

Iran's DEVASTATING War Bombshell Shocks Trump, Netanyahu HUMILIATED | Narwani

Editor of the Cradle Sharmine Narwani joins the show to discuss the major reversal under way in the US-Israeli war on Iran and the bombshell dropped on Trump that is precipitating a massive geopolitical shift in the region and beyond. <https://thecradle.co/> FOLLOW AND SUPPORT THE CRADLE 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 #iranwar #trump

#Danny

Hey, everyone. Welcome back to the show. It's Danny Haiphong here. As you can see, I'm joined by Charmaine Arwani. She's an editor and columnist at The Cradle. How are you doing, Charmaine? Good to see you again.

#Sharmine Narwani

I'm really good. Happy to be back, Danny, as always.

#Danny

Yes, yes, everyone hit the like button as you come on the program. That helps boost the show. And let's just get started, Charmaine, with the latest developments in the war in Iran. The ceasefire is, of course, hanging on by a thread. But we had the latest pullback from the brink of restarting strikes by Donald Trump, claiming many things, but including that the United States was briefed by the Gulf countries not to go to war because negotiations are going so great.

But top IRGC officials, as The Cradle reported, are concerned, not so confident in the way things are going, and are dropping some pretty big warnings on the United States, including this one saying that the Iranian military will take this war beyond the region should attacks restart. And this comes as there's a major intelligence assessment—another one; we seem to get these every other day now—that Iran has rebuilt its military far quicker than the U.S. was anticipating, especially since there's been about six weeks of a ceasefire. So, Charmaine, where are we right now in this war? And please take it where you want to go in terms of reactions to this and anything else you want to bring up.

#Sharmine Narwani

One of the things that's a bit overlooked, but certainly not in the Israeli media, is that big unexplained explosion that took place some days ago. And it was, allegedly, according to Hebrew news reports, a facility for manufacturing and testing interceptor missiles. So the Israelis think that is the underlying reason for the delay, or many Israelis are wondering whether that was the reason for the delay. But we have some news out today that may clarify this to be a much simpler reason. So Hajj is upon us—the pilgrimage to Mecca, that important annual pilgrimage event that Muslims around the world seek to gain entrance to. And apparently the Saudis, because what Trump told us himself is that Gulf allies said, "Don't go to war with Iran now." Right.

What does that mean, in a week, in two weeks? It's fine. I mean, it's not like anything's going to change. But he said they had asked him not to go to war with Iran now. And this may be the most simple explanation for it. The Hajj season is upon us. The Hajj takes place in Mecca, in Saudi Arabia. A war would not be good during that season, for sure. It would disrupt all the flights going in and leaving as well, to Saudi Arabia. But importantly, one reason that was mentioned was that the Israelis and Americans attacked Iran during the holy Muslim month of Ramadan, which was noted upon in the Muslim world. And the Saudis argued that attacking again during the Hajj season would really turn a lot of Muslims against them. So it's an easier explanation. We don't know what the real reason is, ultimately.

#Danny

Yeah, well, with that explosion that occurred in Israel, I mean, some were talking about, you know, it was close to maybe a nuclear site, but it seems like it was a weapons manufacturer. Anyway, what's the significance of this, though? Because, you know, recently Donald Trump is, according to our, I guess, trusted source Barak Ravid, the former Israeli intelligence asset turned Axios reporter, he claims that Netanyahu has reacted to Trump's delay on attacks like his hair is on fire.

And I'm wondering, you know, we've heard this so many times before. And Trump said that Netanyahu, Israel, will do whatever the U.S. wants them to do. We've heard this before, and prior to February 28th. What do you make of this, especially in light of this explosion and also in light of the fact that we do seem to have the Gulf countries now reportedly on the "let's wait for at least a very extended period of time to restart the war" side? And you have Israel on the other side, of course, since the ceasefire began, pushing for a restart of hostilities.

#Sharmine Narwani

Well, you can maybe divide these players into sort of categories. The Israelis under Netanyahu always want war on. They want it to go till Iran is not even defeated, and not even regime change any longer, but crippled, you know, infrastructurally, economically. I mean, this is what the empire

of chaos does ultimately. It's like they don't even have to win a war in order to neuter a country's ability to project power and be sovereign for decades to come, right? So that's one thing. I mean, the Israelis always want a war on. And Netanyahu's only way to avoid his domestic legal problems is war.

It's nothing new. Then you have, you know, the Gulf used to be divided, in the earlier phases of war, into the Kuwaitis, Emiratis, and Bahrainis urging for more war against Iran, and then the Saudis, Omanis, Iranians, and Qataris sort of taking a more restrained tone. I mean, the Omanis were not for it at all. They have their own category because they're obviously cooperating with Iran on the potential administration of the Strait of Hormuz. But I would argue that the Kuwaitis and Bahrainis have maybe become a little bit more restrained as well. They don't see any upside.

They may be really angry and humiliated even by what Iran has done in retaliating in their countries because they allowed U.S. forces to launch attacks from there. But they don't see any upside whatsoever. All Gulf countries have taken some hits in terms of their domestic production, whether it's energy or refineries and some infrastructure, but also in their ability to transport anything, any of their exports, and to receive imports as well, which at one point looked to start becoming quite critical. So you kind of have most of the GCC now not looking for the war to be prolonged or reinitiated by the Americans. And then you have the UAE, which kind of stands alone in this.

