

# Iran RAINS MISSILES on EIGHT US Bases as Trump's Attack BACKFIRES | KJ Noh

Geopolitical analyst KJ Noah discusses the launching of renewed war between the US and Iran, as the two trade massive strikes overnight. After the show, tune into DD Geopolitics' livestream as they continue the conversation: <https://www.youtube.com/live/ZaQ62yqt3Q4> LIKE the video and Subscribe for more in-depth geopolitical analysis Leave your thoughts in the comments below! Support the Channel: Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong> SUBSCRIBE ON RUMBLE: Rumble: <https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong> Follow Me on Social Media: Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DannyHaiphong> Telegram: <https://t.me/DannyHaiphong> Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhaiphong> Substack: [chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com](https://chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com) Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritho> #iran #trump #iranwar

## #Danny

Welcome back to the show, everyone. Let's first get started with the news of the last 24 hours. So, on June 27th, late, the United States Navy and Air Force conducted what the Central Command of the United States says were 10 targeted Iranian military installations near the Strait of Hormuz in southern Iran. This is a video that they published. I only counted five when looking at the video, but nonetheless, Iran that same morning, on June 28th, had a major response. They launched missiles on eight different U.S. military installations across Kuwait and Bahrain. Iran is saying that they have caused extensive damage to these military bases in Kuwait and Bahrain, with some even citing that air defense interceptors actually damaged a residential building in Bahrain.

But nonetheless, Iran has made it very clear that they are going to treat ships in the Strait of Hormuz more harshly now because the United States is saying all of these strikes are justified by Iran hitting Bahrain, or various tankers not following their designated route, and that U.S. military bases from here on out can expect what they say, quote unquote, is hell. Well, to discuss all of this and more, I have with me K.J. Noh. He's a geopolitical analyst, commentator, journalist, activist, and author, and so many more things. Friend of the show, too. K.J., good to see you again.

## #KJ Noh

Good to see you, Danny.

## #Danny

Yeah, well, your reaction to these strikes overnight — this is now the second time that the memorandum of understanding has been utterly trashed by the United States, where even Barak Ravid, the Unit 8200 Axios so-called journalist, is sounding the alarm that this could very well be the collapse of the so-called ceasefire agreement. What are your thoughts and reactions to this?

## **#KJ Noh**

Well, I don't think it's a complete collapse, but it's certainly a very bad sign. And these things, you know, I mean, I think there's going to be a lot of back and forth. I think back to the Korean War, which took almost two and a half years — they began negotiations on a ceasefire, and it took two and a half years to finally, you know, get to a point where they signed an armistice, which the U.S. abrogated immediately afterwards. But the U.S., as Sergei Lavrov says, is not agreement-capable. And so, of course, they've already breached Article I and Article V. This is very clear. Iran has stated that they are responsible for the transit through the strait, and they know where ships should travel in order to be safe.

And apparently, you know, the Panamanian tanker and the Singaporean tanker, they were breaching these guidelines. It's unclear why they were doing it, but they were hugging the Oman shoreline. And because of that, Iran sent them essentially what amounted to a love tap. You know, it was just a single drone attack on the bridge. It didn't damage the ship. The ship was able to continue traveling through, but it was just a warning. And in response to that, the U.S. began severe attacks on—we don't know how severe the impact was—but clearly strong kinetic attacks along the strait on Iranian installations.

And clearly, they didn't do anything because Iran retaliated right back. And some of the most important assets that the U.S. has in the region were hit, most notably the Fifth Fleet headquarters, you know, the Naval Support Activity in Bahrain. That was hit. That's a major base. Ordinarily, before the start of the Ramadan War, it would have had about 9,000 troops. And then also in Kuwait, Ali Al-Salem and other soldiers' bases were hit. So clearly, Iran still has the capacity to hit back and hit back hard. The U.S. seems to be reduced to making largely performative strikes. They're showing just images of smoke and dust, but we don't know if this has actually had any real effect on it.

