to be deliberations and decisions made on renewed strikes on Iran. Trump has already spoken to Netanyahu. There's going to be a situation there, meeting with advisors on Tuesday, tomorrow. And there are also a lot of reports about massive cargo going to the region, which Israel is saying are part of preparations for renewed strikes. Israeli media has been clamoring for this and about this for a while.

But even Iran has been saying that this is likely going to be the case, despite some back and forth about talks and about terms. The U.S. said that they will relieve sanctions during the negotiation period. Iran is saying that is not good enough, KJ. But I'm curious what your thoughts are on this. There's also been these—you know, Iran is not backing down to Trump's threats. He keeps threatening Iran. He's even threatening on social media, an invasion, it appears, like where he posted this on Truth Social, where Iran was getting essentially invaded on all sides. He tends to be creative, or lack thereof, with AI on Truth Social. But Iran hasn't been backing down, and I'm curious what your thoughts are on the situation. You know, there's a lot to be made here, but what's your assessment, KJ?

#KJ Noh

Well, it certainly looks like there is logistical preparation for kinetic war. When you see that amount of staging, especially the movement of munitions into Israel, that is a very, very strong indicator. Now, when he talks about invasion, if he's talking about boots on the ground, we can think there are three possibilities: there's bombing, there's boots on the ground, there's blockade. All three have been tried before. All three have shown that they cannot move the needle. The U.S. depleted its magazine in the first round of war, and it was not able to move the needle. Of course, it killed a lot of Iranians, including 168 schoolchildren, and damaged 81,000 structures. But as far as its strategic goals, it was not able to achieve any of them.

Now, if it is seriously thinking of boots on the ground, we have to think there are probably at least 200,000 IRGC, plus another 300,000 reservists, plus another 300,000-plus Iranian army regulars. We're looking at a force of close to a million. And in order to invade, you would need to bring in or prepare a force of three to four million troops. The U.S. would have to stage troops and prepare that, which it simply cannot do. So what is it going to do instead? Well, as I said, is it bombing, is it blockade, is it boots on the ground? Boots on the ground in any significant measure is not going to be possible. Will there be special ops, i.e., dirty war? Very possible. There will be minor pinprick assaults. That's very, very much possible. They could also resume the bombing, which has been shown not to work, and there are essentially six reasons for it.

There are six asymmetries involved. One is geography. Iran has the geographic advantage. The second is the asymmetry of cost. Iran is using \$10,000 drones, and the U.S. has to expend \$5 million interceptors. There's also an asymmetry of strategy. The U.S. is thinking of decapitation. Iran has the mosaic defense. It's a starfish approach. You cannot decapitate a starfish. There's an asymmetry of resolve. Iran has clearly a much, much greater resolve. And then there's an asymmetry of learning. Iran is learning. The U.S. is not learning. It's simply trying the same thing over and over again. And of course, there's an asymmetry of time. The markets and the midterms will not wait, whereas Iran has been resisting sanctions for decades now. And certainly it is dug in for the long haul.

So all of these things signal that the U.S. doesn't have much going for it in its corner. If it had, it would have already done that. So really what we have to think about is, is the U.S. considering the use of nuclear weapons? Elbridge Colby has been a big advocate of using nuclear weapons. He thinks that there should be a kind of continuum between conventional and nuclear, that you should use nuclear if you need to bring a war to a satisfactory close. So that is definitely a possibility. And the language that Trump has used in the sense of, you know, a civilization will die and, you know, this kind of extraordinary language, you have to wonder if nukes are somewhere on the table. That is the most dangerous issue that we're facing right now. And hopefully, saner minds will prevail.

#Danny

Yeah, and here's a post on Truth Social again of Donald Trump going a little trekkie, but showing massive strikes all around the world with his hands on red buttons, which got people observing a little nervous about what the United States' intentions are, just to boost your point there, KJ, about the potential for nuclear war. All of this fluster, while it might not amount to anything now, certainly reflects a mindset. But I want to ask you a question about this. You know, there was just a discovery that there were at least two Israeli bases operating in Iraq. And then suddenly we have drones flying into Saudi Arabia, which were intercepted, but there were a few that got through in the UAE. And I'll just put up what the Disaster Response Management Center in the UAE had to say.

They had a nuclear power plant catch fire, caused by a drone strike. Didn't do massive damage. But this has been going on for a little bit, KJ. Here's the announcement from the Ministry of Defense in Saudi, talking about drones entering their airspace. Now, Iran usually announces when they fire drones and when they fire missiles as part of an overall operation, like what we saw in those five or so weeks from February 28th onward. But this is quite different, and this has been happening almost regularly since the ceasefire. What do you make of this? Because it feels like, of course, this war involves many more players than simply Iran and the United States. Israel has been acting as a conduit of the U.S., talking to the United States, begging for more war. But what do you make of this? Nobody seems to have a good explanation for what's going on.

#KJ Noh

You know, I don't have any inner knowledge of what is going on, but clearly Israel wants to accelerate and continue the war. And it also could be using false flag attacks to draw other countries further into the quagmire. So attacks on Saudi Arabia, attacks on Qatar, Bahrain, UAE — we have to ask the question: the ones that were not claimed, were these related to Israeli false flag attacks? Another question that we can ask is, you know, Korean tankers were hit in the Gulf of Hormuz or in the Persian Gulf.

