

Anthony Aguilar: Iran Warns Israel – Leave Occupied Territories or Final Deal Is DEAD

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#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today's Friday, June 12th, 2026, and our dear friend, Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Aguilar, is here with us. Welcome, Anthony.

#Anthony

Thank you. Thank you. It's always a pleasure, and I'm looking forward to some great discussion.

#Nima

Yeah, just starting with what is going on right now, because things are moving so fast. What we've learned so far is that earlier today, Iranian media published a 14-point plan that we later discussed with Colonel Wilkerson and Larry Johnson. Later on, we learned from the Iranian foreign minister and Donald Trump himself that this is not the plan they were talking about. So what happened later is that the Iranian foreign minister had an interview on Iranian media, and what he said—the important points so far—one of them is Lebanon, one of the crucial issues. He said that if they do something, Israel must withdraw totally from Lebanon. I think that's a huge, that's a big change, in my opinion, if they do that.

The second point is the Strait of Hormuz. He said the Strait of Hormuz will be under the control of Iran and Oman. Based on international law, there would be no toll system in the Strait of Hormuz, but they have to pay some sort of fee—an administrative or environmental fee. The second point. And then the issue with the release of the Iranian frozen assets. He said that once we sign the memorandum, they have to release the Iranian frozen assets. These are three important issues for Iranians. And the lifting of sanctions, we don't know. He still didn't talk about that. It seems that's part of the deal as well. And the other important point here is that he mentioned that still in Iran, in the Iranian government, they have the Supreme National Security Council. There are some sort of divisions.

And the people who are not agreeing with some issues, I would assume with the Iranian nuclear program, and some people who are agreeing with the new text that was prepared by the Iranians. And he talked even about what has happened. He said the United States was insisting on zero enrichment. We opposed it. And then at the end, you know, they attacked us. The war happened. So the main issue—the helicopter, that could be a helicopter as well—but the main issue was zero enrichment. If you remember, Donald Trump, before the attack, said, I'm going to force them. I'm going to force them to accept the terms that I'm trying to impose on them. It was zero enrichment, based on what the Iranian foreign minister said. So we have somehow a clear picture of what's going on basically with Israel foremost, with Lebanon.

And he mentioned on all fronts—I assume he was talking about Gaza as well. It seems that the issue of Gaza and Palestine was discussed between the two sides. So, when it comes to Lebanon, Tony, you were in the region. You were in Palestine, Gaza. You know how complex the issue of Lebanon is. Because today, earlier, we had Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz saying, Israel is not going to withdraw from Lebanon, from Syria, from Gaza. That's not going to happen. It doesn't matter what Donald Trump is talking about, what the Iranians are talking about. This is the issue right now. And in my opinion, the complexity of the case between Israel and Lebanon, between Israel and Palestine, is the most important issue right now, even more important than the Strait of Hormuz and the Iranian frozen assets. Your understanding of that?

#Anthony

Well, I think what's really important to understand about these negotiations—and this is my perspective—when we hear “negotiations” or “we're close” or whatever, what goes through my mind is that, okay, when a negotiation starts, Iran has a bottom line and other points, and the United States has a bottom line and other points. When you come into a negotiation, a negotiation is looking for where those mutual interests are, where those points of cooperation are, what our bottom lines are—will not, must not, will or will not, whatever the case may be. And in each one of these rounds of negotiation and talking that's then been followed up by hostility, each round of hostility hasn't yielded a change to either of those positions.

So we want you to give up the Strait of Hormuz, give up your uranium. You're not getting your money back. We're going to keep sanctions for a certain amount of time, and Lebanon's off the table. No, we don't agree with that. Okay, bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb, back and forth. We stop and we say, okay, how about now? Go negotiate? Well, I haven't seen anything that's changed from the Iranian side—and nor have I seen anything change unless this latest round from the United States side has capitulated certain things. Because it's very clear. Iran has made it very clear. Strait of Hormuz? No. It's not going back to the same old way. It is our sovereign territorial water shared with Oman. And Oman and Iran will share it. And we will tax it.

It's not really a toll. It's a tax in terms of the upkeep, the maintenance, the environmental fees. They're fees. Every other strategic waterway in the world has something similar. So Iran has made it clear: it's not going back to business as usual. We will be a part of it. You want to drop the toll, so to speak, that \$2 million entry fee? OK, but we're not giving it up. The uranium—we're not giving it up. No, no. You want to bring in the IAEA, and you want to bring back in everything that was under the JCPOA and tie it to our sanctions and tie it to our assets. OK, but we're not giving it up. And Lebanon must end, period. So we know what Iran has said. What has the United States changed or given up that has now brought us to this?