The UAE is very much with the Israeli project in the region. Part of the reason they're with that project is because Abu Dhabi believes it will give them all the armor it needs to replace Saudi Arabia, to replace Saudi authority in the Persian Gulf. This is a fight that reared its head very publicly late last year and has largely been ignored because, you know, the war, etc., and the negotiations that followed between Iran and the U.S. But the UAE's desire to supplant the Saudis in the Persian Gulf region has endured. It's been something the Saudis have not ignored during the war. And the more the UAE sides with attacking Iran, the less the Saudis are eager for that.

Because what can happen in a hot war is that projectiles allegedly from Iran, but actually from Israel or from the UAE, could be hitting Saudi facilities. Because of course, these countries would like nothing more than the entire Arab states of the Persian Gulf to go to war with Iran, right? Because it would also deplete Saudi Arabia, clearly, and that is something that—it's a winning situation for the Israelis and Emiratis that should never be neglected. The Emirati problem here in the region is a huge one, but we don't see it in English outside as much because, you know, for the Americans, those Strait of Hormuz daily reports, you know, with nothing fundamentally changing, seem to be the only story in town. It is not in West Asia.

#Danny

Right. Well, I mean, the landscape is very chaotic right now. You have, on the one side, Israel pushing for war and being unsuccessful up until this point, at least directly. And then, you know, there are changing realities on the ground that you want to discuss, one of which has been very

strange. You mentioned the drone strikes likely coming from, or attacks likely coming from, Israel and the UAE against Saudi Arabia. Then you have the UAE almost every day, uh, Charmaine, talking about their air defenses being activated because of, uh, drone attacks on them, including earlier, uh, you know, just, uh, not a week ago, uh, an attack on their nuclear facility that, uh, didn't cause that much damage, but it was an attack. Uh, maybe you can talk about this. This all came as reports that Israel has two bases, with U.S. help, operating in Iraq. And the UAE just happened to say that the latest drone attacks came from their western borders. Shockingly enough, that's the opposite direction from Iran. Your thoughts?

#Sharmine Narwani

Yeah. Correct. Correct. And what was notable about... So the major drone attack that got attention was drones that targeted the Barakah nuclear power plant in the Emirates. And this nuclear power plant, energy-producing, accounts for—I read somewhere—close to 25% of its electricity use, domestic electricity use, so a significant infrastructure target. But what was interesting was that the UAE did not publicly blame this on Iran. You know, it's their sort of knee-jerk reaction to everything, right? They not only didn't blame it on Iran immediately, they have continued not to blame it on Iran. They, as you mentioned, have said this came from the West. And to the West lies Saudi Arabia, lies Iraq, lies Yemen—all potentially instigators for various reasons.

But I think today the UAE's Ministry of Defense said the drones that targeted that nuclear facility came from Iraq. So they've now gone on the record blaming a country. But the distance between Iraq and the UAE is, I think, around 1,000 kilometers. It doesn't make sense that a country like the UAE, and the countries in between the UAE and Iraq—all countries now on the highest alert possible, you know, that have advanced defensive systems and radars, etc.—were unable to detect slow-moving drones from Iraqi territory. And it is a territory they're surveilling actively since this war began. So I'm not so sure. Maybe Iraq is an easy country to blame right now.

We're seeing the switch over into a new government in Iraq finally, after many, many, many, many months. The Iraqis have reached consensus on a president and a prime minister. Who knows? And yes, you're right, there are two alleged Israeli bases in Iraq that came to light because a shepherd discovered one of them. He, of course, has now been killed. And it's causing a lot of tribal issues because he came from, I think, the Shammari tribe, which is, you know, a significant tribe in Iraq. And the Iraqi government took reporters—Western reporters, I think I saw an AP video on this—to the alleged site, where they showed nothing. They just did some, like, what's it called, special ops kind of moves, like coming down from a helicopter.

There's nothing there, it's like sand, right? So who knows what that was about? Take them to a base that's non-existent when we don't actually know where the base was. It's a possibility. The fact that the Israeli military and special forces have infiltrated Iraq is not a surprise to anyone. It's partially why they sought to occupy the south of Syria. But we don't know. The UAE is now saying they came from Iraq. And we shall see, because in the last 48 hours alone, the UAE's Ministry of Defense says

that they have had six more drones infiltrating, targeting what they say are vital areas in the country. We don't know what those are. And then, of course, they made a statement on their initial investigation into the power plant attack over the weekend. Okay.

#Danny

Charmaine, in lieu of changing realities on the ground in the region because of this war, there's also this that has been published by the Persian Gulf Strait Authority—the mechanism now that Iran has established, created to manage and regulate activity in the Strait of Hormuz. And a lot has been made of these boundaries of control, including, if we just zoom in here, the port of Fujairah, which is the UAE's. And so there's a lot being made about that as being a pretty big move by Iran to demonstrate its overall growing power in the region. So maybe we can get into now the changing reality on the ground in the region, given this and, of course, all kinds of other developments that have, I think, put the Trump administration and Israel in a worse position than they thought they were going to be in over the course of this war.

#Sharmine Narwani

Yeah, I mean, this map—we've sort of seen this in the last week or so, this map—but it's, you know, official now. And the areas, this can present some legal argumentation for the other side. Obviously, the Strait of Hormuz was very clearly in Iranian territorial waters and Omani territorial waters, and they could do what they wanted, particularly because there was a militarization of the region and a war, right? There was an act of aggression, illegal acts of aggression going on, which include, by the way, the U.S. blockade, which is an act of war. But now stretching those waters, going clearly into Emirati territory, obviously poses a counterargument, right? Because that would be an infringement on their waterways. I think the Iranian argument may just be that this is a country that has been attacking us.

