

Matthew Hoh: The US Just Ran Out of Cruise Missiles – What Happens Next?

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#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today's Wednesday, May 27th, 2026, and our dear friend, our brother, Matthew Hoh, is here with us. Welcome back, Matt.

#Matthew

Hi, Nima. Good to see you.

#Speaker 03

Very nice to see you.

#Nima

Matt, let me start with Donald Trump. Just moments ago, I think an hour ago, he said something about Oman. Yeah, it's just amazing to me. The guy is picking a fight with Oman, the only country in the Middle East that is not willing to pick any sort of fight with anybody on this earth.

#Matthew

Right. Right. If there's like an adult in the room, if there's anyone who's reasonable, if there's anyone who people should be buying, you know, soccer shirts from to represent their team, it's Oman. They're the only ones with any decency in all of this. Right. Yeah. He's picking on them. Yeah.

#Nima

And you remember how they tried so hard before this war happened?

#Matthew

Well, and for years, I mean, going back years, the Omanis have been the in-between between the Americans and the Iranians. They have proved very adept at it, very competent at it. They've been incredibly trustworthy. American administration after administration has utilized the Omanis to speak with the Iranians and, of course, to help pursue negotiations such as in 2015 or in this last year. And, yeah, this is how they get treated. You know, Oman should turn around and say, you know what? We had said before we're not interested in collecting tolls from the Strait of Hormuz with Iran, but you know what? Now we're going to.

And people should realize, too, that the Americans have a very serious military presence in Oman, on the Gulf of Oman, on the coast. I think it's Umm Qasr is the name of the port. But it is an important American naval base. And so it does fit in the constellation of the American empire over there. So this isn't also a case of the Omanis not just always being contrary or not going along with the Americans. No, they're fully within the American order, but they've demonstrated an ability to work with others, and particularly with the Iranians, that nobody else can. And here is Trump trashing them.

#Nima

I think that's the only base in the Middle East that wasn't hit by Iranian missiles, it seems.

#Matthew

I think it was hit in the very first days. And it became an issue because the American ships, particularly the destroyers, would have gone there to refuel—not to refuel, they refuel at sea—but they would have been replenished or resupplied with missiles there. And my understanding is that after those initial attacks, the American Navy said, no, we can't put our ships there. They'll be vulnerable. And so that's why they were going all the way to Diego Garcia. So, yeah, no, the Iranians made that off-limits as well. Someone can correct us in the comments, but, like, I'm pretty certain in the first days, Oman was hit.

#Nima

Oman was hit, but it was hit at the port, you know, at one of the ports. It was a tanker trying to change the law of, you know, the mechanism of the Strait of Hormuz, the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz. That was it. I have never heard of an American base being hit by Iranian missiles. I don't know if someone in the audience can relate, right, or can tell us. From the Persian media, from the English media, alternative media, mainstream media, I have never heard of any American bases. Maybe I could very well.

#Matthew

I could very well be wrong.

#Nima

Here's what Donald Trump said.

#Matthew

According to—this is not the best source. Okay, Al Jazeera English reported that a drone strike ignited a fire at—no, that's Iraq's Umm al-Qasr. Let's see.

#Nima

Yeah, that's true.

#Speaker 03

Who wants control of the Strait of Hormuz? Would you accept a short-term deal that allows Iran and Oman to control the Strait, and would they have to open it immediately, or would you be open to that happening over a period of time?

#Speaker 04

No, the Strait's going to be open to everybody.

#Speaker 03

And who would control it?

#Speaker 04

It's international waters. Nobody's going to control it. We're going to watch over it. We'll watch over it. But nobody's going to control it. That's part of the negotiation that we have. They would like to control it. Nobody's going to control it. It's international waters. And Oman will behave just like everybody else. So we'll have to blow them up. Yeah.

#Matthew

Yeah. And that was right on the tail, though, of Iranian television reporting that, you know, a deal had been reached or a memorandum of understanding had been reached. And the White House said, no, that's not true. And then Donald Trump says this. So it doesn't look as if there's, you know, any type of agreement, particularly on the key issues such as who's going to control the Strait of Hormuz. Right. I mean, you've got this disagreement. And so all the other things, too, you know,

we've seen so many different reports over the last days of what this MOU looked like. I mean, on my X feed today, I had two separate sources that were good, you know, reliable sources generally, but basically reporting two different MOUs. You know, one included sanctions relief, the other one included frozen assets being returned, you know, things like that where obviously, I just can't see the Americans agreeing to any of that.

#Nima

I just really can't. Exactly, same feeling here. And I think when it comes to the Strait of Hormuz, somehow Donald Trump is lying, because he somehow accepted that Iran can control the Strait of Hormuz, or Iran and Oman and the region can control it, but he's not confessing that. I don't know what's going on. From what I've heard from Persian media, it seems that they have agreed on a new mechanism in the Strait of Hormuz. The only thing was the toll. Iran, they're calling it a toll system. It's not a toll system. It's going to be an administrative or something, environmental fee.

#Matthew

Yeah, which actually is part of international law, as I've learned recently, that you can't charge tolls for innocent passage, but you can charge fees for things like environmental maintenance costs. So yeah, they're allowed to do that.