The agreement's almost done. The ink is drying. It's ready to get signed. Because what we're hearing from Iran is there's still some distance here. There's still some concerns. And what we keep hearing from the administration now, from this morning, when I started my drive back from Washington, D.C., back to North Carolina, first thing on the radio was, Trump announces the deal is done, closer than ever, waiting for the ink to dry, waiting for the fax to come through so we can sign it, and you're driving off with a new car. It's ready. And then by lunchtime, it was, well, there are still some things to consider, but we're closer than we've ever been. And then by the afternoon, it was, well, there are still some concerns.

And now where are we? Where are we? Now we're back to the, well... there's a lot of good, but there's still some critical questions. Yeah, we're back to the same critical questions that we were at before this most recent escalation: the Strait of Hormuz, the uranium, and Lebanon. Nothing from Iran's position has changed. So either the United States has changed position, or we're nowhere near a deal. And all we're now doing again is going into this rhetoric of "we're near a deal, we're near a deal, we're near a deal." Back to the "Iran isn't negotiating in good faith." "I hate this, this is Donald Trump, I hate it, it's a horrible deal." Back to war. Unless there's something that has changed in the U.S. position, which I don't think it has when it comes to maybe with the Strait, I could see some. OK, we can, we can massage that.

No one pays a toll, so to speak, but there are some fees for upkeep. Okay, maybe we can discuss that. The uranium, okay, maybe we don't take it. Maybe you don't give it to us. Maybe there are some conditions. But the thing that the United States right now is not in a position to put on the table, because they really can't control Israel when it comes to that, is Lebanon. And now comes the question of what has the U.S. given up? Has the U.S. given up Israel? Because the United States may say to Iran, hey, Iran, us, we got it. We're out of Lebanon. We're not going to give Israel the political backing. We're not going to give them the bombs. We're not going to give them the support. They're on their own. But we can't control Israel. Lebanon—or, excuse me, Iran—might be saying now, well, you know what? You made that monster.

So you better control it, because if you don't and they continue, this ceasefire is not over. So the U. S. is in a pretty hard spot when it comes to Lebanon. And that now, out of all the critical questions, has become the critical question. Because Iran has not flexed, has not stepped away, has not

changed their bottom line with the war ending in Lebanon and in Gaza. Maybe there's been some discussion about Gaza, but I don't think they've let up on that. But we know for sure in Lebanon. And with that in mind, what has the United States changed in order to make this deal happen? Or there's no deal happening and we're all just being hoodwinked again. I mean, how many times now? I think someone was counting last time I spoke with Mario Nawfal — I think it was 36 times. Thirty-six times we've heard this: we're close to a deal.

#Nima

Is this going to be 37? 39 times?

#Anthony

39? Is this going to be 40? You know, right? We've heard there's a deal more times than we've seen a deal. Because how many times have we seen a deal? Zero. Zero. My position on this as I watch this unfold is close. Well, you know what? The only thing close counts for is in horseshoes and hand grenades. Close doesn't matter. Where's the deal? Show me the money. Show me the deal. Until we have that, where both sides agree. Because the other thing that Donald Trump tried, I think like on maybe the 14th deal, was, here's the deal. And Iran was like, we haven't seen that. So what's going to come out of this? I think that we are just, again, unless the United States has changed its negotiating position with Lebanon, I don't see a deal.

#Nima

Tony, let's assume Donald Trump wants to do something with the case of Lebanon. Maybe he wants to, because he wants to get out, he tries to do something with the Israeli position. What would be that solution? In my opinion, he could say to Israel, you want to stay in Lebanon? You're on your own, and you have to fight it by yourself. We're not going to stay there anymore. We're not going to fight on the territory of the Lebanese people, because Lebanon belongs to the Lebanese people. You cannot stay there and make it a buffer zone or dead zone, whatever security zone they call it so far. And this is the problem. I think for Israelis, they have a strategic problem with Lebanon. They cannot fight Hezbollah, because the war is getting so serious with the Lebanese people, with Hezbollah. They're fighting back with drones, rockets, ambushes.

Their soldiers are getting attacked by these drones—everything: communication systems, air defense batteries. And these are huge for Israel. A country like Israel, using so far—if I'm not mistaken, there is a report coming out that so far in the recent weeks, or in the last two months, they have lost something like 300 Merkava tanks. For a country like Israel, that's huge. Of course, yes, that would be huge even for the U.S. Your understanding—the way that Donald Trump can do something without, you know, going too far on this Zionist entity—he can do something about it and keep his

position, but by putting pressure, just leaving Israel there. You're going to attack Beirut, Iran's going to respond to you. You're going to stay in the southern part of Lebanon, you have to fight it by yourself. What is your understanding of that?

#Anthony

Well, so great points brought up in terms of what do we then do about Israel versus Lebanon. That's been, I think, such an important question from weeks ago that is still yet to be addressed. And here's where I think the truth lies, in terms of the hard truth that must be done, in my opinion, is that the United States must cut ties and make it clear that they are cutting ties in military support to Israel. Military—and I mean logistics, I mean supply, I mean reconnaissance, I mean intelligence, I mean fuel—all those things, cutting it completely, and must make it clear. There cannot be any pussyfooting around with this in terms of, well, maybe—no. It's got to be made clear, and it's got to be made apparent.