And we're going to exercise authority to prevent this, right? It's a retaliatory measure, right, for an act of aggression. I don't know if these will even get to courts or anything. But certainly we have seen since the war began the Persian Gulf countries, left, right, and center, file statements with the UN Security Council, with the UN Secretary-General. They're trying to, I think, make any headway they can through lawfare. I don't know if they will succeed or not, and these things take a very long time. But this is critical because they have gone... um, so it's stretching from one of the seven Emirates of the UAE, um, all the way—sorry, there's one, two... hold on, I think there's two—and then, you know, Ras al-Khaimah and then Fujairah too.

So these Emirates will maybe have something to say, as well as the UAE as a whole. Fujairah is really obvious why that was done, because that's the way the Emiratis and their allies, the Americans and others, will seek to get energy out into the Sea of Oman and then to trading partners. And Iran—what if one of Iran's conditions during this war is, if you attack us and take out our oil, nobody's going to be able to sell oil? So in this case, Iran may not even be looking at the legalities of it. I

think they probably have argumentation for the legalities of it, because there is a state of war and there's an act of aggression conducted by our neighbors, and we're going to administer these territories to ensure that doesn't happen.

But there is a strategic move for this because we're going to stop you, the most aggressive country in the Persian Gulf against Iran. We're going to stop you from exporting. We're going to stop you from finding ways to circumvent our diktats, right? Because we are the winning party, as the Iranians believe, in this war thus far, and you have to suffer consequences, and you have to pay reparations, etc., etc. I'm sure over time, if the war is wrapped up and there's a new Persian Gulf security consensus and economic consensus built with Iran as a partner, right, without the intervention of foreign states or states foreign to West Asia, then these borders that you just showed us will change.

#Danny

Yeah, and that gets me to wonder, you know, if Iran right now is kind of—and that's been my thinking about the whole Strait of Hormuz issue from the beginning—is that Iran is building an architecture for obtaining the reparations that the United States... Now, there are reports that the United States, of course, has been denying, denying, denying reparations, and then there are some reports now saying that the U.S. might be softening its position on this, finding ways to pay Iran a sum of money through some kind of wildly twisted justification that can somehow not look like capitulation. Most believe, though, that that's never going to happen. So maybe you can talk about some of the other ways in which Iran, out of this war, has changed things on the ground.

Because we have Pakistan now, they are actually sending their premier, their prime minister, to Beijing coming up. And this comes after, of course, China just had Putin and Trump before him. This is, you know, Pakistan has played a big role in the mediation. Iran has spoken very glowingly of Pakistan. China has also commended Pakistan's efforts. And I know that there are even bigger things, bigger fish frying in the region with regard to Pakistan regionally. Maybe if you want to talk about this, because it seems to be a big part of Iran's overall strategy—you could say survival, but really of consolidating control and the ability to, you know, go forward in this region as a growing power.

#Sharmine Narwani

You're right, Iran does want to consolidate that and new realities in the region that they weren't able to achieve while U.S. bases were strewn across this region, and I guess regional governments were constrained by their relations with Washington. So oftentimes change comes—always change comes—through bad times, and you have to take a crisis and make an opportunity out of it, which is another reason why Iran sought to expand the conflict as soon as they were attacked. They said that in the many weeks leading up to it—we know this from months before, you know, even years—that this was a possibility. And they acted according to their promise. They expanded the conflict to

put enough pressure on regional states and its neighbors, right, to understand that, A, they would not be protected by the United States.

They were, A, simply not a priority. B, Iranian missile systems were able to bypass anything that the United States had to thwart projectiles, right? I think that has certainly sunk in. We have seen reactions from all across the Gulf states realizing that there is no guarantee that the Americans bring, but in fact that the Americans make these countries a target. And so the calculations have changed. One of the most interesting things for me was to see the Saudis sit on the fence and be relatively quiet about when the war actively started and Iran began retaliating in Persian Gulf states, right? They were relatively silent. They did make statements for domestic constituencies, which one would do, but on the international stage, on the regional stage, they took a step back, unlike the UAE, unlike Bahrain, unlike Kuwait.

And the reason for this is because the Saudis had, don't forget, last year reached out to the Pakistanis to provide more, I guess, more intense military services for the Saudis, including the positioning of Pakistani troops in Saudi Arabia, for many reasons, including security. It's a very open conflict with the Emiratis. This development thrust Pakistan into the mix of things before anything really even—before the war was launched in February. And Pakistan is what interests me really now. So let's just say, like, in the last month and a half, we have seen this sort of quad group emerge of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Pakistan, right? What have they been doing? There are no Western countries sitting at that table. These are private discussions. Certainly, the Pakistanis and, well, the Saudis are friendly with Pakistan and with Egypt.

The Pakistanis are friendly with all three countries. But Egypt is not friendly with Turkey, and Turkey is not friendly with Saudi Arabia. I think the reason these four large Muslim countries came together is because they individually have the ability to move the dial, and together they have the ability to remake the map if they stick firm on things, right? And they were looking at a post-U.S. security situation. They all had an interest in this at the time because the Israelis were coming, for whatever reason, very viciously and aggressively—at least in words—against Turkey as well, you know, alienating its silent ally in the region. So this was a time, this war, and the fact that Iran expanded it gave every reason for these four major Muslim countries to come together and maybe plot a scenario in which they could win-win, right?