#Nima

Yeah. This is the way that twists the problem, you know, to somehow the difficulties they're facing, the differences that they're facing in the Strait of Hormuz, I think. I don't know what's the point of bombing Oman, by the way, because why do you need to say that? The guy is so much out of control. He doesn't know what he's talking about.

#Matthew

No, I mean, he just rattled off about how UAE and Bahrain need to join the Abraham Accords. And, you know, they're in it. I think, you know, the other day he was going on about how, why are people concerned about how long this war is? You know, the Korean War was seventy years ago. You know, the Korean War was 1950 to 1953. I think he said the Iraq War was twelve years. You know, the American occupation was 2003 to 2011. You know, he said Afghanistan was ten years long. I mean, he just didn't have anything correct. I mean, so, yeah. I mean, but then now this, he's all upset with Oman, he's threatened. I think what he said was, "I'm going to blow up Oman." You know, I mean, this is what the world is dealing with — this man here, who, everything is about himself. And the only thing he can do is offer threats of violence, right?

Or I don't know, but I just don't think a deal is coming regardless. Even if he was to be removed, I don't see how the American administration makes a deal with this. So I agree that the mechanism is

there for Iran to administer it. And, you know, the Americans have a choice now: either allow Iran to do that and allow traffic to resume through the Strait of Hormuz, or don't, and then suffer the consequences of that strait remaining closed. And we're going to have those consequences anyway. Even if everything goes back to normal today, which it won't, you're still going to have repercussions, economic consequences that stretch through 2027. So for the Americans here, it's not bad enough that they started a war that they couldn't win, but they also started a war that they couldn't get out of.

#Speaker 04

Yeah.

#Nima

When he was reporting on Iran, he said Venezuela — we destroyed their navy, the Venezuelan navy, their air force. There is nothing there. He mixed Venezuela with Iran. Yeah.

#Matthew

Well, Iran was supposed to go the way Venezuela went, right? I mean, that was the whole idea — that this would be more violent, there would be much more military action and be much more kinetic. But it would be the same result, essentially a turnkey operation. The Iranian government would stay largely intact, but the leadership would have bowed down to the Americans, would have bent the knee. And then failing that, of course, we discussed this many times, this idea that if that didn't occur, then there'd be uprisings. Right. And I haven't heard him say it in a couple of weeks now, but for a while, once a week, Trump was bringing up the fact that he had given the Kurds weapons and they hadn't used them and how ungrateful they were and everything else, you know.

But, yeah, I mean, it's just the Americans here are really in a position where, how do they get out of it? How do they get out of this? I think the political realities in the U.S. are such that it's impossible for the Americans to offer any concessions. The only concession being that you pivot to Cuba. You take attention away from here. You blame the Europeans for not doing their part, or blame the Gulf states for not doing their part, whatever, and then allow things to go back to normal. And hopefully nobody notices. You know, I think that's the only play the Americans really have at this point. Because, again, politically, I mean, they've got no leverage over Iran.

They can't force Iran to do anything. They go back to war and, what, have to stop the war again in four or five weeks because now they've almost completely run out of munitions. In that five weeks, they've run out of all their Patriot and THAADs, right? No longer have any more JASSM missiles. Yeah, I mean... you just don't see what options they have here. And politically for the Americans,

this idea of, you know, the reaction over the weekend from the possibility of a deal being signed, you know, the hatred, the animosity, the hatred, just the article of faith that Iran is an adversary. It's a great evil.

Iran can never be allowed to exist except, you know, I just don't see a way out of this for the Nima. You know, I mean, you saw not just the Republicans attacking Donald Trump, but you saw the Democrats attacking Donald Trump for trying to end the war. You know, and the Democratic angle is that, well, maybe if he does end the war... First of all, they want the war to continue because they want to have a really bad economy in the United States come November. But the Democrats also believe that if Donald Trump signs a deal, then AIPAC and the Israel lobby will punish Donald Trump by withdrawing support from some of his candidates. And AIPAC and the Israel lobby will shift that support to pro-Israel Democratic candidates, right?

That's how AIPAC operates. That's what they've done for decades. There's no reason why they wouldn't do this here. And so certainly the DNC, the Democratic National Committee, understands that. And that's why you see Democrats going on the cable news shows, you know, condemning the idea of ending this war, you know, all in phrases that are in line with the Israel lobby. This idea that, you know, the other day watching Cory Booker and Debbie Wasserman Schultz, they might as well have been spokespeople for the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, right? They might have been just actually, you know, they probably were reading the AIPAC talking points they were given.

#Nima

Matt, when we talk... you know, you remember the days of the Biden administration, huge chaos in foreign policy. And we knew who was behind those policies — Antony Blinken, Jake Sullivan, Victoria Nuland. When it came to that decision by the Pentagon not to send long-range missiles to Ukraine, it was Lloyd Austin and the people in the Pentagon who decided that. Today, we don't know who's running the show in Washington. And so, in my opinion, I don't know if Donald Trump knows about the same thing you just mentioned — about the ammunition, the stockpile, the cruise missiles, the shortage of cruise missiles. The guy somehow, every time he talks, he doesn't have that much patience to listen to these details. That's why I'm telling you, my opinion is this: who's running the show in Washington, in your opinion?