And the clear evidence that will come of that, if we're really doing it, is that Israel cannot defeat Hezbollah. Can't. Not without the U.S. And here's why. You can't bomb Hezbollah out of existence. Can't. And if you want to go in on the ground, they're going to beat you. Because unless Israel were to take all of the IDF out of Gaza, out of the West Bank, out of the Golan Heights, and bring it all to bear to go into Lebanon on the ground, maybe then they could have some level of success on the ground. But even then, it would be incredibly costly, and they would be giving up elsewhere. It's like the eastern front of the Roman Empire under Romulus Augustulus, when the Roman Empire could no longer hold, and was unwilling to give it up.

And then around the fringes is where it collapsed, and eventually in the west, you cannot... Or excuse me, and eventually in the east, you cannot do that and defeat Hezbollah if you are Israel going in it alone. Israel can't even defeat Hamas. You can't bomb them into non-existence. And if you go in on the ground, you're going to get your butt kicked. And they have. Just like in the problem set with the United States and Iran. We cannot bomb Iran into a change. We cannot bomb our way into a negotiation. We can fire missiles and bombs and warships and tanks and, or excuse me, helicopters and jets all day long. But at some point, you got to then say, okay, where's the negotiation?

And Iran's position has been, no, we're not changing. So if the U.S. really wanted to go in and change Iran, the situation with a military capitulation upon Iran, we would have to go in with everything, and it would be incredibly costly, and it wouldn't guarantee a win. Israel cannot defeat Hezbollah without the United States. So Israel will then have to make the decision: are we going to let go and give up without the U.S. support, or are we going to keep at it without the U.S. support? And it's going to get very, very bad, which then again, depending on how committed the United States is to this position and upholding—remember, a deal made doesn't mean it's a deal upheld, right? We can make the deal.

But if we go right back into supporting Israel because they're getting slammed by Hezbollah and Hamas, well, then we just, we just, we just reneged on our deal. Can't do that. So the United States is in a very, very complicated position with our partnership with Israel, especially when it comes to Lebanon and this critical point in this negotiation. And Iran is going to want guarantees. Iran is going to want proof. Iran is going to want, like, we don't trust you, we want proof. So... I just don't think that the United States is willing to do that at this point. And if they are, we're going to know about it. We're going to find out soon.

We'll see if there's news—not that Donald Trump says. If Donald Trump says there's a deal, I don't believe it until, like, Iran comes out officially, the U.S. comes out, until every—like, like Pakistan and maybe even the Pope—says, "Oh, it's real." Like, everybody has to come out and say it's real before I'll believe it. And even then, I'd like to see, OK, what did either side give up? Because in these previous hundred and four or five days of war, nothing's changed. So if nothing changed, I'm not buying it. If something did change, I don't think Israel gave anything up, because we haven't seen that. So did the United States say no more to Israel? And if that's the case, we're going to have to prove it.

And that's, I just feel right. And then again, you know, imagine you have a child and they just don't follow the rules and they're a menace to society. And you say, you're kicked out of the house, and they're underage. So they go out, and they're a minor. And the police are going to come right back and say, you cannot abandon your minor child. It is your responsibility. We have made Israel into this uncontrollable, vicious minor child who cannot do it on their own. And if we cut them off, well, then the world's going to come back and say, well, United States, you own this. You own this problem. You own this monster you created. And we're going to have to deal with it. I see some decisions coming up that are going to be very hard for this president.

#Nima

You know, we've been witnessing a new sort of ceasefire, as Ambassador Chas Freeman calls it. It's a ceasefire with Israeli characteristics. And maybe they're going to sign an MOU, a memorandum of understanding, with the same sort of—it's going to be a new sort of MOU. They're going to sign it, and they're going to fight, because today, what we've learned is the Israelis are attacking the southern part of Lebanon. They're bombing the southern part of Lebanon and killing people in Gaza the same, in the West Bank the same. As we talk right now, there are vessels, commercial vessels, trying to pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

And Iranians are firing at them. You know, there is no sign of having any sort of—because when you try to make some sort of negotiation or talks, at least we have to see some sort of sign. From looking at all fronts, there is no sign of anything coming up. That's why I think if they assume—let's assume they're going to sign the MOU—we're going to have the same sort of issue we are witnessing right now. The same with Lebanon, the same with Gaza. I don't know what that means anymore. And what is it, what is the main objective of negotiations with the Trump administration?

#Anthony

Yeah, and I, you know, memorandums of understanding are the coward's way out of firm negotiation. An IOU. And I don't think Iran's playing anymore with MOUs as the end. There may be MOUs being passed back and forth from the United States to Iran and Iran to the United States. Memorandum of understanding, that in these rounds of negotiations, here are the things we'll consider. But Iran is not going to stand for, nor should they, the result of negotiations being an MOU. While I was up in D.C. this past week, because it's also the 250th anniversary and I had some time, I went to the National Archives.