Because that's what Iran has been promoting. I mean, since it promoted, I think, in the late 2010s—maybe it was 2017 or 2018—the Iranians promoted their HOPE initiative, which was actually for providing Gulf security, Persian Gulf security, among the littoral states. And that was a really important step. The Iranians saw this as a win-win. The Americans saw it as a complete loss, right? Because then they wouldn't have bases. They wouldn't have, you know, the clout, et cetera. And they wouldn't have the clout to force their Gulf proxy states to continue trading in the U.S. dollar, right? The whole yuan perspective of trading in the yuan would become more likely.

The U.S. didn't have bases there and weapons systems they were selling, you know, in their clutches. And so what's interesting to me is how Pakistan has suddenly stepped into the role of peacemaker. OK, the Pakistanis are the negotiators between the Americans and the Iranians. All right. But they've also set up this quad on the sidelines, which means the Pakistanis have the ears of Riyadh, of Cairo, of Ankara. That's huge. OK, all vested now, not just talks, vested in coming up with solutions. And Pakistan then, bizarrely—this is something we're following up at The Cradle, by the way—is looking, has offered Russia, and this was not just Russia but Azerbaijan, that has been very close to Israel and kind of against Iran, right?

Offered Azerbaijan and Russia, before the U.S. and Israel launched a war on Iran, they offered them a connection to the—they wanted to connect Gwadar, their big port constructed with the Chinese, the Pakistani port, and you could probably point to it on a map at this point. They offered them, before the war even started, "let's connect our CPEC," so China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, right? And where Gwadar Port is a major waterway trade route for both. Let's connect this to the International North-South Transport Corridor, whose principal participants are India, Iran, and Russia.

Now, India, months ago, basically, essentially withdrew from their port project, Chabahar, in Iran, which is just along the same coastline, but in Iran, where Gwadar is in Pakistan. You can probably zoom in and see that, or on one of the maps I've sent you. And so, the Indians pulled out of that because of American pressure, and they paid up what remaining dues they had for this project and, you know, kind of stepped out. Well, Pakistan's now inserting themselves as a major, major port hub, okay, and roadway hub through not just BRI with China, but INSTC with Russia and Iran. OK, I cannot tell you, I mean, it looks really complicated. You're seeing all these lines. You can kind of find a lot of these maps at The Cradle. But it looks complicated, but it's really simple.

If you left Asia on its own, Asia would build railroads and dams and trade corridors and ports and pipelines to do business with each other, all right? When colonialism came into this region, they came by sea, they came by waterway, and they dominated this region and kind of inhibited them from building relations across borders with each other. But China has kind of blown that all up. They said, okay, we have the money, the infrastructure, know-how, whatever. We're going to connect Asia by land. And of course, there's a lot of sabotage activities going on. But this Pakistani proposal brings India on board with Pakistan as well, brings Iran on board with Pakistan as well, brings Azerbaijan on board with Pakistan as well.

Okay. Positioning Pakistan as a major now trading hub that everyone can be open to because it's friendly with everyone. Now keep in mind, I'm sure you saw the Drop Site exclusive where they actually published the U.S. cable that showed that everything Imran Khan had said the U.S. was doing, plotting to replace him, was true. And the main reason for this was because of the trip he made to Moscow to meet with Vladimir Putin. Now Pakistan, under the command of a much more powerful army leader, right, who's in Washington all the time until this war started. Really, he was just, you know, Pakistan was... What was Pakistan? Nobody was taking it seriously, right?

Then what did Pakistan do? It kind of beat India in terms of global perception in their skirmish, right? Which suddenly gave it a lot of perception clout, and then it started to, you know, intervene in the negotiations between Iran and the U.S. and put itself on the map. And then it became the central place where the Saudis and the Turks and the Egyptians were talking. And now Pakistan is offering to become the major trading hub in the region, open to all parties. Now Pakistan—I mean, Imran Khan—got replaced because he made a trip to Moscow, and now Pakistan is saying, let's connect the Russian- and Iranian-backed International North-South Trade Corridor with Gwadar Port, right?

The other thing Pakistan has done since the negotiations began—and I've sent you a map of that also, we're map-crazy at the cradle—is to create six corridors for Iran to transport goods out of Iran and into Iran. So when everybody says the U.S. blockade is going to suffocate Iran, it's not true. Iran is moving the most ships through the Strait of Hormuz and those waterways, the Persian Gulf, than any other country. Iran now has these land routes that Pakistan has opened for it.

And Iran still has the Caspian Sea in the north, which is an essential route on the INSTC, right, the International North-South Transportation Corridor. What's happening, you know, behind the shadows of this crazy American assault on Iran and Israeli insistence that the assault keeps going on, is the remapping of many things in the region—affiliations, alliances, economic deals, infrastructure, and infrastructure routes. I think this is, you know, and they're doing it kind of quietly. Maybe it's good it's not coming in Western headlines because the Americans would have to react to that. Basically, the region is slipping out of their control. What interests me is how a Pakistan that was so, you know, that was taking money from the UAE until recently, and when the UAE yanked back its money, right?

It's punishing Pakistan. Just for your viewers to know, the Emiratis, who have a lot of Israeli AI tech, military tech, have basically offered that up to the Indians. So in the next confrontation with Pakistan, they could do better. They're really taking punches at the Pakistanis now. So you're seeing a bunch of different alliances work out here. The Saudis are looking to talk with Iran. They're looking to do a new security and economic arrangement in the Persian Gulf. We know we will have an article out, I think it's today, as a matter of fact, on where those talks are. And our writer in Iran is saying, look, you know, he's talking to Iranian officials, saying, look, nothing is real yet.