#Matthew

I don't know. I mean, that's a great question, right? At least with the Biden administration, there was an understanding of, you know, Joe Biden wasn't running it, you know, but at least you understood that you had Tony Blinken, you had Lloyd Austin, you had Jake Sullivan sitting on top of these institutions, on top of these bureaucracies, and the American empire, the American government was functioning as usual. So we didn't like what we saw. We didn't like the support for

an unwinnable war in Ukraine. We didn't like the support for Israel's genocide, but we could be assured of some degree of certainty in what they were going to do and how they were going to do it, right?

And in this case, you don't have this at all. And, you know, we've brought this up before as well — this idea that in 2024, Vladimir Putin gets asked, who do you support, Joe Biden or Donald Trump? And Vladimir Putin says he'd rather see Joe Biden reelected. Right? I mean, because the idea being that Joe Biden is predictable, even though Joe Biden was obviously going to be more hostile to Russia than Donald Trump was, and that Joe Biden was going to continue American support for Ukraine. Right? You know, Vladimir Putin preferred that to the unpredictability of what Donald Trump would bring.

And I think that is what we're seeing across the world, right? That there is now the American empire, for everything that was wrong with it, for all the damage and destruction it caused, for all the exploitation, the extraction it takes, right? And the fact that I think most countries were understanding it was hollow, as we're seeing now, that it can't live up to its promises. Its military is overextended, et cetera. You know, there is the predictability that those in power could be understood. And in this case, you have Donald Trump and his court that have no allegiance to any ideology, no allegiance to any type of institutions.

The only allegiance they have is to themselves. You know, Trump's court is full of sycophants, phantoms, fellow con men, those who you can point to and say, ah, no, Pete Hegseth, he's got an ideology. You know, his is this crusade, this white Christian crusader fantasy — that's his ideology. So those, you mean, like, that's the best we can do in terms of pointing to somebody who says, okay, you know, Hegseth, I can kind of predict what he's going to say about something. You know, it's based upon this cartoon in his head about him as some type of, you know, crusader taking part in the great cosmic struggle of, you know, a clash of civilizations, et cetera.

So, yeah, I mean, who's in charge? And this is another reason why we won't see a deal, Nima, right? Because the incoherence among the Americans is—how are they going to get anything done? I mean, you know, in fact, the people who are leading the deal, Witkoff and Kushner, you know, I don't know enough about Witkoff to describe him as, you know, essentially a shill for Israel. That's what Kushner is. Witkoff walks around with a beeper given to him by, I forget who, Miriam Adelson maybe. I forget who gave him this beeper, supposedly. It's a direct connection to Mossad, obviously. I mean, so, I mean, there is that.

And Witkoff is an ignoramus. And Witkoff is in a position that he never, I mean, I think Jeremy Scahill quoted the Iranians as saying when they were dealing with him, it was like having a fourth grader sitting at your table. You know, I mean, like just this—his purpose was, this is ridiculous. This person being here, he doesn't know anything. So, you know, but I think both of them, Kushner and Witkoff, you can define by self-interest as well. I mean, certainly you look at what's happening with Gaza, the Board of Peace. I mean, that was just one big grift, one racket to line their pockets.

Of course, it was to establish Israel's peace. Up to now, victory in Gaza, you know, ensures that Israel controls 60 percent of Gaza. That's part of the border peace. But a lot of it's to line their pockets. And there's a Financial Times article just today or yesterday or sometime, you know, getting into this about how nobody knows where a lot of the money has gone. But of the, you know, few billion that has gone to it, nobody knows where that went, that kind of thing. So, I mean, this is the problem I think that we see—how do nations deal with the United States? And it's very, very troubling.

#Nima

I think the point that you just mentioned is so important. You remember, the JCPOA took two years, day and night, with technical teams coming together, negotiating, talking to each other to reach a deal—something like the JCPOA. Where is that? Right.

#Matthew

There's not anything like it. And I don't think, Nima, there's an understanding or appreciation for that. I think they really do believe—the White House and its people really do believe—that negotiation should be able to be done in one day. They really do believe that. You know, I think they really were frustrated by what was occurring in Oman, that they were on their sixth round of negotiations, each round of negotiation being, what, a day and a half, essentially? You know, I mean, but I think they were genuinely frustrated by that.

I think maybe they really did think the Iranians were holding out and were being difficult and being frustrating, purposely being frustrating on this, because I don't think they have any concept of what this actually entails. And I think J.D. Vance's trip to Islamabad back in April, you know, they had a 22-hour session. And I think the White House really believes, excuse me, that that 22-hour session, or whatever it was, was Herculean. That was an incredible display of—right? I mean, there's no way, if you can't get a negotiation done in 22 hours of talking to somebody, it's never going to happen, right? They're obviously here in bad faith.

#Speaker 05

I think that's how they really think.

#Matthew

I really do. And I think, you know, certainly if you were to go in, you were to say you write something up in a nice executive summary and everything and say, Mr. President, you know, here's how the JCPOA occurred, they wouldn't read it. They wouldn't care. It actually took, as you said, two years. So again, another reason why I don't think there's going to be a deal. And the Americans and the Iranians are talking to each other via the Qataris, via the Pakistanis. I'm not sure at this point

really what role Oman is playing in it. I don't know if any at all. I think it's really a Pakistani and Qatari thing.

#Nima

Basically, they're talking through the Pakistani government.