And when you go to the National Archives, you can see all these historic documents. And one of those is the Japanese surrender. We keep a copy of it in the National Archives. You can go see it. And I'll tell you what, you know what it's not called? It's not called a Memorandum of Understanding. It's called a formal declaration of surrender. Do you think we would have taken a memorandum of understanding from the Empire of Japan to end World War II? Hey guys, you really laid it on us. A lot to consider here. How about we just stop the war, like stop bombing us, stop with all the Navy stuff. Here's a memorandum of understanding.

We'll come back to it. No, no, neither should Iran. And they won't. So, memorandums of understanding—sounds nice, sounds cushy, sounds like something you could celebrate. It means nothing. It means nothing if there isn't something tangible. It means nothing if behind that agreement you aren't showing action. Don't tell me you're going to do it. Show me. And I think that's where Iran is now with the United States when it comes to their relationship with Israel. Don't tell me you're going to—do it. Then we can negotiate. Can Iran survive with sanctions? They sure can. Can Iran survive with their assets frozen? They sure can.

Can Iran survive and still maintain how they have the Strait of Hormuz and not be blown out of existence? They sure can. Can Iran continue to exist and support the axis of resistance with Hezbollah and Hamas and Ansar Allah? They sure can. So what is the United States' leverage? And if that leverage that Iran is dividing—that wedge is that relationship with the United States and Israel—Iran is not going to take, "We'll get to it." They're going to want proof. Just like we say to Iran, "We want proof," Iran is saying the same thing to the United States. "Okay, here's our existentials. You want proof of the nuclear?"

Come and inspect it. Go ahead. Come and look. We're not giving it up, but inspect all you want. The Strait of Hormuz—the world can see it. We're not going to—you know, that can be hashed out—but we're not leaving. How can Iran leave the Strait of Hormuz? It's their... it's their... it's their territory. Iran can't leave the Strait. Iran is the Strait of Hormuz. When people keep talking about, well, Iran is the Strait of Hormuz—the Strait of Hormuz is literally half Omani, half Iranian. Iran can't leave the Strait of Hormuz. So, these conditions—though some things are fungible—what's not is Iran's position on Lebanon.

And what Iran will not take is, "We'll get to it," or, "Here's an MOU." So between two days ago, when it was, "We're going to bomb you out of existence, there's no deal," to within a few short hours, "Oh, there's this deal, we're going to have it signed, it's great." What's the day of the week today? Friday. What do we always see on a Friday? So I don't think there's a deal. And if there is, there's going to have to be some hard evidence to show come tomorrow or Monday or whenever we reveal this deal on what the United States has promised. I can see what Iran has promised. I can see that pretty clearly. I don't see what the United States has promised.

#Nima

Because basically all of these promises are related to Israel, and Israel is not willing to make any promises.

#Anthony

We signed a co-loan to go into war with a partner that doesn't have a job. It's a bad situation.

#Nima

This is unfortunate. This is what Donald Trump created for himself.

#Anthony

Decades of administrations in the United States have created this. Donald Trump is the one that just put his hand in the trap thinking he could get out. Donald Trump right now is stuck in one of those Chinese finger traps—no pun intended with China—but he's stuck in one of those Chinese finger traps where you can't get your fingers out the more you pull. And no one told him to do it. He had it. He was like, what's this? Oh. And he keeps trying to pull, right? And Iran's like, that's not how that works. You want to get out of this? You got to give a little. You got to give a little before you can get out. And he's not willing to. And, you know, the other hand that's pulling and won't let him give is Israel.

#Nima

Yeah. There's a lot of noise coming out, Tony. One of them is what CBS News reported — that U.S. military planners are preparing contingency plans for a possible operation to secure and remove Iran's enriched uranium if necessary, if a nuclear agreement is reached. And here is what the Iranian foreign minister said: that the two issues — lifting sanctions on Iran and nuclear issues — have been postponed. And until the final agreement, there is no sign of talks, any sort of negotiations, any sort of discussion when it comes to lifting sanctions on Iran and the Iranian nuclear program, Iranian nuclear issues, as they said. CBS is reporting that they already have it and that the planners are preparing to go there and remove it.

This is, these are, I don't know how it works within the two admins, because looking at the situation right now, there is no direct talk between the two sides. Basically, they're sending Qatari delegations or Pakistani delegations to Iran, sending messages—written messages, by the way. But that doesn't, you know, just imagine we're talking to each other. You know, we are texting each other. It's too difficult. It's too difficult to say what you want to say. And just imagine you're calling and talking, and that's a huge change. Texting and calling—huge change. I think when it comes to the negotiations, it's the same, the talks between the two sides. But it doesn't seem that the Trump administration is willing, or I don't know what the problem is there.