And once again, there's a question, you know, was this a false flag attack? And so I think there's a lot of subterfuge, a lot of false flag attempts happening with the understanding that, you know, the Israelis really want to expand this war. The Americans gave it their best shot the first time around. I think there are factions inside the U.S., in the U.S. ruling elite, that are not so, you know, enthusiastic about recommencing. And so this is a way potentially of enmeshing and mired and entrapping the U.S. further into this military quagmire.

#Danny

Yeah, we could talk about the global aspects of this now, because, you know, it seems like we are in this standoff where, you know, Iran is not backing down. The United States also is not backing down. They're not giving anything. And even when they do give something, Iran has no reason to trust it. But then you have this reality that seems to be creeping up, maybe not so slowly. The Financial Times published this — they said that there's a tipping point right now for the global

energy crisis, where nearly 80 countries are now enacting emergency measures as oil stockpiles run low.

And there are talks happening, KJ, about in the coming weeks. These are what economists are saying — a recession could be on the table. So we're talking about a matter of weeks before a recession is on the table. Many people think that that actually is already here, given the astronomical rise in prices and cost of living. But what are your thoughts about this and the impact it will have on the larger global stage? Because this is certainly not contained to Iran, the U.S., and Israel.

#KJ Noh

Well, petroleum is the lifeblood of industrial capitalism. No exceptions there. And it's not simply fuel like, you know, natural gas and diesel, jet fuel and LNG, but it's also the feedstock for the entire global supply chain. For example, you know, naphtha is a petroleum derivative, which is the basic feedstock for most of the plastics, most of the wiring, for rubber, for ink, for everything. Right now, there's a Japanese company that has said that it's going to stop printing color packaging because it, you know, is seeing ink shortages. In Korea, where I was, it was hard to get plastic bags.

There's a kind of global shutdown that is rapidly approaching. And something that people don't understand is that they move at the rate of a bicycle. Those tankers that left before the start of the war have now reached their destination or are in the oceans. And from now on, it is going to be a complete and total shutdown, in the range of already a billion-barrel shortfall. This is catastrophic for the global economy. The countries, ironically, that will be less affected are China and the United States. But in terms of feedstock and industrial supply chains, the U.S. will be significantly affected.

And, of course, we see it in terms of inflation, in terms of, you know, pressure on markets, fertilizers, and food security. There are cascading effects that are catastrophic, that are just waiting to happen. Even if the Strait of Hormuz were completely opened up tomorrow, we would still be facing massive economic catastrophe, and for it to continue even further is, I think, you know, essentially an economic nuclear bomb. And so I'm glad to see that, you know, some of the ruling class journals are pointing this out. But, you know, once again, is the ruling elite learning? Are they paying attention to this? I'm not optimistic about that.

#Danny

Well, no, I mean, they're doing nothing to pull back their political class, their lieutenants governing the United States and elsewhere who continue to push and push and push for renewed war. So, KJ, you know, couldn't it be the case—and this, I think, also exposes the ruling elite here—why, on the one hand, it seems like there's a lot of concern. You had neocons writing about—the top neocon, Robert Kagan, talking about how this war is lost by the United States. But yet no concerted action to really stop what's going on. And it seems like still there is this global, we could call like a world war happening, where the U.S. is attempting to knock off all of the alternatives to its rule. But.

Couldn't it be, KJ, that this situation here, that Iran's Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting published—that there are 1,500 vessels waiting for permission to cross the Strait of Hormuz—you know, that's a lot of vessels there. Couldn't it be that if the U.S. really, really wanted to end this, they could just say, okay, these vessels can obtain permission from Iran, and then they will cross the strait, and the strait would be effectively open? Because that's what Iran is saying. Iran is saying it's open; you just have to get permission and then, of course, follow our navy because there's a war going on. But couldn't it be as simple as that? And why won't the ruling elite, who essentially control someone like Donald Trump, allow that to happen?

#KJ Noh

Yeah, this is the \$64,000 question. Essentially, they don't want to show that Iran has won. I mean, in their press, amongst themselves, in some of the elite discussions, they agree the U.S. has lost. It's a complete and total strategic loss. There's really no way the U.S. can recuperate its position. It's been pushed out of power in the Gulf, 15 bases destroyed. The sortie rate has been reduced to one-tenth of what it was 30 years ago because of this. And the strategic radars have been knocked out in the region. It's essentially been blinded. And so if you look at these, you know, objective facts, then, of course, they need to think about, you know, what is the rational thing to do—make an accommodation with Iran, meet its demands, which are not unreasonable.

Among them are the removal of sanctions, security guarantees, reparations, release of funds that the U.S. has seized, and, of course, that they will control the Strait of Hormuz. Now, once again, not to be repetitive, the Strait of Hormuz lies within—I mean, half of it lies within Iran's territorial waters—which means that it can allow transit passage or innocent passage, but it also has, especially under conditions of war, the right to control it for security reasons. Iran has said that it would, you know, levy a \$1 per barrel fee on transit—that amounts to two cents per gallon at the gas station. Would you rather pay an additional two cents per gallon at the gas station, or would you like to pay \$2 extra as people are paying right now?