#Matthew

Yeah, yeah, and the Qataris are very, you know, the Qataris for years have wanted to be players in all these kinds of things. So, um, but yeah, well, you know, it's just, I think we're going to be talking like this, you and I, every week until sometime in August. And then I think at some time in August, you're going to have that economic pressure that is also then the political pressure in the U.S. with the coming midterms. But also two things: one, in July, the oil inventories run out, right? So the oil that was afloat, the oil that the governments were releasing from their strategic petroleum reserves, all that runs out by the beginning of July. And then that's going to push this price spike in oil.

Because, I mean, listen to the oil and gas folks. You know, almost to a person, with the exception maybe of some of the hacks on CNBC, almost to a person, they're shocked that oil is already not at 140, 150, right, for futures. And spot prices, they've been paying 125, 130, you know, a barrel. And the difference between, you know, current price—what you pay for a barrel of oil today—versus what you pay for a barrel of oil for 60-day delivery or whatever the delivery window is, you know, there's this dissonance. It doesn't match up. And I think that's all going to shift dramatically come July. And then you're going to have that pressure then on the Americans, the American market, the inflationary pressure. You know, gasoline is going to hit gas.

If oil goes to \$150 a barrel, that means, you know, American average gasoline in the U.S. probably goes to \$6 a gallon. At that point, you know, and that's just, that's national, so in California they're paying, you know, \$11 a gallon, those poor people, right? But, you know, the other thing too is that by August we'll start really feeling the pressure of all those secondary byproducts and downstream products of oil and gas and other things and other commodities that come out of the Persian Gulf that have been shut off. So that deficit that we understand for whether it's aluminum or sulfur or urea or helium or copper or whatever it is, all those major commodities that the Persian Gulf exports a significant amount of, I think, you know, that latency is going to be dissipating and you're going to have that inflationary pressure then because of the supply chain shortages starting to really be felt. I want to say probably maybe sometime in the summer, right?

So that's why I'm thinking August is when the Americans, and really the campaign season for the November midterm elections, usually begins at the beginning of September. We have a holiday in the United States called Labor Day. It's the first Monday in September, and that's typically when traditional campaign season begins in the U.S. And so I think the idea is that they're going to want to have something done by then. Otherwise, they are going to have a real problem in the elections.

The Republicans' only saving grace in all this is that they're running against the Democrats. And if there is ever a political party out there that could ruin the opportunity that has been given to them through Republican mismanagement, through Republican policies, through, you know, the economy, all these things, it's the current American Democratic Party.

Anyone who could just basically ensure that it's, you know, they ruin a good thing, it's going to be them. So I think that's why we and I have been having these conversations, you know, reports of deals, intermittent clashes, you know, the Americans sink boats, the Iranians shoot down drones. I think that's the way it's going to be until August. And then at that point, there will be some type of probably silent agreement where, you know, it's known to the shippers and the insurance companies that the Iranians and Americans have a deal, and the Iranians are not going to shoot your boats, and so traffic is going to resume.

I think traffic is going to slowly pick up until then anyway, but, you know, not at the level necessary. And I think the other side of it then is the Americans launched this thing on Cuba, and hopefully everyone's paying attention to Cuba and not to Iran. There's also this idea that Donald Trump is going to restart his ICE raids on American communities. So that would certainly take attention away. So whatever they can do to distract from what's occurring, but it's going to be real hard to distract Americans from what has occurred there and who did it when it's costing them six dollars or whatever a gallon for gasoline, as well as all the other inflationary pressures we're going to feel, and our interest rates, and et cetera, et cetera.

#Nima

Yeah, even the release of UFO files.

#Matthew

Yeah.

#Nima

It distracts people from what's going on.

#Matthew

Yeah, I mean, not that you do. You get them, you're like, you see that, and every once in a while you're like, man, maybe there's really going to be something. Like, I can't tell that. It looks like just the more, you know what I mean? Sure, you want to tell me it's a UFO, it's fine. There's like a white piece of, there's a white blob in the middle of this picture that, you know, looks like a streetlight to

me, you know? I mean, so, because, yeah, I would love to see, and if that's, if they, maybe they're holding, maybe that's what they do. Maybe they're holding off on the really salacious, right, the really like, hey, here's a picture.

Here's, legitimately, here's E.T. We've got him. He lives in a bunker in Nevada, you know, that kind of thing. Like maybe that's what they're going to do in August to try and distract from six-dollar-a-gallon gasoline. Because I don't see—I mean, I just don't see a deal happening, and I don't see what's going to change and who's going to come in. What's the deus ex machina that's going to resolve all this? The Chinese don't seem like they're interested in doing this, right? You know, I mean, coming in and, like, putting an end to it and, you know, being peacemaker and everything else and resolving it. I think the Chinese, they don't like it. They don't like these disruptions.

They don't like this uncertainty. They want a stable world economy. They want stable global transit. But there's a part of them that actually is happy to see—not part, but they're very happy to see—the United States be humiliated, for seeing the multipolar world advance, you know, at a gallop now, where it was coming along at a normal pace. This has accelerated that advance, the closure of the 20th century, the establishment of the 21st century, all these things. Yeah, I think the Chinese are more than happy to see all that. So why are they going to intervene to stop something that they see, even though it's painful, as basically being in their long-term favor?