We have seen proposals, but, you know, we're seeing like one-pagers, not extremely detailed ones, in the way the IRGC is issuing on the Strait of Hormuz. But I think the grounds are there for a lot of the countries in the region to now look at a post-American West Asia and open their doors to the Chinese and Russians, who are obviously the biggest—they're the major powers, they're global major powers, but they're the major powers of the Eurasian century, right? And of course, Iran has thrust itself in there because, after showing its capabilities and its ability to de facto establish facts

on the ground, Iran is, as many Western commentators have noted, the new world power. Sorry, that was really long and convoluted. I hope I didn't lose your audience. I'm going to go look at the comments now.

#Danny

Definitely not. Definitely not. That was all necessary detail, especially since it alludes to, you know, I think the United States and Donald Trump himself, a blockade-obsessed and very heavily dependent on the US Navy to try to choke countries that it wants to destroy, like Iran, via the sea, via waterways. Some have even argued that maybe the US and Israel want the Strait of Hormuz to be entangled not just because the higher oil prices can bring profits, but also because it can reassert some kind of control despite the economic consequences of this.

But at the same time, this completely negates everything you just said, which doesn't get factored in, which is that there is a big push by China, especially with the ability to build this infrastructure with other countries. But now, of course, with Iran, to heavily develop these land routes, which are rapidly becoming more and more important. And the fact that Pakistan now is fully on board with this and willing to use their port infrastructure to boot, to assist Iran as well as to be kind of a central hub for trade through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. I mean, all that's really huge.

And I think that's something that may just go by the Trump administration's point of vision, because that's something they really can't stop short of attempting to bomb everybody. And hell, they couldn't sustain bombing Iran for more than a month. It was just over a month without having to stop and replenish. You can't bomb everything. You just can't. So especially if you want Pakistan to at all continue to be what it's playing now, getting along with everyone. You bomb Pakistan, you lose Pakistan. And so it's a big problem. And your reaction to this, because that's kind of what I'm seeing as you were talking about this.

#Sharmine Narwani

Wait, my reaction to what?

#Danny

Just like the bigger consequences this has for the United States and Israel trying to get what they want out of this war, given that Pakistan is playing with China and these land routes, all of this that you just outlined. There are things that they can't really stop, as much as they try to with sabotage.

#Sharmine Narwani

No, I've often said that what comes after this war is pure terrorism, pure terrorism by the United States and its allies, including Israel, because they don't have any other way to stop these big

projects, because they're genuinely win-win projects—militarily, economically, strategically—for all these players in West Asia. So how do you get people to shoot themselves in the foot? They don't. Eventually they realize, and really this war helped the Gulf realize, and a lot of countries, a lot of Arab countries realized, that the Americans were kind of paper tigers and not ultimately going to use their cards or put all their military might behind any of their regional allies.

So you now have the Americans and Israelis who, at best, can, you know, do what they did with Nord Stream 2—blow up pipelines. The Siberia 2, right, pipeline, Power of Siberia 2—blow it up. Power of Siberia 1—blow it up. The Turkish pipelines, you know, they're trying to connect Iraq and the Persian Gulf, right, to Turkey directly, railroads. And I think there's the canal, a big national canal project. All these things they'll just bomb. I mean, this is what they're going to do—actually become terrorists. You know, if anyone has any doubt, this is what we're going to see. We're going to see terrorism, all right, because these countries can no longer afford to go to war. They can't afford to pay for it.

They do not have the resupply capabilities that these Eastern players have. The costs are too oppressive for Americans, and they're not even getting the rare earth minerals from China that they would need to power up all these things they need in warfare—from technology to actual military hardware. So the world is changing, and I think the way these guys become spoilers is through acts of pure terror targeting civilian infrastructure. I mean, just a threat to, like, take out all of Iran's bridges and all of Iran's water facilities, all of Iran's power plants—it was just like a month ago, right? To destroy an entire civilization. You think those animals would hesitate to blow up a pipeline?

You know, no, it's par for the course these days. You know, but I mean, just a general statistic here: Iran has 300,000 bridges, around 500 power plants, between 2,000 and 5,000 substations, 80,000 transformers, 130,000 kilometers of high-voltage lines, and 1.3 million kilometers of network. It would take—what would it take? What would the Americans and Israelis have to do to get rid of this? So even those threats make no sense. And yeah, that's how I see things going, because they—I mean, what the Chinese and the Russians and the Iranians have been saying for a really long time, you know, which is the win-win scenarios for all: let's lead with soft power, let's open our borders to each other, let's have visa-free borders.

Let's do trade. Let us help you with your infrastructure, not rip you off and own it for the next decade, century, or two, right? But let's— we'll build it, we get something out of it, you get something out of it. It's like the Nigerian refinery was built with Chinese help, right? A Nigerian billionaire finally decided, why is Nigeria, an oil-rich country, sending its oil to the U.S. and elsewhere to be refined, then buying it back at astronomical prices? Now, Nigeria, within just less than a year of it going online—there were plenty of acts of sabotage, by the way—now the U.S. is sending oil to be refined at the Nigerian refinery. So everything's changing.

And it's mostly because of the perception that things can change, that countries can take sovereign decisions. And that's happening more and more because the U.S. is becoming more isolated as it

becomes more aggressive. And they're seeing, you know, Global South countries are genuinely seeing multipolarity come into being, not through the BRICS so much, but through the actions of major states. You know, the Chinese are now tackling the much-overdue issue of the U.S.'s stick of secondary sanctions. Nobody was pushing back against it. They'd just rather not be blacklisted by the Americans in international markets, right? So they would just immediately back off if there was a threat of a secondary sanction.