And I think Iran, as I said before, still has the upper hand for some very important structural reasons. They have greater resolve. They're learning faster. Just the fact that the U.S. still allowed itself to be hit in those bases shows that it hasn't learned anything yet. Their economic and cost advantages, their better geographic advantages, and the strategic advantages that Iran has—none of these have changed with any of this exchange. But it does show that the quote-unquote ceasefire is precarious, and I think it will be a long road before anything gets worked out to the point that we can say that, oh, you know, things have stabilized.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, we can just go to now Donald Trump's reaction on Truth Social, or his announcement saying that U.S. aircraft just struck Iranian missile and drone storage locations, coastal radar sites, for violating the ceasefire agreement. Again, it's very possible they'll never learn. There may come a point when we are no longer able to be reasonable and will be forced to militarily complete the job that we very successfully started. If that happens, the Islamic Republic of Iran will no longer exist. And KJ, this really hearkens to, despite the fact that Iran still is showing the capabilities of retaliating and continuing to strike, and even to assert control of the Strait of Hormuz, Trump is once again making what I remember caused a lot of stir—the comment to end Iran's civilization. Now he's making a comment that he's going to end Iran altogether. What's your... what's your reaction to this? And it's so curious that this is all happening as the market remains closed.

## **#KJ Noh**

Well, I mean, these are genocidal threats. I mean, they're illegal under international law. And most specifically, they're illegal. They contradict the terms of the MOU. It says no aggression, and it says no threats of aggression. A threat to wipe out an entire country is a genocidal threat. It should not, cannot be tolerated. But it gives you a sense of, A, the mindset of the United States, and also it could signal that the U.S. is preparing the use of nuclear weapons. I think this is eminently a possibility, because as we know, and as I've just said, in the kinetic domain, in conventional weapons, the U.S. simply is out of options. It's looking at zugzwang.

It cannot do what it wants to from a kinetic standpoint using purely conventional weapons. This is why, as I've said before, during the Gulf War in 1991, the U.S. did something like 108,000 sorties in 38 days, while during the Ramadan War, it was only able to do about one-eighth of that—13,000 sorties over the same period of 38 days. And that is being assisted with AI for targeting and logistics, et cetera, which is supposed to speed everything up. In other words, the U.S. has about one-eighth of the projection capacity that it had over 35 years ago. That's not a good sign. So the U.S. does not have this kind of strategic and tactical projection capacity.

And because of that, it may very well be thinking of using nuclear weapons. Now, what does that mean in the larger political context? Well, it means that neither Russia nor China will stand still. I mean, essentially, we're barreling towards Armageddon if this happens. So just some very, very foolish, foolish things—foolish acts, foolish gestures, foolish signaling—which won't get anywhere. I think the U.S.'s best strategy is to buckle down and see if it can come to some reasonable accommodation with Iran and salvage what it can, what's left of the MOU, and move towards a stable peace, whatever it takes. And it will take longer than, you know, 60 days. What are we, 30 days out so far?

## **#Danny**

Yeah, and we spoke last time on the program about Vietnam. I mean, Vietnam had an eight-year—more than eight-year—period, no, about a seven-year period after the Treaty of Paris, where the United States was bombing all around and in Vietnam, but especially on its periphery in Laos and Cambodia. That war didn't end for seven years after that. So it's an indication that, yes, the United States is not agreement-capable, is not agreement-capable, as Russia has said. And Iran is saying that, you know, after these strikes, they will respond more forcefully to future ceasefire violations, and that they anticipated this the whole time. This is what the spokesperson for the IRGC is saying.

They say if the enemy breaks its commitments and violates the ceasefire, we will respond more forcefully than before. But, KJ, the United States is not heeding these words. According to some, there's activity happening around the region that some are saying is the largest logistical operation in history, where you have, just in the last seven days alone, U.S. air logistical activity accelerating by nearly 20,000 tons around the clock for 76 days. So, there is no de-escalation, it seems, from the United States. They haven't left the region. They are pondering putting some of these assets underground, further away from Iranian drones and missiles. But the escalation is still there, and I guess it shouldn't come as a surprise that we are seeing strikes come out of it now.