It's kind of a no-brainer. So if, you know, if the ruling elite were thinking rationally, they would say, you know, this is actually a good deal and make accommodations. And Iran and Oman are already in negotiations for creating a structure for, you know, controlling the Strait. The IRGC has put up, you know, a website, I think a Twitter and an email. So all of this, the administrative structures, have been set up to make this work efficiently. But of course, you know, the elite who believe that they have to have domination at any and all costs simply don't want the optics of a loss. And this is why they're doubling down on this bet that they have no way of winning.

#Danny

And yeah, well, I think that gets then to this maybe broader point we can discuss, which is there is some belief now that the United States is really focusing on the Strait of Hormuz and attempting to bludgeon Iran, but also to effectively keep and maintain a blockade for the fact that these rising oil

prices and these rising costs actually profit the oil companies, the financiers that underwrite them on Wall Street. What are the limits to this though, KJ? Because there appear to be many limits, especially when we're talking about a looming recession coming. What could be the limits, especially on the global stage, of attempting to—and this could very well be plausible given who Donald Trump is—simply to pad the profits as much as possible, as fast as possible for these big oil monopolies and LNG corporations while the global economy as a whole overheats in this way?

#KJ Noh

Well, I mean, ultimately, you know, without exaggerating, you're looking at the collapse of global industry, the global capitalist economic system. That's literally what you're facing. And so, you know, of course, you can sell the rope or the bullets or the munitions, make profit off that. But if that is going to come back and bite you, it's an absolute and total failure, an act of madness. But again, they don't seem to be thinking this way. Part of the problem, this is my opinion, is that, for example, the negotiators with Iran are essentially real estate agents. People who do real estate don't understand supply chains. The modern economic system is built on an intricate and complex supply chain.

For example, a single car has 30,000 components. A single jet has three, four, five hundred thousand components. All of these come from all over the world. Somewhere along the way, the feedstock involves petroleum. And you have to understand that you cannot attack or even seek to profit from one part of this economy if it collapses the entire structure. Now, the problem is real estate agents don't deal with supply chains. Real estate, essentially land, has no supply chain. So I think they're not understanding that. So this notion of blockading the blockade or thinking that they can get short-term windfall profits because oil prices are going up is, in my opinion, a complete and total act of madness.

#Danny

Yeah, yeah, indeed. And despite all this act of madness, the Trump administration and the United States appear to be trying to do some heavy damage control. We saw that with this recent trip to China, where at first Marco Rubio and others in the administration said—and even Mike Waltz, I don't know if you saw this—Mike Waltz said something to the effect of, "We did it, we got China to capitulate on Iran." It seemed like a big motive for going to China was trying to pressure Iran. But then Trump ended up bringing all of these executives and CEOs of the biggest monopolies in order to strike deals. And the talk has been very rosy about this trip, KJ. Donald Trump—they published this, the White House, on X of all places. Surprise, surprise.

President Trump secures historic deals with China, delivering for American workers and farmers, talking about soybeans, talking about all these agreements on the Strait of Hormuz, that Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon, and to denuclearize North Korea, which I found to be incredibly, almost random in many respects, since the U.S. has been at least rhetorically ignoring the Korean Peninsula

throughout this time. But again, I think that Trump came in with a different attitude toward China this time around, at least in terms of optics. What have you made of this trip and maybe some of the underlying realities that have influenced the outcome? China has not been so gung-ho and praiseworthy of the trip. They've simply moved on from it now, with Putin coming tomorrow.

#KJ Noh

Well, let's remember that just before the Trump visit, the foreign minister, Araghchi, met with Wang Yi, his counterpart, in Beijing, and they released a statement together. Essentially, China has signaled that it is completely in support and in alignment with Iran. It supports Iran's sovereignty and supports it 100%. Now, does China want the Strait of Hormuz open? Yes, it would like to have the Strait of Hormuz open as a global need for all countries and all economies. So if you put it in that framework, what's very clear is Trump was going to go to China, and ideally he would have liked to have, you know, crushed Iran and then gone to China and then made strong demands.

But actually, you know, he went in chastened and weakened. He was very, very deferential. I don't think there's any other way to describe Trump's attitude towards President Xi. And polite and cordial. And now the White House is putting out all of these images of Chinese troops marching and saying this makes America great again. The logic there is a little, you know, beyond me. But anyway, I think what happened was the U.S. went in, you know, with very, very much a weakened position. It did not get anything of what it wanted, you know, primarily, you know, the four or five T's that were issues that were to be discussed: tech, tariff, trade, Taiwan, Tehran, i.e.

Iran. China has said that, you know, it wants the Strait open, but it hasn't said anything about tolls. And as I said before, you know, given that these are territorial waters and under conditions of war, I think it's actually permissible or understandable that Iran might want to charge a toll through the Strait of Hormuz. Regarding the nuclear issue, essentially China's viewpoint aligns with Iran's viewpoint, which is that, you know, under the NPT, it has the right to enrich nuclear materials and that it doesn't want, you know, nuclear weaponry. You know, this is actually the same thing that Iran has been saying, actually, for decades.