But the last time the two sides talked to each other, it was in Islamabad, Pakistan. We had J.D. Vance together with his team. We had the head of the Iranian parliament with his team. After the outcome, the U.S. delegation was not prepared at all. And J.D. Vance was calling back and forth to Washington, maybe two calls to Israel, to see what they felt about the ongoing negotiation. This is the problem. I think what Iran is facing is a huge, a deep problem, Tony, because they are dealing with Jared Kushner, Steve Witkoff, then J.D. Vance. These people don't know what the issue is, and they have no understanding of diplomacy. They're not diplomats, by the way. J.D. Vance maybe a little bit, but the two guys, Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff, are not.

#Anthony

Vance is not a diplomat.

#Nima

So when it comes to the Iranian foreign minister, he was part of the JCPOA. The guy knows everything.

#Anthony

Yeah. Yeah. We are sending amateurs to deal with doctors. Literally. Literally. The people on the other side of this negotiation are the ones that... And I guarantee you, I bet the Iranians, in terms of looking at what the United States is now willing to give up or do when it comes to sanctions and the nuclear material and et cetera, they're like, this is—this is a go, get the old copies of the JCPOA, change the date, let's just give it back to them, and then we'll deal with the Lebanon issue. Homework done. We've already done that. It's laughable because J.D. Vance and Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff, they're like, oh, look at this deal that we made. And it was like, yeah, because do you think Donald Trump even read the JCPOA before he said this is garbage and threw it out and put it in the trash? No.

The only reason he tore it up and threw it in the trash is because Obama did it. He didn't read it, because if he did, he'd look at everything that he keeps saying and realize that was in there—we could have prevented a war if he had just read the thing. You had mentioned CBS News and what

they've been putting out. I trust CBS News about as much as I trust whoever does Donald Trump's spray tan. Don't trust it. So when I look at CBS News, I take that with a grain of salt. But as I look at the other news sources and put it all together, I'll tell you, I have no doubt that the United States Department of Defense has a plan on the table to go into Iran to seize uranium. Have no doubt that the United States has a plan on the table to conduct some type of operation on Qeshm Island or Kharg Island.

Have no doubt that the United States military has a plan to do none of that and just stay in a distant blockade. Okay. Have no doubt that the United States military has some plan to do nothing and leave. Every consideration and course of action therein, the United States Department of Defense has planned options on the table. So if you think about it, could it happen? It absolutely could. This entire "we're close to a deal" can go six ways from Sunday after the Sunday UFC fight when Donald Trump celebrated his 80th birthday. And come Monday, we're back at war with some type of operation to go in and seize the uranium, to seize Kharg Island, and to try to strangle Iran at a very high cost. Why? Why? Because we can't let go of Israel. That's the only thing right now that we're not willing to negotiate on, that Iran's not willing to negotiate on.

Like I said, the depleted uranium, we could come to an agreement on that. Straight or Hermuz, we could come to an agreement on that. It won't be easy, and both sides are gonna have to give. The two things that either side—or the one thing that either side—will not give right now: Iran in defending the resistance, and we're defending Lebanon, and Trump with not cutting ties with Israel, which is the thing that is threatening Lebanon. That's where we stand. And you know, another great point you brought up that I think people need to understand is the power and the importance of diplomacy and lines of communication. World War One, back and forth, back and forth, back and forth. We're almost done, we're almost done. And it wasn't until Marshal Ferdinand said, "OK, enough of this back and forth. Get a train, drive it to the front line. We're going to take their side."

We're going to take our side. We're going to call a truce. We're going to put them on the train, and they're going to talk it out. And that train, it's called the Compiègne Wagon. It's in Paris, where they sat. It's in Paris. Now it wasn't then on display in the museum. And they sat there face to face, and they figured out an armistice. And that is what brought World War I to an end with a treaty, an armistice. The treaty itself wasn't signed until Versailles, November 11th. But that armistice ended that. And they couldn't get to it. They couldn't until they sat face to face and hashed out the terms. Same thing with Japan.

When the terms of surrender came, we dropped the bomb. Japan said uncle. We sent people, we sent an envoy with translators to sit there with the Japanese leadership, with the emperor, because they didn't want the Americans to see their eyes upon the emperor in the room next door, in the room to make that surrender document. We cannot do this in good faith with a real result if we don't have Americans and Iranians sitting in the room together. Not Pakistan. Pakistan can be involved. But unless you have Americans—Americans that know what they're doing. And that's not Marco Rubio. That's not J.D. Vance. That's not Jared Kushner. That's not Steve Witkoff.

That's, you know, unless you're putting together a boy band, you don't want them. You want people that are diplomats, that are rooted in deep foreign service and understanding of negotiations. Same side, same thing from Iran. And you've got to put them in the same room, and they've got to hash out something where there isn't "he said, then he said, and he said, then he said," because that's what we're doing right now, right? The United States isn't communicating directly with Iran. We're doing it through Pakistan. So do you think Pakistan isn't putting a little bit of their own interest in there? Come on now. You know they are. Who wouldn't?