## **#KJ Noh**

Yeah, I mean, certainly that logistical escalation is very, very ominous. If you want to track and predict when and where war is going to happen, you follow the logistics, right? During the Vietnam War, you tracked where the peanut butter was being sent. You could pretty much guess where there was going to be a major engagement. So, I mean, this is fundamental, that, you know, the U.S. looks to be building up for yet another major kinetic engagement, but that still does not change the fundamentals of what we've just said. As I've said, you know, the six core asymmetries that the U.S. cannot overcome. If you think that you can, you're fighting reality. But the geography is critical.

I mean, Iran has bunkered down in the mountains. These are deep granite mountain bunkers, which they learned from North Korea. North Korea has spent almost 80 years fighting the U.S. They figured out how to deal with U.S. aggression. And the Iranians have taken that skill, technology, and understanding, and they've honeycombed the Zagros Mountains with bunkers and outposts. That is not easy to overcome, despite what the U.S. thinks it is capable of. But on the other hand, once again, the Gulf states, and where all the U.S. bases are, that's flat alluvial plain, mostly desert. You're not going to be able to bunker down in sand very effectively. Once again, Iran has the kind of skybox and the bleachers.

It looks down on the entire Gulf and the entire Persian Gulf states as if they were a field, and it has kind of an amphitheater, or, you know, an amphitheater view of the entire area. So the U.S. is at a tremendous disadvantage, as we also know. You know, these are munitions that have been rapidly depleted. Standoff weapons are probably at least 50% depleted. Interceptors, we know, are significantly depleted. So the magazine is a real issue. Magazine, as well as markets, as well as midterms — these are all key issues that are playing into the calculation. But it's unclear to me why

the U.S. is thinking in purely this one-dimensional way, setting itself up essentially for yet another set of devastating reprisals by Iran.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, and I also found this report from Dropsite News to be particularly interesting. According to a U.S. official asked why the U.S. military is restriking areas such as Qeshm Island in Surak that had already been struck repeatedly before, a senior U.S. defense official told Fox News that Iran has reconstituted its positions since the April 7th ceasefire. They said that in the time since the ceasefire, April 7th, Iran has reconstituted. Thus, the targets are on the Strait of Hormuz. There's a lot that is damaged — a lot — but they moved things around. So this feels like, I mean, a game of chicken, KJ. This could go on and on and on. I mean, is this now a war of attrition, or is this the United States prolonging a war that it can't find its way out of, or maybe a combination of both?

## **#KJ Noh**

Well, I certainly think it is going to be a much, much longer war than most people have anticipated, certainly much longer than the U.S. had anticipated. You know, they claim that they're now playing whack-a-mole or, you know, another ugly term, mowing the grass. It's not going to work. As I said, there are fundamental advantages that Iran has. And another fundamental advantage, or asymmetry if you will, is that Iran has a very different strategy vis-à-vis the U.S. than the U.S. has vis-à-vis Iran. That is, the U.S. originally had a plan, what is called Air-Sea Battle, which is a plan of decapitation and blinding.

They thought that they were going to decapitate the leadership and that they were going to blind all of its capacities, and then slowly they were going to attrit all of its counter-battery and all of its standoff. That did not happen. Starting with the decapitation didn't work because the moment they decapitated the leadership, essentially the entire command split off into independent commands. It's a starfish strategy. You cannot decapitate a starfish. Simply, it starts to regenerate into multiple starfishes.

So this was the mosaic strategy that showed that within hours, they were able to hit back with tremendous force against U.S. installations, essentially doing the opposite—essentially blinding the U.S. U.S. radars, U.S. installations were hit. And it was the U.S. that turned up to the fight with a detached retina, which it still has not been able to repair. So that was the first thing. And then, of course, Iran's strategy is not simply this decentralization, but the diffusion and the dispersion and the distribution of its power, which makes it impervious, or strongly impervious, to this U.S. approach of precision attacks.