Regarding Taiwan, there was a significant divergence. Right before the meeting, essentially, China sent a message to the U.S.: if you get Taiwan wrong, we're going to be in conflict. That conflict could be very, very bad for the entire world. You know, you need to think very, very carefully about your position on Taiwan. Trump seems to be noncommittal, unlike the neocons who would like him to remove all strategic ambiguity. And, you know, he said, you know, it's 9,500 miles away, you know, it's... you know, it's an insurance policy. They need to pay the insurance. I don't know if we'll, you know, pay out the insurance, et cetera.

So, you know, he's very, very transactional, not very committed to, quote-unquote, you know, supporting the secessionists on Taiwan, which is making the secessionists very, very unhappy. At the same time, we also know that there are, what, \$13 billion worth of arms that were sold recently, last

year. This is in addition to another \$20 or \$30 billion that are actually in arrears because they're in the pipeline. And so it's a double game. The ruling elite—essentially, what it boils down to is the ruling elite still want war with China. Iran was actually a distraction.

It was supposed to be dessert after the ruling elite knocked out the appetizer of Russia, and now they've gotten, you know, they've gotten bogged down in both. So they're not happy about it. But the ruling elite still does want war with China. They recently released what they call the DIME analysis—diplomacy, information, military, and economic parity. And essentially, they're saying that China has outmaneuvered the U.S. The U.S. has lost. It's in a weakened position. And the recommendations coming out of that are, if you look at CSIS, they're saying, you know, we just need to double down on our preparations for war with China.

#Danny

Well, you know, you said Iran is a distraction, and it's one that has really mired the United States, especially Donald Trump himself. And I'll just put up this post that he published today. I just want to point to one part of it because everyone's focusing on the surrender talk, because he's very angry about how the Western mainstream media, the corporate media, is talking about the war against Iran as being a losing war, as being a war that's not going well. So as he's rambling about this, that even if Iran were to surrender and wave the white flag, all of these outlets would say that Iran had a masterful and beautiful victory. But I don't know if you saw this.

He said he called the Wall Street Journal the China Street Journal. And I think, in some ways, when we talk about distractions, KJ, it seems like the U.S. administration is actually mired in a distraction of its own making. And that is what explains why China may not be in the headlines and why the trip, the way the administration talked about China, was far different from even what you just cited—CSIS and others still pushing for war. But some commentators, KJ, are saying that we might be entering an era where reflexive China bashing in Washington may largely be behind us, in the acceptance stage of the five stages of grief.

#KJ Noh

Do you agree with that?

#Danny

In large part, it's hard to agree with this when the U.S. views Iran as a major chip in defeating China. So what are your thoughts on this?

#KJ Noh

Well, I think the first thing to point out is that Kübler-Ross's five stages are actually not linear. So expect more denial, more anger, more bargaining, more pleading, et cetera, back and forth. I think we're due for many, many more cycles of this. What you can notice is there is a kind of bifurcation among the ruling imperial elite. Some are seeking more accommodation, whether this is genuine or whether it's simply buying time because they're rationally calculating that it will take three to five to ten more years to adequately prepare for war against China, or whether they've genuinely had a change of heart, i.e., the carnivore has actually become a vegetarian. That remains to be seen, but there's still a hard core, which is bipartisan, a hard core of hawks whose entire life revolves around bashing and accelerating toward war against China.

And you can see it in the constant hybrid war that is happening inside the United States, as well as the massive logistical preparations. If you pan out in the Pacific—what's happening in Japan, what is happening in Korea, what is happening in the Philippines, the Balikatan exercises, Takahichi's aggressive militarization and threatened interference in Taiwan—all of these things signal that, you know, from a big-picture perspective, there is a large part of the ruling imperial elite that is still very, very stuck on war. So I think it's too early to tell. Certainly, I would not take out, you know, I wouldn't take out the good champagne and think that it's over.

#Danny

Yeah. Yeah. And in large part, there's also a lot of games being played. I don't know if you saw the so-called Taiwan—I don't know what you call this person. They say foreign ministry, but no such thing really exists. It's, I guess, a foreign representative or whatever you would call it—say that Taiwan's already an independent country, KJ, so nothing that is said really matters, and that the separatists, they said U.S. arms to Taiwan is the number one deterrent to a war with China. I mean... Trump has not said anything about this.

And of course, like everything else with the Trump administration, we could see weeks, months even, before any concerted action on these kinds of points, given that generally what we've seen is the U.S. not make good on any points—even, you know, waffling promises to, for example, address the arms-to-Taiwan issue. Nothing has changed. We've seen the same with Russia. Ukrainian drones are flying into Moscow, and the U.S. has not pulled back out of that either, because they wouldn't have that technology if it wasn't for U.S. cooperation. So your thoughts about this? A lot of the Trump administration is this kind of bait and switch—say something, try to attract flies to the honey, and then move on with business as usual.

#KJ Noh

Well, let me just come back to the readouts, and I'll tackle Taiwan. You know, once again, if we look at the readouts, nothing about rare earth elements, which was actually a core part of what people anticipated Trump was going to raise. This is because Scott Bessent met with his counterpart in

Seoul, and with his Chinese counterpart in Seoul, and was trying to pressure around rare earth elements. And we think that those talks fell flat. In other words, he got a big F-U from the Chinese. Currently, U.S. industry is on a diet, and the U.S. military-industrial complex is on a fast regarding rare earth elements. So essentially, it's just a matter of time before, you know, supplies run out completely.