#Nima

I would imagine when he saw the JCPOA, I'm sure he didn't know anything about the JCPOA. He decided to withdraw. Maybe he saw the signature of Barack Obama.

#Anthony

As soon as he opened that book and saw Barack Obama, he closed it.

#Nima

Barack Hussein Obama. Barack Hussein Obama. Oh my God. You know what?

#Anthony

Actually, it said, "Donnie, read this. It's important. Love, Barry." And Trump scratched out "Barry" and put "Barack Hussein Obama," and then threw it in the garbage. I don't think he read it. I don't. The reason I don't think he read it is because some of the things that he says on where negotiations could go, specifically about sanctions, frozen assets, the depleted uranium—it's like, is he trolling us? He's trolling us. He knows that the thing he threw away, that he says was the worst deal in history, was then the pretense for us to go into this war and lose American lives and American resources and billions and billions of dollars of American tax dollars and America's reputation, to go back to the exact same thing we already had. He's either trolling us or he didn't read it. I think you can even get the JCPOA on audiobook.

#Nima

Tony, do you see, let's assume that there is no sign to believe that any sort of deal or agreement is going to be reached. Even if they, you know, if they sign this MOU, I think we're going to have this sort of fight going on and on. Because Israel, as we talked, as I mentioned just moments ago, they have attacked Nabatieh in Lebanon.

#Anthony

Yeah.

#Nima

And they're bombing people right now. Yeah.

#Anthony

Yes. Right now. Right now. The negotiation token on the table is being flicked around right now by Israel. It's like, here's the thing. And they're just like, so if you look at that, if the United States is going to go into a memorandum of understanding with Iran that says all these other things, and then down to the hard thing about Lebanon and Israel attacking Lebanon, who's going to enforce it? Who's going to make sure that Israel doesn't attack Lebanon? Because Iran is going to want guarantees, like I said. Okay, America, you're going into this memorandum of understanding. We understand that there's going to be something with the uranium. I don't know. Maybe even Iran does give up some of it and then brings the other under IAEA observation. I don't know.

I think that Iran is willing, that there's some wiggle room there. There's some negotiation space. Same thing, we already see negotiation space. Like, okay, we'll drop the two mil. I honestly think that the entire two-million-dollar levy thing was simply so Iran would have a negotiation position to come down from. I don't think they care. I mean, they care, but I don't think it was one they're willing to die on the hill for. So they negotiated that. When it comes to the Lebanon piece, it's going to be, okay, you agreed to it, America. Israel's still bombing. Who's going to stop them? Who's going to stop Israel? And if we think that it's just going to be Donald Trump telling Netanyahu to stop, no one believes that. No one. I don't even think Trump believes that.

#Nima

How many aircraft carriers are close to the Persian Gulf, or are there to support the war or the conflict? We have three of them in the region.

#Anthony

So we did have four. One did come home eventually, the one with the laundry room fire. We have one still in the Indian Ocean. We have one still—and because we've switched them around so many times and there's like the Ford and the Lincoln and all these dead presidents, I don't remember which one's which. But there's one still in the Indian Ocean, there's one still in the Mediterranean, and there is still the USS Tripoli, which is a Marine littoral light carrier. So technically, we still have three. But we also have the U.S. Special Operations Command mission command vessel. It's not a carrier, but it's important. And that's sitting off of Diego Garcia.

So we got that out there, too. And each one of these carriers, it's not just a carrier. It's a carrier strike group. You have destroyers, you have tender vessels, you have submarines. We know that there's at least two nuclear submarines out there. And we know that there's one sitting off the coast of Florida because they just demonstrated it with a test of the D2 Trident nuclear missile, or the carrier of the nuclear missile. They didn't put a warhead on it, but they fired it. So we know we got one sitting off the coast of Florida. We got one in the Mediterranean. We got one in the Indian Ocean. So we still got a lot of stuff there.

Nothing that we have militarily indicates stepping back. It's like, truce, everybody. And the guy's like loading up a magazine. Oh, we're in a truce? Okay. It's like, what are you doing? We're in a truce. Yeah, yeah, we're in a truce. And then he puts the magazine in the weapon. Hey, I thought—did somebody tell this guy we're in a truce? And he flicks it off safe, ready to fire. No, no, no. That doesn't look like a truce. Militarily, what we're doing doesn't look like a deal. It doesn't look like stepping away. What it looks like is deal, deal, deal—military action. I don't see how the United States can make any promises on Lebanon unless they directly confront Israel.