You do not have—the U.S. does not have—enough standoff munitions, precision standoff munitions, as far as we can tell based on magazine levels, to take out all of Iran's distributed, diffused, dispersed capacities, which is exactly what they have been planning for, you know, for at least four

decades. So I think the U.S. has seriously miscalculated this, and it thinks that it can do kind of a slow attrition, that it can build things back up. It thinks that it can use some kind of gray zone strategy as well as continually kind of chip away at Iran's control of the Strait of Hormuz. It's not going to happen. Essentially, if I were to give a combat analogy, it's like Iran has the capacity to choke out its opponent any time it wants to.

And even when it lets go of that choke, that choke is ready to hand, and it can kick its legs out any time as well, as well as headhunt. So it has multiple advantages. And the U.S. is really struggling. It's had its legs kicked out. Its bases, from where it projects its force, are no longer functional. It has a detached retina—that is to say, it has very minimal vision over the Persian Gulf because the strategic radars that were destroyed, to the best of my knowledge, have not been replaced. It's lost multiple AWACS. It's losing refueling tankers, so that prevents it from doing the longer trips that are coming in from Europe.

And so there are multiple disadvantages that the U.S. is facing. And once again, I think the key thing for the United States is to come to grips with reality and make a reasonable accommodation with Iran to find some kind of stable modus vivendi, including giving Iran the right to control the Strait of Hormuz. It's very simple in maritime law. Maritime law talks about territorial waters. Territorial waters are not an abstraction. Traditionally, they were between five and 12 miles from the shoreline. The reason why they were five to 12 miles from the shoreline was this was the distance from which the land power could exert material force onto the ocean.

Iran has shown that it's completely and totally capable of doing that, and I think the U.S. needs to take that as kind of a basic requirement, a material fact, start from there, and then do the rational negotiations that allow things to stabilize and come back to normal trade. Otherwise, the rest of the planet, including the United States, is really in a very, very bad place. You know, we've said this before, petrochemicals are the basis—not just the oil and the gas—but the petrochemical industry is the basis of modern civilization. Without that, we don't have plastics, we don't have medicines, we don't have fertilizer, we don't have anything. And this is a global catastrophe that we are facing, that the U.S. is playing chicken with to the detriment, not just of its own economy, but the entire planet.

## **#Danny**

Very well said, and even in just the very concentrated example of the Strait of Hormuz, even in just this latest round of escalation by the United States and Iranian retaliation, the rate of shipping in the Strait of Hormuz—what everyone was so excited about in the mainstream media, the Trump administration—that the vessels going through the strait were increasing as the MOU was taking effect. Now, a huge dip, down to just 24 vessels in the last 24 hours, and even less, I believe, fewer than five since the escalation. So even just this, KJ, this trade is supposed to be open. It's supposed to be going toward pre-war numbers. That's the ultimate aim. Iran has said that's not going to happen unless they're the ones managing it. And of course, you gave the example of the Omani-U.S. corridor.

That's supposed to be an alternative to Iranian management. That's not going to work out because Iran is not going to let those ships go without consequence and show that they manage it. And still, we're nowhere near that number of the 100-plus that would go through pre-February 28th. And this has huge global ramifications. And yet the markets, the oil prices, all of it is whistling past the graveyard. The United States—some have posited the United States as an imperialist power—is actually trying to destroy the global economy and doesn't care about any of this. But yet there's this other part of the contradiction where, indeed, you said midterms, oil prices, cost of living, all of this production itself is in danger. So what is this? It's like another game of chicken. Why play it, and what's going on here?