Yeah, so I don't know. I just don't see—I wish someone would tell me why we should have any hope that this thing resolves. And then there's always the possibility that the Americans say, oh God, we're running low on our oil inventories, supply shortages are showing up, inflation is going to blow up next month, the Fed is going to have to raise interest rates, whatever, you know. And then they say, OK, we're going to go back to war. And that's the real danger in this, that they don't get a deal, then they'll go back to war to at least show that they're doing something, even though the war is not going to deliver anything.

You know, in fact, it's going to make things worse because what can you do? Well, you have to do more than you did last time. What does that mean? We have to destroy Iran's infrastructure. What's Iran going to do? It's going to destroy all the infrastructure throughout the region. What does that mean? That means we don't have oil and gas facilities in the Persian Gulf for the next five, six years. What does that mean? That means we're in a depression, a worldwide depression. You know, I mean, so that's the very real danger that's sitting in front of us. I mean, that makes \$6-a-gallon gasoline seem, you know, not that big a concern.

#Nima

Matt, here is what Pete Hegseth today said about Iranian missiles and drones.

#Speaker 05

And so whether it's their Navy that's at the bottom of the Persian Gulf, their Air Force, their air defenses, or their defense industrial base, they may have missiles, but they can't build more right now. And they can't build more drones right now. And they can't build more ships. And so they came and cried uncle to talk, which Steve and Jared and the Vice President and others are doing so ably. And during that time, we put in a world-class blockade.

#Nima

I can confirm that what he said about producing missiles and drones is a total lie.

#Matthew

Right. It makes no sense. Yeah, yeah.

#Nima

I don't know who's going to buy this and what would be the outcome of these sorts of arguments on his part. Is he producing this sort of information to feed some sort of audience that he's aiming at? What is that? Because if that's the calculation on the part of the United States, that's a big lie in my opinion.

#Matthew

Yeah, you don't know what these people actually believe. I don't know if you watched it, but John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt debated Victoria Nuland and Mike Pompeo. And, you know, as expected, Walt and Mearsheimer won the debate. You know, they actually won the debate in terms of votes. But also, too, if you watch it, it's... it's humiliating. I mean, Pompeo and Nuland aren't able to offer anything other than tropes and assertions based upon the principles of American exceptionalism, and this idea that we're involved in a Manichean struggle of good versus evil. I mean, everything comes back to those. Essentially, that's where their certainty, that's where their smugness comes from.

And, you know, you have to understand, and Scott Horton had tweeted this out. At one point, Victoria Nuland talks about how if Iran were to get a nuclear weapon, what does that mean? Well, that means the Israelis would have to get one. You know, and the way she says it, it's, you know, as if she doesn't actually know that Iran—excuse me, Israel—has nuclear weapons. And, you know, very possibly she'd just be doing her duty and protecting that, you know, decades-old lie. But there's also a part of me that believes she may not know that they have it, that these people in Washington, D.C., the thing that matters is loyalty, right?

Whether it's to your party, to ideology, to a person, but overall loyalty to the American empire. And, I mean, you see that with what Pete Hegseth is saying there. You see that with the assertions from,

you know, Barack Obama officials about how we were winning the war in Afghanistan, George W. Bush officials about how the war in Iraq was going. Just so detached from reality. You know, and Nuland actually, almost immediately after she says this thing about Israel would have to get nuclear weapons, implying they don't have them now and implying that she's lying to cover it up, or she actually maybe doesn't know.

And again, I think it's possible she doesn't know because she is in this bubble. Then she goes on to say how the Iraq and Afghan wars made the world a better place, that they were necessary. She makes a caveat about, "I'm not going to defend all of what happened with the Iraq war, but it's, you know, cannot be contested"—you know, I'm paraphrasing her—that the Iraq war and the Afghan war made it so that those countries could not threaten their neighbors. You know, if Saddam Hussein was still in power, if al-Qaeda was still in power—al-Qaeda was never in power, the Taliban, the Afghan Taliban, al-Qaeda, two completely separate beasts. But I mean, you know, you see that there is this—what is the most existential aspect of these people—is their loyalty. And in order to have that type of loyalty and survive, because if you become exposed to what's actually occurring in the world, if you understand the history, if you understand the context, if you understand what is really occurring, that loyalty comes into conflict with that knowledge, and that is unsustainable.

It creates such a dissonance that nobody could survive that. So that's why I think these people remain purposely ignorant, right? They stick to the narrative. They're in positions now where everyone below them who provides them with the information only provides information that goes with the narrative. And many of them are also psychopathic, and those two things—being ignorant and being psychopathic—are not exclusionary, right? And so I think you see that with Nuland and Pompeo, right? In the year 2026, how can someone say that the Iraq war made the world a better place? You know, it's equivalent to saying that it's OK to murder somebody because that person may spread a disease or that person may get cancer. I mean, you can't argue with someone like that.

It's so irrational and so detached as well, not just from morals and ethics, international law, but also from what actually occurred, what actually happened. Uh, and so, uh, I think when you look at, you hear Hegseth saying these things, and as you said, no, it's simply not true. First of all, the drones—they can manufacture those things in people's basements. Yeah, I mean, like, Ukraine is producing them in homes, and Ukraine is a great example. I mean, Ukraine just sent, what, 500 more drones at Russia just yesterday or whatever it was, and they had a huge drone attack a couple of days ago. And you see where the Ukrainians are producing a couple million drones a year. Many of those are being produced in Europe, but many, many of them are being produced in Ukraine.