Even though they're not conducting their business in dollars, even though they're not doing business with the U.S., they would just back off business with Iran, business with Russia, business with Cuba, etc. Now the Chinese are saying, nope, you cannot—they're ordering Chinese companies not to respond to secondary sanctions or they will be punished, right? And so now Chinese companies are saying, oh, I can't do anything about it. Law of the land trumps, you know, U.S. jurisdictional law. So I just, by the way, for reviewers, it's genuinely not another plug for The Cradle, but we just today posted an interview with an amazing international law expert. I mean, she's great.

And her name is Mariam Jamshidi, and we tackle a lot of these issues, like Iran's legal rights and the Strait of Hormuz and the Caspian Sea and where sanctions are a concern. And we were talking, to my point, about how, you know, the fear factor is disappearing from tackling American threats, right? Global South countries are moving on. European partners are now moving on. Look at how Spain basically, you know, flips off Trump every day and says the exact opposite of what the EU, right, is saying and what the Americans are saying. So the fear factor is gone. A lot of changes are happening. And the only recourse the Americans, maybe even the British, maybe even the French and the Israelis and the Emiratis, for that matter, may have is to blow shit up.

#Danny

Yeah, well... we can definitely talk more about this because I was thinking about how this is not unprecedented. You mentioned Nord Stream. But of course, there have been attacks on China's BRI infrastructure in the region, including in Pakistan before, in 2021. There was a suicide bombing that directly targeted a hotel area that had been built up. The infrastructure around that had been—ooh, what the heck? I hate when this happens. Hold on one second. This always happens here. Okay, this is it right here. So there was a suicide bombing in 2021. There have been many like it, actually—so-called Balochistan separatists attacking BRI infrastructure in and around economic zones where China has deep infrastructure projects, roads, train systems, et cetera.

And then there was the report today. I don't know if you saw it in Reuters. I couldn't get through the paywall, so I have this post talking about it, where this is how unhinged U.S. foreign policy really is. This is a Trump thing in the sense that Trump gets reported on in these ways because of his antics. But really what we have is Trump, when he shrank the National Security Council, regular strategy meetings started to disappear. Officials were starting to look for clues, and they started to keep his Truth Social feed open on dedicated streams, treating his posts like real-time foreign policy directives.

And they say, Charmaine, that when he posted that—you referenced a civilization-ending, um, Truth Social post that he had—they said they had no idea what he was actually thinking in terms of what was going to happen from there, that there was nobody in the administration that really knew. Because somebody asked, "Hey, what does this mean? Nuclear weapons?" I think it was a European diplomat. And they said, "We don't know. We have no idea." So this is kind of an anything-goes situation for the United States' foreign policy, in my opinion. Anything they can do, at least. There are limitations, but destroy terrorism? I mean, this is something they've invested in—the U.S. foreign policy establishment has invested in—for decades and decades. And it seems like that will be a big part of the strategy. But your thoughts on this?

#Sharmine Narwani

Yeah, look, I mean, we saw it with Nord Stream. It's crazy how everyone went, tut-tut. Everyone in Europe, in the West, they went, tut-tut. Wow. Wow. Who would have done that? Oh my goodness. I mean, that's the kind of reaction they had, right? And then they blame it on, like, some Ukrainians on a fishing boat, and I'm just like, ridiculous stuff. And they didn't even allow the Germans to investigate, right? They thwarted that at every turn. And then Trump said, well, you know, remember that interview, I think before he became president? "Well, we know who did Nord Stream." You know, just ridiculous.

They did it. They did it. They blew up a Russian-German pipeline that billions of dollars had gone into. And by the way, you know, the British are still—I think they're still on the board, not board of, I don't know—but the British are fully immersed in getting Russian gas, right? BP is still on boards or whatever with Russia. It's absolute lies we're getting. And then more recently, there was, you know, when Viktor Orbán was still president, the leader of Hungary before he got unelected. He was a real thorn in the side of the Ukrainians.

And so the Ukrainians kind of blew up this pipeline that got energy to Hungary. And they're like, oh, we're still working on fixing it. And the Hungarians and even the Slovaks, I think it was, came in and said, no, there is no problem. This is a political decision by Ukraine. And then another explosion happened, you know, and then Viktor Orbán was kicked out because his country wasn't getting the energy they needed. You know, this is the way we're moving forward. I've been saying it for years. When empire shrinks, it tries to shrink others with it, okay? Because it can't grow anymore.

It doesn't have the money. It doesn't have the credibility. It doesn't have the resources. It doesn't have the human resources. What do Americans know how to do anymore? I don't mean that badly. Obviously, there are people who are trained in many vocations and many specialties in the U.S. I'm just talking about, you know, it's a service industry. Well, you know, anyone can serve KFC. Anyone can take customer phone calls. You know, so basically when empire shrinks, what it'll try to do is cause chaos elsewhere to take the biggest powers that exist, or the growing ones, down with them, right? But the other alternative, and we've written about this, I talk about it all the time.

One of our authors, Fadi Lama, wrote a piece, I think it was in 2022 or 2023, and it was called *The West's Plan B: Securing the Realm.* And it's about, as empire shrinks, what it will do is resource and geography grabs. Because there are some things it's going to need in order to protect itself and stay strong as this other world is developing outside of its grasp, right? Which is why the Greenland, the Canada, the Venezuela, all these energy grabs are because of this—securing the realm, the plan B as empire shrinks. You know, so I think, yeah, I think we're in for very difficult times. These are countries that very, very cavalierly use false flags as well. If they want to sway the British public a certain way, you know, blame it on the Russians, because the British now are tiring of the constant war with Russia.