## **#KJ Noh**

Well, you know, if anybody has to swerve, it will have to be the United States. But, you know, coming back to this game of chicken, you cannot play chicken with supply chains because the U.S. is equally implicated in supply chains. You know, the U.S. is led by lawyers, and at the current moment, there seems to be a strong influence of lawyers, real estate agents that are doing the negotiation. I've said this before: real estate, if you think of it as land, has no supply chain. But supply chains are critical. Your car has 30,000 components, a vast majority of which come from other countries, especially China. If you think of anything that you use, there's some kind of supply chain involved.

I sometimes say, look, if we stop getting naphtha, if there's a reduction in the amount of naphtha from petroleum, then we won't have plastic anymore. That means you will have to demyelinate naphtha—your entire house. That means the copper wiring will no longer be insulated. The one to three miles of copper wiring inside your car will no longer be insulated. And people say, oh, that's great, we need to get rid of plastics. But they don't understand—plastics are everywhere. You are not going to replace the insulation on copper wiring with wood or ceramic. It's just not possible. And your clothing has plastics in it. You know, your average baby diaper has, what, 60% plastic.

You know, are you going to recycle that? No, I don't think so. So there are people who just don't understand plastic supply chains. But the capitalist system is built on transnational supply chains. And once you start to break those, you start to damage yourself in ways that are completely detrimental to yourself. Just one very quick example: the U.S. created this fraudulent, utterly fraudulent scam that, you know, in Xinjiang in China, the Uyghurs were being enslaved and forced to work in the cotton fields. Now, you talk about enslavement in cotton fields—it's clearly a country that did that and became rich off of that. Certainly not China. Most of the farming in the cotton fields is done mechanically in Xinjiang, and there is no Uyghur enslavement or Uyghur genocide.

It's all sheer propaganda, but it's a kind of propaganda that has been so effective that people unthinkingly repeat it. But one of the things that happened as a result of this was the U.S. stopped importing cotton from Xinjiang. And then what it realized after it did that was that it no longer had

guncotton, which was necessary for the artillery shells that it was using against Russia in the Ukraine proxy war. And so then they started to act like China is withholding cotton from us. No, you put sanctions on Xinjiang cotton, and now you deal with your own—you know, the bed that you've made. Lie in it, because when you get rid of a large chunk of the cotton supply, you're also going to run into a difficulty with guncotton, which is a core element of the explosive used in explosive shells.

In a sense, the U.S. was undermining itself. It's actually a good thing that it reduced the number of shells, but you can see that this lack of systems thinking, this lack of understanding of supply chains, this misunderstanding—they think they can just cut off one part or choke off one little part of this network and not understand that there are ripple effects that cascade all the way back to themselves. This is the kind of lack of systemic, dialogical, dialectical understanding which I think is a real, you know, blind spot for the United States. And it is going to pay for it, and it's going to continue to pay for it.

## **#Danny**

Now, in terms of how the United States is paying for all of this and maybe some of the blowback, something that isn't being talked about so much is how, in this destructive course of action with Iran, it seems like the world is really moving very fast toward maybe leaving the United States in isolation. Here you have a report that China has not only defied its tech restrictions and the sanctions and all of this to continue to develop high tech at such a rate where it's surpassed the United States in most of the advancements already now, but it has just made another one—building the world's fastest supercomputer, ranked the fastest in the world despite not using any GPUs. KJ, maybe you can talk about the bigger ramifications of this and what else is happening in the periphery around this, what a lot of people, because of gas prices, oil prices, because of the kinetic nature of it, you know, we may be missing—a lot of the world shifting as the Iran war drags on and on and on.

## **#KJ Noh**

Well, I mean, the first thing to note there is that China is becoming a technological and scientific powerhouse. There's no doubt about this. If anybody is seriously paying attention to science and technology, they should understand that China is moving ahead. It's in the passing lane. And, for example, you know, ASPI, which tracks critical technologies, says that China dominates, what, 95% of all critical technologies. It used to be the other way around two decades ago, but China dominates about 95%. It is the leader in 95% of critical technologies. You know, people still go on. You hear these AI tech bros, they say, well, China stole everything from us.