It will take 5, 10, up to 15 years to even get back in the ballpark with reindustrialization and reprocessing indigenously for the United States. So that is a kind of abyss that they've run into. And I think that explains some of the quote-unquote politeness towards China that we saw in the Trump–President Trump and President Xi dynamic. But coming back to, if we look at the big history of U.S.-China relations, essentially there are three or four phases. Prior to 1949, it was essentially a colonial or para-colonial relationship. The U.S. was essentially selling, trafficking drugs into China and trying to colonize it.

After 1949, when China stood up and became the PRC, we saw a period of almost two decades of hot war and dirty war. That was the Korean War, that was Taiwan, that was Myanmar, and then that transitioned to dirty wars in Tibet and the Myanmar border wars. And then the entire Vietnam–Southeast Asia war was really a proxy war against China. So it was about two decades of war. And then from about 1980 until 2007, there was a kind of hedge or détente phase where the U.S. was trying to use soft power to undermine China and absorb it. So similar to what they had expected and done with the USSR, they expected China to collapse. So this was the collapse/absorption phase.

And this involved the WTO accession and then the massive super-exploitation of Chinese labor for U.S. super profits, all the time while they were continuing to subvert and undermine. So during this time, you also saw the regime change attempt, which was Tiananmen. You saw continued subversion in Tibet and also using Taiwan and the beginnings of a terror campaign in Xinjiang. In 2007, everything changed because China, which was supposed to collapse, was the only country left standing after the global financial system collapsed. All the Western imperial elites and their economies collapsed. They actually had to go hand in hand to China and ask for help. And China was the only country that was left standing.

This is why Nicolas Sarkozy, you know, extreme right conservative, said, "Laissez-faire, c'est fini. Capitalism is finished. You know, it's all over." And China was the only one left standing. And so from that point onward, from 2008 to the present moment, essentially the U.S. transitioned back to war. That is to say, it went from war to hedging and détente, back to war, so we're back in this war phase. And the hawks that had been dormant during the hedge phase joined hands with the liberals who had expected a kind of collapse, who had a kind of collapsist, absorptionist doctrine, and they created this neocon class that was focused on kinetic war.

And starting in 2009, they drafted a plan of war, which I've mentioned before. It's called Air-Sea Battle, as well as the strategic documents and the appropriations and the economic war, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and the information war. And they reconfigured the U.S. military for war with

China. So they began the basing, the staging, the operations, and the logistics, as well as the kind of hybrid warfare, the tech and trade warfare, information warfare, as well as the mobilization of proxies. All of that has been kind of an unbroken stream up to the current moment. None of this changes with a single summit.

I think it's also important to point out—in fact, I think it's critical to point out—that the doctrine of war that the U.S. unleashed against Iran is actually the doctrine of war that they have planned for China. That is to say, Air-Sea Battle is planned for China and Iran. If you look at the documents, you can see that they were directly targeted for Iran and China. And it involves blinding and decapitation, which Iran has shown is not possible, even with a second-tier power. You know, Iran is the 16th most powerful military in the world. The U.S. is the most powerful.

But Iran stood up, and it fought the U.S. essentially to a standstill. And so it's very clear that Air-Sea Battle, which derives from Air-Land Battle, which is colloquially known as shock and awe, actually comes out of Israeli war doctrine from the Yom Kippur War. This is the decapitation, the surprise, the perfidy, the sucker punch. They thought that if you throw the sucker punch and you decapitate, then you win. Of course, Iran was prepared for this because it has the mosaic defense strategy. You cannot decapitate a starfish. It just becomes multiple starfishes. And the same thing with China. China has been preparing for decades.

So what is very, very clear is that if you look at everything—signals, doctrine, logistics—if you do all the math, if you look at the objective facts, it's clear that the U.S. cannot and should not go to war with China because there is no way it can win. And yet it is still going down this path of madness. Most significantly, as I said, you can see the massive escalation in military exercises, most recently in the Philippines—the Balikatan exercises—the appropriation of proxies like Japan and South Korea, and of course the Philippines and Taiwan as proxies, as the new proxies like Ukraine that they expect to wage the war. And the continued rhetorical escalation, as I said, the continued hybrid war, including information war and the kind of constant demonization of Chinese on U.S. soil as well.

#Danny

Well, yeah, I mean, the Trump administration, the first Trump administration, really escalated around this kind of new Red Scare, or maybe we should say the continuing Red Scare. Many researchers—you know, there's Huawei, Meng Wanzhou, who was imprisoned in Canada on behalf of the United States—and it still goes on to this day. I know we were talking before the show about researchers in Michigan. I've gotten messages from people who have gotten into cases simply for being Chinese and being professors, being in certain arenas. There is a campaign—even just Chinese students who come to the United States. There have been many cases during the Trump administration, this time around and the last Trump administration.