#Nima

When we talk about the pressures on Donald Trump, we're talking about the midterm election. We talk about the global economy, the resources, oil reserves that Donald Trump has decided to use — U.S., you know, U.S. oil reserves — to use them to balance the market. But the other issue would be, when it comes to the reality of the war, is what's going on on these aircraft carriers. I think with Gerald Ford we've seen, because the life on these carriers is miserable. It's too difficult to stay there for such a long time, and you don't know what the mission would be, how long it will take. That's why we've seen those problems with Gerald Ford. And the people there were just going crazy.

#Anthony

So carrier life inherently is not miserable when it's within the intended period of deployment. I'm not saying that it's cushy. I'm not saying that it's just a holiday. But it's not miserable.

#Nima

In fact, I know—I've seen all of them because I've seen footage of these aircraft carriers. For some of them, just around 10%.

#Anthony

It's miserable for them now because those carriers have been deployed three times longer than they're supposed to be in their operational cycle. So when a carrier is leaving port, they're going to be gone for four and a half months. In that four and a half months, with everything you're supposed

to have and it's operating like it's supposed to, it's hard. It's hardship, of course, but it's not miserable. When you start going to six months, eight months, ten months, it gets miserable. It's like you put on a set of clothes and you're like, this is nice. Well, when you keep that set of clothes on for a year and you never wash them, it gets pretty miserable. Same thing with life cycle. And that's the other thing. When we first went back to this war—take it back to Venezuela, right?

When we said, hey, we're going to send that carrier group from Central Command, and we're going to bring it over to the Caribbean, and we're going to put it right there as a backup. And the Navy said, hey, that's all well and good, but then who's going to replace that one? Oh, take that one from over there and put it there. Well, that's all well and good. Who's going to replace that one? Oh, that one that was supposed to be done? Take that one now to replace that one. Okay, you still haven't solved the math. There's still a missing gap because we're doing an extra thing. Oh, we're just going to leave that one out longer. Okay, well, once you do that and you're going into that operational and maintenance life cycle, you start running out of fuel.

Now you have sailors that are on an aircraft carrier for going on six months or plus, now eight, maybe ten, maybe twelve. Yeah, things get real miserable. But it doesn't start off miserable. And again, I'm not saying that carrier life or submarine life is by any means easy. It is a hardship. But it's not necessarily miserable until you get to that point where you're breaking the thing. It's like having a vehicle and never changing its oil. And you're like, oh, crappy transmission. It's like, well, the transmission wasn't crap—you never changed the oil. So it's kind of that situation where I concur with your point that life right now on these carriers is very likely miserable for these soldiers and sailors and airmen.

#Nima

Tony, the latest Iranian attack on Israel has shown how weak their defense system is, both the combination of the United States and Israel to defend Israel, because they hit the targets. I think they hit many of the targets in Israel hard.

#Anthony

Yes.

#Nima

This is the reality of, you know, if they decide to go to war. I think when the latest attack by Iran was not responded to by the Israelis, they didn't retaliate. They attacked Iran once. Iran attacked them twice.

#Anthony

Yes.

#Nima

I think that's a difference for Israelis, because we know that every time you attack them, they want to attack you—unless they have something to lose and don't want to continue this game, this war of retaliation.

#Anthony

And even at times when they have something to lose, they often miscalculate, and they overestimate their capability and underestimate the opponent. Case in point: David's Sling, Iron Dome, best thing ever. Well, yeah, the Iron Dome and the interceptor system of David's Sling, in coordination with the defensive posture of Iron Dome, is exquisite against rockets. It's not exquisite against intercontinental ballistic missiles. It's not exquisite against hypersonic missiles. It's not exquisite against the Fatah-110 and the Khayyam-3 missiles. It's not—it can do it, but it has to do a lot to do it. It's not designed for that. It was designed to defend against the occasional rocket, the occasional missile, but not what they've seen.

So they have a defense system that is not only severely degraded. I would say along the spectrum of battle damage assessment, you have slightly degraded, you have critically degraded, you have incapable, then you have non-mission capable, and then you have destroyed. So it wasn't capable of defending against all of this. Now it's also been severely degraded. So yeah, they're kind of sitting, you know, they're still throwing rocks from a glass house, and it's not wise. And that's the other piece to it, right? They know that. So why would they keep doing it? Because the U.S. is going to come to their aid. So those are some of Donald Trump's points of leverage. Is he willing to use them? And if not, why isn't he?

If he has the leverage to end this war by saying, hey, Israel, other country, not us, our interests are on the line. We're not going to give you these missiles anymore. So if you want to continue bombing Iran, you're on your own. Hey, Israel, we're not going to give you the fuel and the tankers and the bombs and the munitions and the satellite intelligence and the reconnaissance. We're not giving it to you anymore. So if you want to continue on the ground in Lebanon, that's on you. Donald Trump absolutely has that leverage. There's no question, no question he has that leverage. So why isn't he using it? So then that brings into the whole question about what do they got on him? What's in it for him?