They'll put some bombs on, you know, public transportation. I wouldn't put anything past them. I'm not being dramatic at all, I'm just giving you clear examples of where these players—okay, empire and its proxies—have bombed actual infrastructure and tried to blame it on others. Okay, so that's what you should be prepared for. And don't think it's going to happen in just brown countries, because to sway the perception of their publics—okay, propagandizing their own populations, which you all know they do—they're going to have to terrify you, which means terrorize you, okay, into supporting ridiculous policy decisions. So I do think this is where things are headed. Meanwhile, yeah, the rest of the world is plowing ahead with sovereign projects and sovereign decisions. It's a very exciting time. But, yeah, I think there's a lot of hell we have to traverse through before we get to the good stuff.

#Danny

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Well, and, you know, with that said, Charmaine, there's the, you know, there's the fact that you have this very deep contradiction of the U.S. empire doing exactly what you said, citing the article there about the empire's plan B and resource grabbing. What's so interesting about resource grabbing is that it actually is an incredibly backward form of, I guess you could say, economic terrorism. But if you want to just stick to economic development terms, by resource grabbing in a period where the overall economy of especially the United States empire—this big capitalist empire—is actually shrinking, its industrial capacity has shrunk incredibly over the last several decades.

Its growth has stagnated to such a high degree, and it actually does rely upon finance, Wall Street, and, of course, oil and really low value-added—but once critical to its own economic infrastructure, the kind of resources that is. It is both, of course, a type of, in a kind of attempt to power project, but it power projects on this basis of actual decline and relative weakness and a continued path toward collapse, because all of the industrial power is going toward the East. That's where all of the development is actually happening—from China, and of course now Russia—all of the corridors you're talking about, all of that is going to fuel industrial development.

That's where actually all the growth is, in that direction. And then you have a lot of what really is both, of course, inhumane, genocidal, disgusting, morally, politically reprehensible, but also wasteful,

in a sense. You have Israel, just to protect U.S. power in the region, it gets the green light to militarily, you know, absolutely devastate and destroy the lives of Palestinians, Lebanese. But all that is very wasteful in many ways because it does not bring real development back to the core of the empire.

Actually, what it does is it tries to spoil, through utter destruction, the development of the East by terrorizing and destroying people's lives. That is kind of where I see the empire at right now, and that does not... Some are saying, wow, look, the U.S. through its Navy and Israel through its, you know, green lights, unaccountability, they're both able to, through October 7th and then the Iran war, you know, reconsolidate power. I don't see it that way. I actually see this as a lot of power projection out of a kind of desperation. But, you know, as we head into the last five minutes here, what are your thoughts about this?

#Sharmine Narwani

Yeah. I think in order to figure out where we're going, you have to look at the strongest players on the world stage and look at how they will make decisions in crises. And you can usually do that by looking at their core interests and their core interests only. No alliances, nothing like that. I just think it's become so obvious, at least to me, that China, Russia, Iran — they're on the same page exactly with the core interests: preserving sovereignty and territorial integrity. And, you know, I think Trump's trip to Beijing and meeting with Xi Jinping was very telling in that, you know, I feel like he got nothing.

I know the headlines were like, oh, soybeans and Boeings, right? The Chinese came out and said, no, no, no decisions have been made yet, right? Number one. Number two, even on Iran, which is the other question people were asking consistently, journalists were asking Trump. He said, we're on the same page on Iran. What did he say? He said, we want the war to end, or the Chinese are asking for the war to end. We both want free passage through the Strait of Hormuz, and then he threw in something about the Chinese agreeing with us on no tolls. By the way, this is where language is meant to confuse us. There are no tolls.

If you look at Iran's proposal, which, granted, is not out there — we at The Cradle have a draft that was sent to Parliament, but it could be very different when it comes out of Parliament, so we didn't publish it. The draft actually talks about what the charges will be for. They will be for securing passageway, they will be for environmental damage, they will be for actually checking cargo, they will be for services rendered. It's not a toll, it isn't at all. Of course, the Chinese said no tolls won't be accepted, because then they can do it in the Strait of Malacca, right? Then everyone can just charge tolls. No, tolls are not the way forward. They're actual services that Iran will provide. So, um, I forgot the question, Danny.

#Danny

It goes along with the question of some people seeing the U.S. and Israel coming into October 7th and the Iran war, kind of this period from 2023 until now.

#Danny

As, uh, being in a better position because of all the violence and destruction, everything that they're causing, um, but it seems like there are these roots, there's this—there are things happening in the background of the broader sphere that, uh, show a different story.

#Sharmine Narwani

So the three main actors in Eurasia are on a different track. And they have—it's not just now, it's not just because of this war. They have been on this track for, you know, at least a decade and a half, and looking for alternative situations. Much slower before, but conflict always accelerates things. The Syrian war accelerated these three countries coming together and, you know, coordinating UN Security Council meetings, vetoes, and et cetera, BRICS statements and SCO statements. The coordination became—and then, you know, it continues. Gaza, the Ukraine war, and now the Iran–U.S. war, the Israeli war against Iran, have all accelerated the coordination, the understandings. But in these 15 years, so much has happened. So much infrastructure has been built.