No, that is absolute BS. If China stole those things, then it stole them by going into the future and moving them back into the past. So if China has figured out time travel, then that's an even bigger problem that you need to think through. But if we assume that China does not do time travel, then essentially China is ahead in multiple areas of critical technology. And this boils down to the fact that

China has invested in education. It graduates between seven and ten times the number of engineers. I mean, you go to China, you know, look at their curriculum, look at a middle school math textbook and see how many of those problems you can solve. You know, I come from a family of mathematicians.

I had difficulty with those, you know, with those problems. But the thing is, China is a country that has its leadership — a lot of its leadership are engineers and scientists. Now, other people have said this. I've been saying this a long time before they started to say it. But the U.S. largely is led by lawyers and failed business people. And the fact is that if you are in a science and engineering race, and it's lawyers versus scientists, the scientists are going to win, which is essentially what we're seeing here. The Chinese are pulling ahead. And in the meantime, you know, the U.S. is falling behind. It has been de-skilling. This is what capitalism does.

It dumbs down its population and it de-skills its population so that we are less and less capable of critical thinking, but even more so, we're less and less capable of dealing with basic conceptual challenges such as advanced math and science. So this is a kind of structural dimension. It's a structural contradiction within capitalism. And essentially, for example, in the chip sanctions, it was the lawyers, patent lawyers, who essentially designed what they referred to as a four-point chokehold against China, designed to kill off China's industrial and technological development. And when they did this, this was several years back under the Biden administration, the lawyers at CSIS crowded. They said, we're essentially choking China out, to kill it. China is essentially dead.

China's technological development is essentially finished. Now it's just going to be treading water until it sinks and dies. They were so arrogant and so confident about this. But the thing is, these people knew nothing. They knew absolutely nothing about science. All they knew was something about law. And they were so proud of this. And of course, it didn't work. China simply pulled ahead. It developed other things, it developed other technologies, different methodologies, et cetera. That's when you're scientists and engineers — you're trained to think about solving problems, as opposed to lawyers who are designed to think about making problems and obstacles. That completely did not work.

Just one very quick example. If you think about the basics of physics, the technology of semiconductors is what, less than a century old? It's about 80 years old. But anything that is developed in semiconductors can eventually be reinvented or discovered or engineered in some other fashion. This includes ultra-high lithography, chip manufacture, et cetera. These are procedures that can all be eventually engineered. When the US did this, China retaliated by putting a chokehold on rare earth elements. And if you know anything about rare earth elements, if you know anything about the periodic chart, essentially China wiped out two rows of the periodic table from easy access for the West and for Western munitions companies.

The thing is, you can always engineer technology, but you cannot engineer a new element. That's just something fundamental to the nature of atomic structure — you cannot engineer these things,

certainly not in any easy fashion. And China has had a monopoly over rare earth elements since the '90s, but it was developing its rare earth element technologies since the 1970s. It was looking 50 years ahead. And now it has essentially a quasi-monopoly on rare earth elements, in particular the processing of rare earth elements. And rare earth elements are not rare, but they are hard to find in significant concentrations.

If I were to give an analogy, it would be like trying to build a car from the iron that exists in human blood. You have to refine it, take a lot of human blood or a lot of cadavers to get enough iron to extract to turn into something usable. That's essentially the level of concentration you're looking at. And so China has created technologies to make this feasible and economically viable over a five-decade process of development. The U.S. has done none of this, and now it thinks it can throw money at the problem and recover its rare earth elements. But all of this is to say that if you invest in education, which China does, it spends four times on education what it spends on its military.