And of course, Biden doesn't get a pass. It was happening during Biden, too. But all across the board, this is a policy—a policy of harassment. And it all comes under this same viewpoint of China

still being a threat. And to your other point about proxies, too, I mean, look at what the U.S. is now doing to the UAE. The UAE has always been a U.S. proxy, but now the Trump administration feels very, very emboldened to, with the entire region up in flames, push the UAE out front as its primary non-Israeli proxy, its non-Israeli partner in war criminality. But any comments on these things, KJ? It truly is, I think, a global war landscape where these pieces are interconnected. They are not separate.

#KJ Noh

Well, I think the first thing to point out is really, you know, proxy war is going to be a very, very large part of this. Of course, the most important proxy, the genocidal proxy, is Israel. But also they want to pull in all their other Gulf allies, proxies, in particular, as you pointed out, the UAE. The UAE, you know, is—all of the Gulf states, all of the GCC states—are actually monarchies. And I think half of them are absolute monarchies. The UAE itself calls itself a confederated monarchy, but that's a nonsense statement because the seven states that they're a confederation of are actually all absolute monarchies themselves. And most of them live off of—they run their economies through—slave labor. Sixty to ninety percent of their population are actually migrant workers or expats, many of whom are held in conditions that are very, very close to modern-day slavery.

They're indentured slaves, essentially. So in terms of their political economy, not only do they have no legitimacy, but they actually have no real foundation. Inside that, the UAE is constituted of seven what the British used to call trucional states. These were sheikhdoms that signed a pact with the devil—that is, the British imperialists—and became collaborators with the British and then later with the United States after they formed the UAE. And essentially they serve as staging grounds and as proxies, and also as dictatorships that have quashed national liberation movements, especially Islamic and Islamic socialist movements that want more independence. So these are the kind of dictator, tin-pot, quisling dictatorships that the U.S. has relied on.

And now they're being pushed back again into the front line as proxies for war against Iran. Iran, as far as I can tell, wants to have good relations with all of them, but some of them are clearly aggressive actors and perfidious, aggressive actors against Iran. And so I think that we'll see how it goes, but I expect a much, much more horizontal expansion, much, much more devastation to all of the Gulf Coast, Gulf Cooperation states, if the war re-escalates. Regarding the kind of red scare, red baiting that's going on, we are fully in the state of this kind of McCarthyite red baiting that we saw in the 1950s. We're right back to that point. And people have coined the term "researching while Chinese." If you're a Chinese researcher, you should expect to get your lab door busted down and be arrested.

During the first Trump administration and also during the Biden administration, they were, you know, opening a new investigation every eight to ten hours against, quote-unquote, Chinese and Chinese-related researchers. But more recently, you know, apparently the University of Michigan seems to have been one of the key areas where they have concentrated some of this, you know, red

baiting and red scaring. And so there have been multiple Chinese students that have been arrested, interrogated, incarcerated, and also deported for minor process errors. For example, there was a researcher who was charged with bringing in, you know, a fungus, *Fusarium graminearum*. This is a fungus that is prevalent in the U.S. It's all over the Midwest.

And she was just doing research. In fact, she's one of the key researchers doing work on trying to prevent it. And she had imported, you know, a sample of this from China without doing all the paperwork. They threw the book at her. They threw the book at her. They essentially, you know, ruined her life, her career, and her, you know... her sanity. And they've done this with multiple, multiple Chinese researchers and students, which is terrible because, you know, anybody who goes to a graduate research facility will understand a very, very large number of those researchers are actually from China doing very, very important work, which benefits both countries.

But anyway, they've been throwing the book at these researchers. The University of Michigan seems to be very, very happy to collaborate and to facilitate this process, not understanding that China is actually starting to push back. They've drafted these counter-sanctions laws, which say that if you arbitrarily and excessively persecute our interests or our citizens, we give ourselves the right to take countermeasures. So I think the University of Michigan is actually wading into a geostrategic battle, the likes of which, the proportions and the risks, it does not understand. But anyway, it's very proud of its collaboration.

It talks about how they are a team player and they want their teamwork, i.e., their facilitation of federal prosecution against their own students. And more recently, they have gone after a professor who gave witness, expert testimony, and said that *Fusarium graminearum* was a non-issue. And apparently his research lab was raided and shut down, and he's in all kinds of hot water. They also went after a University of Michigan researcher. He was actually an engineer, a computer science engineer. He was working on advanced chip technology, and apparently they hauled him in for interrogation. He was deeply traumatized not long after that. Apparently, he committed suicide—if it was suicide.

The university has made no attempt to investigate or look into the issue. But there's a level in which this kind of researching while Chinese has become very, very deadly for Chinese researchers and Asian researchers, and for the scholars and professors of integrity who support them. So anybody who thinks that this anti-China crusade has dialed down is wrong, is not seeing the full picture. It's simply amped up. It's dialed down in certain areas on a very superficial level, but it's amped up on other levels. And I think we're at a very, very risky situation at the current moment. We also see the escalation in the proxies, for example, in South Korea, which I can talk about more if you want.

#Danny

Yeah, I think it's, you know, we have about eight or so minutes left, KJ, so definitely get into this because, you know, in the Trump administration's now renewed readout, I guess, that I pulled up

earlier celebrating all of the accomplishments of the Trump administration, one of them was that China and the U.S. agreed to denuclearize North Korea, the DPRK. But the Korean Peninsula, as I said before, has not been in the headlines in large part because the Trump administration has not either been able to or wanted to look in that direction. So maybe you can help us understand where this part of the world fits into the grand scheme of things and what's going on.