And the Russians can't stop that. The Russians can't stop that, right? The Russians, with their mass drone and missile fleet, for whom the idea of stopping Ukraine's use of drones is key to any strategy for victory for Russia in Ukraine—whether it's to actually allow some kind of advance on the front and finally take the rest of Donetsk—they've got to do something about the Ukrainian drones. Or just, hey, just stop having them close our airports, stop having them terrorize our civilians. This is not—we don't want this kind of thing. And the Russians can't do it. You know, I mean, and so the

idea that a five-week air campaign where, first of all, half of our airstrikes couldn't even reach half of Iran, right?

The northern part of Iran and the northeastern part of Iran were inaccessible to American and Israeli airstrikes if we didn't have the aircraft or really the standoff missiles to reach. So God knows what they have up there, the Iranians, you know, as well as that we understand the Iranians have prepared for this war for decades, right? So we know that they built these facilities within mountains and designed them to withstand air attacks. No one knows particularly what they're going to be up against. And so the idea that they can't—I mean, I might give you that maybe some of their ballistic missiles, they've lost the ability to produce maybe some of them. But I'm only just being generous there for the sake of being generous, right?

I was wrong earlier about Oman. I was convinced that in the first days Oman had gotten hit. Right. And obviously I'm wrong about that. So now I'm wrong about this. But otherwise, you know, the idea that, well, the Americans and the Israelis took out the plants that were building the rocket fuel, that were manufacturing rocket fuel, right? They took it. So they were hitting all those petrochemical facilities are one of the reasons why. And, you know, we don't think the Iranians prepared for that as well? You don't think they have other facilities or at least stockpiled a whole lot of that fuel? Yeah. I mean, and so the certainty with which these people speak, they're either ignorant or they're lying. And, you know, it's hard to know which.

#Nima

You remember Donald Trump was elected telling us his priority was to put an end to the war in Ukraine in 24 hours. And as we talk today, there are new escalations happening between Ukraine and Russia. That's why we've seen Russia, for the second time, using Russian missiles against Ukraine. And one of the main reasons for this sort of escalation is the production of drones and the way Ukraine is using those drones against Russia and hitting civilians in Russia. Where are we headed, Matt, when it comes to Ukraine?

#Matthew

No place good. No place good. And we see that, you know, this is what we've been warning about for years now — the idea that if this war isn't stopped and that there's not some collapse that occurs... You know, I mean, I've been saying for years I thought the collapse that was going to come would be an economic collapse, a budgetary collapse, which is still possible because Ukraine is short billions and billions and billions of dollars. But the idea that this war is essentially stalemated — and I know people are freaking out because I use that word — but that's essentially what you have here. You've had a slow westward progression, but even with 75% of Russian control of Donetsk, at the rate of the last four years, it's going to take three more years to get the rest of Donetsk.

So this idea that the war was going to end up escalating and becoming essentially a war of the cities is what we saw with the Iran-Iraq war, and you can talk about this much better than I can. But when that war becomes stalemated, and the same people were saying, oh, it's an attritional battle now and everything else, that's well and good, but that doesn't serve the political interests involved here. You have to demonstrate to your people that you are doing something to win this war, to knock the other side out, or at least to give them back as good as you're getting. And so, you know, this has been the concern — that it was going to escalate where, you know, the Russians were going to feel pressure to hit more Ukrainian non-military targets, you know, and then that's what you got.

So now you have had this college situation hit in Luhansk and 21 people killed. And there had already been pressure building on the Russian government because of these other attacks by Ukraine with drones all throughout Russia. And so what are you going to do about it? And so now you have this threat of the Russians now striking government buildings, now striking command and control facilities, now striking infrastructure targets that they hadn't hit before. And so what then is going to be Ukraine's response to that? And Ukraine, which is in an inferior position, they're gonna have to be more extreme in their action. And they're gonna have to demonstrate to their European backers that they should still be backed, they shouldn't be given up on. I don't think that's really gonna be a problem.

The Europeans have shown just a ravenous disregard for any type of rationality in any of this. And they are just continuing to back this. And now we're at the point where you're starting to reach, you know, we're getting through 2026, and then, hey, guess what? The American presidential election starts in November. As soon as the midterm election's over, the American presidential election basically begins. And so I think you have many Ukrainians, many Europeans that say, all we have to do is make it to January 2029. You know, it seems a bit ludicrous, but I think that's the feeling there — that if we Democrats get back the White House, then the Americans will come back and support us.

And we just saw a discharge petition passed in the House of Representatives. A discharge petition is in the American House of Representatives — the Speaker of the House, who's Mike Johnson, he decides what comes to the floor to be voted upon. And this bill to provide about a billion and a half dollars in aid to Ukraine, he wasn't going to allow it to be voted on. And so the discharge petition was put forward, a majority signed it, and it's going to be, you know, so whether or not it'll get through the Senate, I think it will pass in the Senate.

I don't think it's got a veto-proof majority, but I think, you know, this idea that here we are, where you have solid support from the Democrats for, for, uh, you know, the Ukraine war, and you still have those like Lindsey Graham and Mitch McConnell, you know, and others who are firmly invested in the Ukraine war. So yeah, this idea that maybe even before the Democrats retake the White House in 2029, the Congress that comes in in 2027 would pass things to support Ukraine, right? I think that's, you know, you're dealing with a strategy of hope here, but I think that's what they're

looking at. But this escalatory danger, though, is very real, because what could happen is the Russians will do something, the Ukrainians will respond, and then the Russians will say that wasn't enough, what we did.