So many countries that were averse to maybe dealing too much with each other have seen the upsides, right? It hasn't been overnight. And this just really is a slam dunk for so many in the Global South, seeing what the Americans and Israelis did with no reason, violating international law, not getting condemned for it, right? Everybody wants a different outcome. And the outcome doesn't make you pro-Iran necessarily or anti-American, but an outcome that ensures peace and stability, maybe under the guardianship of different countries—not necessarily Russia and China, maybe Pakistan and Egypt make the Saudis feel better or the Kuwaitis feel better. Do you know what I mean? But overseen in terms—same with nuclear inspections in Iran. Why does the IAEA have to do it?

Don't two nuclear states, China and Russia, have every incentive not to have Iran develop a nuclear weapon? They have condemned it before. They've condemned and sought to sanction Iran for any kind of weaponization. So they should be trusted by Gulf countries. I mean, there are so many other ways to create win-wins for everyone. And the thing is, the cat is out of the bag because people have now seen these, have been privy to one national destruction after another national destruction. And there's no continent safe from American interventions now. So yeah, everybody's tired. And now, of course, people, regular people, are feeling the pain. And it didn't just come from the Iran war, which is like a new level of pain. It came during the Ukraine war. It comes from all these things.

The fact that nothing is being produced in the Western world—it's just finance capitalism, deals on paper to help each other's quarterly earnings, the billionaire companies—where citizens can now see. I mean, when Trump did his China tariffs, everybody suddenly got to see on Twitter what China

really was, and people were like, "Wow, I want to go there, and I want to buy my stuff there," you know? So the world is changing so much, and each of these conflicts accelerates that change and further isolates the U.S. to the point where it's isolated to a certain degree even in Europe. You know, it's mostly its base—its Atlantic base, essentially. So yeah, I think hard times ahead. And then, you know, the age of Aquarius, as they say. Beyond that.

#Danny

Yeah, and we'll have, you know, a lot of... And Danny, one more thing.

#Sharmine Narwani

The new actors, they have strategic minds and they have efficiency, right? The Americans have neither. Okay. And I think part of your last question is also like, how will Israel react to this? Israel, like Trump, the leader of the United States, and Netanyahu, the leader of Israel, are very much ensconced in domestic perception bubbles. Okay. Which is why they keep getting everything wrong. And they no longer have strategy, and they no longer have efficiency. And this is why it's going to slip away from them.

#Danny

Yeah. Yeah, and, you know, a lot of, of course, because Trump has been president since, what, 2020? I guess January 1, 2025. So a lot of U.S. foreign policy focuses on his administration. And because of the way he behaves and the way a lot of his administration behaves, a lot of this is more like a personal thing. The political figures—Trump and his administration—they reflect everything that you just said. They reflect this kind of desperation. They reflect this real decline happening. But it's not a people thing, it's not a personal thing. We will see the political madness of the U.S. empire get worse and worse. I think we haven't seen anything yet. Donald Trump, I think, is just the beginning. The madness will get worse and worse the more the developments that you just spoke of accelerate. And these are unstoppable developments. Some say worry about the danger of nuclear war, but even nuclear war...

I mean, that's a major catastrophe on a level we haven't witnessed, even because World War II was a particular nuclear question—devastating and, of course, abhorrent. But this will be far different, with multiple nuclear states and a different world order afoot. So, yes, we're in for a rocky ride, especially in the U.S. and the West, and the countries that are being targeted the most by them. But yeah, we are also in very interesting times, and I think historic times as well. So, Charmaine, I want to make sure everybody knows that The Cradle is in the video description—your publication and the publication of your colleagues. And everyone should follow it, support it. It's in the video description. Hit the like button, everyone. I want to thank everyone who gave super chats today. I'll pull them up as I give it back to Charmaine if you have any final words for our audience.

#Sharmine Narwani

I think we're going to have war back on. That's the sad part, but I think Iran is also likely to emerge even more strongly after this round because it has more cards to play than the Americans and Israelis. So unfortunately, I hate to say that, but I think war is back on, and also things in Lebanon are going to get a lot more dire because the moment you're open to talking with the Israelis or Americans, they basically kick you to the corner, and the Lebanese government has made the mistake of doing this. So yeah, I don't think conflict is going to go away in this region anytime soon. But I do think the next round of conflict will be even more decisive than this one.

#Danny

Yeah. Yeah. Well, Hezbollah is in for what seems like a very long resistance about now. And Iran, I believe them. I think I've been saying it for years—believe Iran when they say things. But now, yeah, if war restarts, Iran's retaliation will, of course, be devastating. And it will—I think, I don't see any possibility for how a restart of the war on Iran doesn't facilitate an almost immediate economic recession or depression worldwide that will, if not more immediately, hit the United States really, really, really hard. It will have global ramifications, but it'll hit the United States really hard because I don't think... I don't think Americans, especially ordinary Americans, are going to be used to this combination of war and economic recession happening at the same time.

#Sharmine Narwani

But they just voted out the Republicans that could show them a new way. I just literally—I was like, really?

#Danny

How does that happen?

#Sharmine Narwani

It was rigged.

#Danny

Yeah, well, Thomas Massie, for sure. But that was Israeli-U.S. coordination there. But yeah, this will shake, hopefully—and I believe it—ordinary Americans into understanding more so that you're not going to elect away this problem. But without further ado, Charmaine, thanks for coming on. We're going to head out together. Hit the like button. The Cradle is in the video description. Thanks to all the viewers and moderators who came today. The moderators will moderate the chat. Go to the video description as well to find a place to support this channel. But most importantly, hit the like

button. That's a free way of boosting the program after we're done. I'll be back tomorrow, same time, 12 noon Eastern, and I will let you know what's going on soon. All right. Take care. Bye-bye.