#KJ Noh

I think the first thing to understand about North Korea is that South Korea was split off from North Korea. Korea was split just as the U.S. split Vietnam into North and South Vietnam because they wanted a proxy that they could use for their strategic agenda. Left to its own devices, South Korea and North Korea—Korea had been a unified whole for 1,300 years. After the Japanese colonization ended in 1945, they would have created an indigenous socialist state, and they had prepared that. In fact, they declared that in the Korean People's Republic, with thousands of people's committees that actually created a functioning government. The U.S. came in in the South as a caretaker government.

Russians came in in the North, and they were supposed to simply return the country back to the Koreans after ushering the Japanese out. But instead, the U.S. created a proxy puppet government. They brought in a dictator, Syngman Rhee, flew him in on MacArthur's private jet, and for the next 12 years, they had an absolute dictatorship whereby they waged war, split the Koreans away from the North, created this internecine conflict. And then in 1960, when Syngman Rhee was kicked out because the Koreans rose up in a revolution, the U.S. supported the next dictator. This was Park Chung-hee. In 1961, he got the okay from the Kennedy government, and then he was a dictator for another 18 years until 1979. I'll get to 1979 in a moment. But essentially, Korea has been used as a U.S. base.

#KJ Noh

And a U.S. colony, and as a U.S. Quisling proxy that the U.S. uses for its strategic ends. For example, any time it loses a war, it sends in Korean troops to do the janitorial military cleanup. In the Vietnam War, as the U.S. was losing it, they sent in Korean troops. By 1972, Korean troops outnumbered U.S. troops two to one in Vietnam. Actually, a total of 320 to 340 thousand Korean troops served in Vietnam. In the Iraq War, in the Afghan War, Koreans were right there with the Americans right from the get-go. So the U.S. has always used Korean troops as convenient cannon fodder and as a military proxy. And it's very clear that they have designs to use Korea as a proxy, potentially in a war against Iran.

This is why tens of thousands of Koreans have been on the streets protesting, saying that they do not want to be conscripted into a U.S. war against Iran. And Korea does have conscription. It has a long conscription. That conscription exists largely because the U.S. wants cannon fodder for its own wars. Inside that context, okay, North Korea has built itself up as a kind of state that resists imperial

domination, and they have created a nuclear deterrent. The North Korean military budget is probably around \$2 billion, possibly a little bit more. It is about one-fourth or one-fifth of the NYPD police budget. It's less than Taylor Swift's earnings from her most recent tour, you know, the revenue generated from Taylor Swift's tour.

So they're not a threat to the United States anymore. They do have a nuclear deterrent because they know that's the only way they can survive, because they've seen what happened to Gaddafi and Syria and every other country that didn't have that, including, as we can see here, Iran. And so, you know, they are trying to defend themselves. But North Korea has always been a stalking horse for U.S. aggression against China, starting from 1950 onwards. The Korean War itself was an attempt to attack China. And so inside that context, the U.S. and South Korea have always wanted to disarm North Korea. And constantly they have tried to rig treaties where they make nice and pretend they want normalization and de-escalation.

But each time they betray the North Koreans in their negotiations. We saw that back in, you know, the six-party talks. Even before that, in the Agreed Framework, there was an agreement: North Korea would give up its nuclear capacities in exchange for the U.S., you know, giving it a light-water reactor. That never happened. In the six-party talks, North Korea agreed to de-escalate and to do some, you know, preliminary steps toward denuclearization. And, of course, that didn't happen either, because the moment they signed the agreement with North Korea — North Korea signed the agreement with the U.S. and the other six parties — the U.S. slapped sanctions on North Korea the very next day.

And so essentially the U.S. is not agreement-capable as far as North Korea is concerned, as I would say as far as the rest of the world is concerned. But there is still this kind of vain ambition that somehow they're going to, quote-unquote, demilitarize North Korea and that they're going to turn it into the next war, just an extension of South Korea. North Koreans are not having any of that. They have said that they no longer seek reunification with South Korea. They're meeting as equals in the political and diplomatic domain. And at the same time, they're still extraordinarily, extraordinarily distrustful. So this was something that was just kind of thrown in, I think, as an afterthought. I don't think that the U.S. is serious about any de-escalation with North Korea.

As I said, it always uses technology with North Korea as a pretext and a stalking horse to accelerate and increase strategic pressure and strategic escalation against China. So this is kind of a non-starter, but it's always thrown in because it's a trope that they like to throw in. Currently, the current president, Lee Jae-myung, is not very amenable to U.S. designs. The president before Yoon Seok-yeol was essentially Mr. American Pie, which he sang at the White House. He was a complete and total U.S. proxy. Right, I remember that. And Lee Jae-myung is having none of that. Yoon Seok-yeol was thrown out. He was literally impeached and is right now in prison. This has been a pattern in U.S.-Korea history.