We have to do more. And the real scary thing is that the Russians, who have been saying for years now, we have to start striking again, hitting those facilities in NATO countries that are providing support for these drones that are hitting us. Yeah, many are manufactured in Ukraine, but many are also supposedly manufactured in Europe, and the components and all the support, as well as the targeting and the intelligence, that all comes from NATO and from the United States. Still, the U.S. intelligence is providing support to the Ukrainians. So, you know, where does this get to? And the fact that Rubio the other day essentially said talks regarding Russia are over—over the war—are over.

And Vladimir Putin more or less said that following the Victory Day celebrations earlier this month, he doesn't see a role for the United States anymore in any of this and that the war is coming to an end. What does that mean then? How is he going to accomplish that? How is he going to—I mean, I'm very concerned about where this is heading, what this could portend, you know, what it could bring about. Certainly, you have Ukraine sending drones via the Baltic states. You have everybody upset with Belarus and, you know, this idea that Belarus is now going to invade Ukraine. I mean, all these rumors out there, as well as things that are actually occurring, don't calm anything down—they further escalate it. So yeah, this is really dangerous, Nima. I think Europe is...

#Nima

There are many things to change in Europe, in my opinion, because we've learned that Germany's ruling CDU is quietly discussing replacing Chancellor Merz. And Merz was somehow, you remember, with Olaf Scholz. And Merz was just a disaster, what he has done so far. It's not even comparable with Scholz, that guy who did nothing but just watched the sabotage of the Nord Stream pipeline and the way the German economy got destroyed during the war. And how do you see the changes in Europe, Matt? Do you think that Europe is going to somehow—the public opinion in Europe is going to move towards some sort of sanity? Or are we going to have Europe doubling down on their insane policies toward Russia?

#Matthew

I think the European leadership as it is, both at the EU and on the national levels, are going to double down on their anti-Russia policies. They see their identity as, you know, through this confrontation with Russia, right? The idea of a foreign power, a foreign tyrant that they're standing up against. You know, trying to harken back to 20th-century imagery, you know? And so I think for them as well, too, because things are going so poorly in these countries, the popularity of these—these, I mean, God, they make Donald Trump look like Beyoncé—uh, how unpopular these people are, you know what I mean?

Uh, and right, you know, and then, so I think that idea of continuing to use a foreign demon, right, to try and keep support for you, trying to, you know, use some type of grave, uh, not overseas, but grave foreign threat that supersedes any of the problems at home. Yeah, yes, we are having cost of living issues. Yes, our health care system is falling apart. Yes, we have these issues regarding migration. Yes, we have these issues regarding our infrastructure. We have real housing problems, on and on and on. But that all, you know, that doesn't matter because the Russians are pointing Russian missiles at us.

And didn't the 20th century teach us anything? If we don't stand up to them, they're going to be in Warsaw, and then they're going to be in Berlin, and then they'll be in Paris, and then they'll cross the Channel. So I think that's the messaging that the current crop of leaders in power are going to continue to use. And it will fail. It will fail. And unfortunately, you'll see support going to the AfD in Germany, to Reform in Britain, to, blanking out, Marine Le Pen's party in France. Right. I mean, you'll see support for these right-wing groups, you know, and then so then you'll just be getting a different view.

#Nima

But in France, we have a left-wing party as well. They've combined two or three left-wing parties together. We came in second place.

#Matthew

Right, exactly. Yeah. So at least in France, there was that, okay, we have a real, we have a problem here that we have to address. If you look at what happened in Britain, you know, with regards to how, you know, it was a cartoon depicting how the British Green Party's, what's his name, Zack Polanski, their leader, was described compared to how, you know, what's his name, the head of Reform was described. You know, and Polanski is basically saying we can't support a genocidal state like Israel and we have to invest in ourselves. And the British tabloids are up and down screaming he's an anti-Semite. You know, the same thing that happened to Corbyn. Meanwhile, Farage is just talking about setting up concentration camps for immigrants, and the British press is describing him as having bold new ideas. You know, I mean, and this is what we see over and over again in so many nations, right?

You know, this is, throughout the 20th and 19th centuries, this great fear of the left, this great fear of anything that could be considered socialism or anything that could be attenuated or adjacent to communism, this idea that anything that threatens corporate profits has to be destroyed. And so the corporate press, they can deal with the far right. The far right might try and shut them down because they don't like what they want to hear, but overall the far right is only going to help corporate profits. They're going to push a tax policy that the corporations are salivating over. I mean, so I think that's one of the things you have. But, you know, I mean, the willingness, though,

of the Europeans to destroy themselves. I mean, all these countries have incredibly high debt-to-GDP ratios.

Most of them, I think, are over 100 percent. And, you know, how are they talking about funding the war in Ukraine? They're going to fund the war in Ukraine by increasing their debt. How are they going to pay for their militarization? I mean, all these countries are talking about spending hundreds of billions of dollars, hundreds of billions of euros, and tens of billions of pounds more on their militaries. Well, again, they're going to pursue debt. You know, last year you had Germany, which had a debt mechanism that prevented the country essentially from running a deficit, while they removed military spending from that. I mean, so, you know, as well then, too, not just with debt, they're going to cut services.