What's the relationship? Who controls who? Is it Israel controlling us, or do we control it? Now, that's when all those questions come up, because it's like, I have a glass of water, I'm thirsty, there's a faucet, all I have to do is fill it up and drink it. Oh, I'm thirsty. Why aren't you filling up the water? Why aren't you putting water in your cup and drinking it? Oh, there's no bottom to it. There's no bottom. I can't put it. Ah, okay. So you're compromised. Your cup is compromised. The only reason

Donald Trump won't exercise the leverage that he has is because he's compromised. By what? I mean, we can all speculate. I don't know. But he's compromised by something, and it has to do with money and whatever's in the Epstein files.

#Nima

Tony, what are the capabilities of these destroyers that they're using? It's basically, they use the destroyers for defense, you know, to defend the Israelis. Is that the case? Because I remember when this war started, they were talking about something like 15 destroyers being sent to the Middle East.

#Anthony

You're talking about a Navy destroyer?

#Nima

Yeah, a naval destroyer I'm talking about.

#Anthony

So an aircraft, a U.S. carrier strike group, has destroyers assigned to it. We have sent additional destroyers from other carrier groups, like when the one that went back that's now in maintenance—the one with the laundry room fire—when that went back, it left some of its destroyers assigned to the carrier group still there. So the most prevalent one we hear about all the time is the Arleigh Burke class. The Arleigh Burke class is not a particular destroyer; it is a class of destroyer. There's the USS Peralta, there's the USS Murphy, there's the USS Canberra. So we are using those in the Mediterranean, and we're using them in the Gulf of Oman, because a destroyer is both offensive and defensive.

Some destroyers are designed as anti-missile destroyers. They're even called that—anti-missile destroyers or anti-missile ships. Some destroyers are missile destroyers or cruisers, missile cruisers. They cruise in with missiles to do stuff to the enemy. Some have a combination of both. When you do a combination, you're obviously limited in one or the other. So depending on what its primary role is, that's where you want to put it. So it seems that the ones in the Mediterranean are there primarily to defend. Can you reach from the Mediterranean all the way to Iran with some type of Tomahawk?

You could, but why do that when you have some sitting right off the coast of Oman? So I think that the destroyers that we've sent that are there in the Mediterranean, that we beefed up, are defending where the Iron Dome is failing. Those destroyers are picking up that slack. In the Gulf of Oman, where those destroyers are, they're doing some defense interdiction, but they're primarily offensive.

And to your point, if we were to move those, or if we were to just say, with those destroyers sitting in the Med, we're not going to help anymore, we're not going to give you interceptors, we're not going to give you Patriot missiles.

We're not going to give you the munitions to reload your David's Sling. We're not going to give you the ground sensors, which are part of our THAADs. We don't give them the THAADs, but we give them kind of like the thing in the THAADs that makes it work, and then they put it on an Israeli variant of the THAAD. It's a joint cooperative. We have a joint cooperative defense program in the Iron Dome. The Iron Dome is not exclusively Israeli. In fact, when you see the Iron Dome on the ground in various locations throughout Israel and you see an Iron Dome interceptor, you'll see that on it is an Israeli and U.S. flag, and it's the Iron Dome.

So it's not exclusively Israeli. We could stop giving them that stuff. We could stop interdicting with our destroyers. Would it hurt? Would Israel get hurt? Yeah, if they continue to fight, if they continue to exchange missiles with Iran, yeah, they're going to get hurt. What are we willing to do? That's why with this current round of negotiations, I'm not believing it, because I've seen no indication that Donald Trump is willing to do that yet. And I see no other thing that's going to change that calculus when it comes to Lebanon or comes to Israel's aggression that's changed unless we do that.

Mark my words, Iran is not going to go for, "Oh, we'll sign this and we'll tell Israel to stop." No, Iran is going to want proof. You tell them to stop. You stop giving them the stuff. Then we'll consider it. So I don't know. There's been some heated debate and phone calls between Netanyahu and Trump. Israel Katz has been vocal. So obviously something's been said about Lebanon. But what's the U.S. going to do? In this round of negotiations, I don't think we're there yet. I agree with you. I could be wrong. I could be wrong. Maybe we figured it all out. The Ayatollahs come into D.C. to watch the UFC fight on Sunday. It's all great. We worked it all out. I don't think so.

#Nima

No, exactly. Exactly. Thank you so much, Tony, for being with us today. Great pleasure, as always.

#Anthony

Well, thank you. And I appreciate you keeping everyone informed and maintaining such a great platform. And we will see what comes of this current negotiation. And then we'll see how the United States actually lives up to its commitment. Because that's the other part of it, right? You can make a deal all day long. I can sign a deal and drive off the car lot with a new car and then miss my first payment and then get it reposed the next month, right? So you can make deals. It's, are you going to uphold it? That's the next critical question to whatever deal may or may not come out, is are we going to enforce it? Exactly, exactly.

#Nima

Thank you, Tony. Thank you, Nima. Appreciate it. See you soon.

#Anthony

Talk to you soon. Bye bye.