The U.S. always puts in some kind of Quisling or dictator, and the Korean populace, they overthrow them and try to put in their own leaders, and then the U.S. does some kind of subterfuge or regime change or a new coup, etc. This is just a kind of recurring pattern in Korea, in Korean history, just as it was, for example, in Iranian history. And so at the current moment, Lee Jae-myung, because he is not very pliable and seems to be looking out for South Korea's sovereign interests, is actually under a lot of pressure by U.S.-allied neocons and the U.S.-allied neocon class in South Korea. This is the Quisling class that has always collaborated with first the Japanese and then the U.S. And so, you know, there was just today or yesterday, because Korea's a little bit ahead, it's a big scandal.

Now, May 18th in Korea is a very, very important day. It is the anniversary of the Gwangju Massacre. Gwangju happened on May 18th, 1980, and essentially it was a massive civil protest against the United States putting in and enabling yet another military dictator after Park Chung-hee was killed by his own chief of security. In 1979, Park Chung-hee was killed by his own chief of security, and then right after that, there was another military coup. A military general called Chun Doo-hwan took power, and he was green-lighted by the United States to take power. And then in 1980, when protests arose against his new regime, the U.S. green-lighted a massacre. He sent in tanks and helicopter gunships, and he wiped out the city. This is a huge, you know, festering wound in the Korean psyche.

The Nobel Prize winner Han Kang writes about Gwangju in her book **Human Acts**. It's actually her best book. So that's one way of learning more about Gwangju. But anyway, during the Gwangju Massacre on May 18th, five divisions were sent in, including two armored brigades with tanks and APCs, and they just wiped the city clean. And Starbucks today, on May 18th, did this massive promotion saying that they were going to promote Starbucks mugs on Tank Day. What they refer to as Tank Day is essentially a reference to celebrating the sending in of tanks to Gwangju on May 18th. It would be like calling May 3rd in China, when the U.S. or Bull Connor sent in troops in Alabama, celebrating Firehose Day or German Shepherd Day. But this is what Starbucks has done.

So if you needed another reason to despise Starbucks, here you have it — that they represent the extreme right, far-right, quisling, neoliberal, U.S.-aligned class that makes fun of Korean oppression and Korean massacres. Apparently, the CEO was fired for this. But it just speaks to the kind of toxic, pro-American, extreme right-wing politics that is currently in play in Korea at the current moment. Another right-wing, U.S.-allied Korean corporation that is trying to take down the government is Coupang. Coupang is like an Amazon-type delivery service, and they're trying to pull what looks to be like a United Fruit on the South Korean government, essentially saying that Coupang had a data leak and then they covered it up, and they've been abusing their workers, and the Korean government is trying to get to the bottom of this.

They've been trying to investigate it, and Coupang essentially has lobbied U.S. politicians to tell the Korean Justice Department that it cannot investigate Coupang and that it has complete and total immunity. And it is putting pressure on and threatening to undermine the Lee Jae-myung

government. So, you know, literally the kind of mindset of a United Fruit, if you will — that we overthrow the government if we don't like it. And so you see this kind of extreme far-right, corporate, neoliberal intervention and interference in Korea's domestic economy and politics, with the understanding that they're still trying to force Korea into this proxy role as cannon fodder for U.S. war against China and for U.S. wars, other proxy wars abroad.

And you see the same dimension in Japan. Japan is, you know, essentially the ultimate quisling, the ultimate proxy. But Sanae Takaichi, you know, has said that she's going to remilitarize Japan. They're going to gut their peace constitution. They're going to sell munitions abroad to create, you know, the kind of synergy with the militarization efforts. And they've said that Taiwan is Japan's business. And so this is kind of extraordinary, an extraordinary escalation in East Asia. Just one last comment — you know, that statement that Taiwan is independent, that's a misframing by the BBC. The spokeswoman said that the ROC is independent.

And that's what it's asserted since, you know, 1945, so 1949. So the Republic of China is the legal name of Taiwan Island, the Taiwan provincial authorities. And they say that, you know, essentially that they are different and independent. And they actually claim all of Chinese territory, including the mainland. And so it's a completely different framing from the way that the BBC and the West would like to frame it. But anyway, all of this is to say that things are heating up in East Asia, and don't be, you know, don't be misled by, you know, minor de-escalation on one front, because it's a strategic war with multiple fronts, and it's just heating up on other fronts at the same time.

#Danny

I think it's a great place to conclude, KJ. Incredible detail there. Be sure, of course, to hit the like button as we head out of here. I'm just going to pull up the comments and super chats thanking KJ and myself. Thanks so much, Servant of the Most High, for these two comments and super chats. It's very much appreciated. Without further ado, everyone, I want to make sure everyone knows to hit the like button before you go. You can support the show in the video description — Patreon, Substack, and much more. KJ, anything before I hit end stream here?

#KJ Noh

Now, I'm just going to sound like a broken record, but, you know, really, we are in a dangerous place, and we do have to do everything humanly possible to prevent further escalation to war, not just in West Asia, but in East Asia and everywhere else.

#Danny

Yes, we are looking at a global war. Some say World War III. No matter what you call it, it is global in character. And tomorrow I'll be back. Vladimir Putin is going to visit China very soon. And I'll be on tomorrow, 1 p.m. Eastern Time, with Larry Johnson and Carter Lawrence Wilkerson. 1 p.m.

Eastern Time to cover that and so much more. Without further ado, everyone, hit the like button before you go. See you tomorrow. Bye-bye.