And so you've already got a population in Europe that's been suffering for years because of austerity measures, suffering for years because of underinvestment in their own economies, in their own communities, right? In their education and health care systems, in their infrastructure, right? Because they pursued incredibly idiotic deindustrialization policies that also were coupled with, you know, allowing things to happen like the destruction of their cheap energy, you know, via the blowing up of the Nord Stream pipelines. I mean, so I just don't see anything that's telling me that these European leaders in power are all of a sudden going to become sane.

You know, the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior. And these people, their identity is tied to this foreign threat. Starmer, Macron, I mean, their whole, you know, as long as talk started about the EU, von der Leyen and Calico, I mean, don't even start on them. Their whole identity is based around opposition to Russia, based around standing up against this great foreign tyrant, right? This, you know, and for many of these countries like Britain, the idea of Russia as the enemy goes back to like the 1830s. Uh, so it's well established. It's a, I mean, so, I mean, I just don't see how anything changes there.

Um, and the far right is going to take power in some of these countries, and it's going to be a real mess. The population is going to suffer because they're going to cut budgets, they're going to cut support. Uh, there's not going to be investment in the economies, there's just going to be, uh, money provided to corporations. So it's going to be hollow. Um, and you know, you're going to have, uh, greater wealth inequality, a greater loss of quality of life, and Europe is going to resemble more and more the United States, but without a reserve currency to allow it to do as it wishes up until, you know, recently.

#Nima

To be honest, I don't think, Matt, I think the United States has its own resources. They have everything. The United States is self-sufficient in many aspects, but Europe is not that. It's not there. They're so dependent on energy. That's why the situation in the Middle East is putting them in a very desperate position, because they don't receive Russian gas and energy. They're not receiving

that from the Middle East because of the war in the Middle East. So they have no other options unless they decide to improve their relationship with Russia.

#Matthew

We produce about 13.5 million barrels a day of oil in this country. We export about 5.5 million. And I think this is one of the things Americans are going to learn — that we are part of a global market and that the American oil producers and the American government are going to chase where the money is. And so if somebody someplace else is offering more money for that oil or that refined product or what have you, or that gas, the Americans are going to ship it there. I think a lot of Americans don't know that.

#Nima

Welcome to capitalism.

#Matthew

That's exactly right. And so whatever vestige that was in Europe that was opposed to such things — whatever degrees of socialism you once had, whatever type of social welfare programs you had — and I know that's a latent term, but essentially ensuring that your societies, your communities, your people have what they need to prosper. And that's why you've seen success in many countries, because they invest in their people. I think China is a good example of that. How do you bring 400 million people out of poverty? You invest in your people. You give them education. You give them health care. You give them the ability to earn good-paying wages, right? And advance through society that way.

And Europe, I think, is going to go the opposite direction — that they're going to follow this, you know, this idea of, you know, their embrace of the neoliberal policies, I think, has not yet come to fruition. I think we're going to see, even as the rest of the world says, my God, what a mistake that is, I think you're going to see these European countries. Because I don't see the ruling parties changing that, and I don't see the parties that are coming into power — although they are populist — I just don't see AfD and Reform actually putting into practice or legislating actual real populist policies, you know, economic programs, you know, tax policies that take the burden off of people.

Right. I see them being dedicated to improving a lot of the corporations. I see bad times ahead for the American Empire, and those bad times are going to include the Europeans that have decided that they are remaining with the American Empire. We'll see what the Japanese and the South Koreans do. The Australians will stay with the American Empire. But, you know, rather than branching off on their own, as the Europeans could — although not that there would be any type of Pax Europea — like, God, if von der Leyen was head of the EU army, what would happen kind of thing? God forbid it was Kallas, you know. So we'll see. We'll see.

#Nima

Yeah. Thank you so much, Matt, for being with us today. A great pleasure, as always.

#Matthew

All right. Thank you, Nima.

#Nima

Just let me, let me just bring it up, and please go to Substack of Matt. It's Matthew Hoh. Let me, let me just bring it up here, Matt.

#Matthew

Thank you.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Nima

I want to.

#Nima

Yeah. Here.

#Matthew

I appreciate it. Thank you.

#Nima

You can go to Matt's Substack and subscribe there. I'm sure you're going to find a lot of good writing from Matt. He's cutting through the propaganda and making you think critically.

#Matthew

Thank you. I've got stuff on there going back to 2013. I need to upload my stuff that goes back to 2009. People are interested. You want to see what I was saying about Afghanistan and Libya and Syria in 2010 and 11 and 12. That's all still on Huffington Post, but I need to get it off of Huffington

Post because I'm afraid that one day I'm going to wake up and Huffington Post is going to be gone, and all that stuff I wrote back then is not going to be available any longer. It's interesting to go back and read that — what you get right, what you got wrong, how your views have changed. It's really interesting to go back and see how you've evolved — how I feel, me, to go back and see how I've evolved over the last, you know, 17 years of doing this. But I appreciate you sharing that. And of course, people should like and subscribe to your channel here on YouTube. You know, you're doing great work, and more people need to be watching you and listening to you.

#Nima

Thank you so much, Matt. Great pleasure.

#Speaker 05

Thank you.