The U.S. spends four times on its military what it spends on education. You see that asymmetry eventually pays off, and this is why China is pulling ahead, and this is why any half-baked idea by a bunch of patent lawyers to choke off China's industrial development is simply not going to work. Instead, the U.S. is trying to engineer society and engineer the economy through technology, through clever lawyering. It's not going to work. You need to get down and do the basic science, the basic engineering, and you need to educate people rather than de-skilling them and dumbing them down.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, and that \$1.15 trillion military budget, if anyone looks at even the very vague fine print in it, does the exact opposite of what you are suggesting, KJ. It goes, doubles down on stupid, as it is said. And, you know, breaking news is that it looks like the upcoming round of talks between the United States and Iran have now been canceled. This is according to Israeli media, but oftentimes Israeli media loves to break bad news, at least when it comes to peace. So that is the situation now. When it comes to the negative aspects, KJ, of what you just outlined here, how the United States is operating as an empire around the world, here you have the Maritime Executive sounding the alarm. And I'm going to show two examples of perhaps the backfiring of everything that's going on.

They mentioned three huge limitations of the reliance now on what they're calling naval coercion, blockades, and sanctions, and how these three limitations — the fact that naval power alone cannot guarantee passage through a contested choke point like the Strait of Hormuz, that a physical disruption of trade routes like a blockade actually nullifies economic sanctions because a country like India might have to choose between sanctions enforcement and energy security, and that secondary sanctions lose credibility when a primary choke point is closed — refer to the Strait of Hormuz and how the United States had to actually relieve Russian sanctions in order to make up for the shortfall. And then there is this fact.

I think a bigger, broader point, KJ, that isn't being talked about is how countries like China, Russia, and Iran — their prestige only grows higher. In the case of China, because it is not involved in economic coercion, because it is not involved in sanctions, and because it is not involved in kinetic war, it is gaining massively globally to the point where China is not — there's no debate anymore on the African continent, this rich continent, about whether to trade with the United States, to trade with the West versus China. No, it's China being the sole platform for their development and the West being one that isn't even really in the conversation anymore, given how it treats the African continent. But this is really a microcosm of the world situation. KJ, your thoughts and comments on this?

## **#KJ Noh**

Yeah, you're absolutely correct. I mean, the first thing about, you know, naval coercion — the Western imperial powers have always been naval powers, you know, starting with Portugal and then Spain and the UK, all of them, and the United States — they were all naval powers. And there's a military theorist called Alfred Thayer Mahan, and he essentially said that sea power dominates the land. You know, it's essentially the country with the most powerful navy will essentially control the world. In the early 20th century, a British geographer said, actually, that's not the case anymore.

This was Halford Mackinder, and he said as the Eurasian landmass connects through the use of rail and other logistical methods, actually land power will become more powerful than sea power. And of course, land power is intimately connected to the possibility to blockade choke points, because choke points were always controlled by Western imperial navies. So I think there's a fundamental shift. Once again, the US is not reading the tea leaves correctly. It's not seeing how the wind has shifted. And so I think that this is one of the core shifts that is happening.

As the world moves to multipolarity and as the world moves to resistance against the unipolar hegemon, the unipolar hegemon has to understand that control of the seas, by and of itself, is simply not enough. You know, before, Britannia used to rule the waves. It does not do that anymore, and certainly the United States, with all its ships and all of its aircraft carriers, is not able to control the Strait of Hormuz. Iran controls it. It's a land power, but the advantages, the geographic advantage, the structural advantages that it has as a land power overlooking the entire strait mean that it controls it. So the U.S. has to come to grips with this.

The other point, which I think is related, as you point out, is that prior to this, the U.S. not only controlled naval lanes, but it also controlled essentially the economic Strait of Hormuz, which was run out of New York — which was the flow of U.S. dollars. That flow of U.S. dollars, which was pinched off or opened and specifically sanctioned against certain countries, has shown to be no longer effective because essentially the U.S. has overused it and has driven countries to look for other methods of clearing and settlement. And so it has undercut itself by overusing it. It's like

overusing a medicine, overusing antibiotics — after a certain point, they're not going to work anymore. And by abusing that power, it has driven countries away from using the dollar as a reserve currency and all the clearing mechanisms involved with it.

But the piece about Africa I think is really important, and it's a lesson for the rest of the world. It shows the way that the entire world is transitioning, that China is the stable and reliable partner for trade and development. It doesn't take a pound of flesh. It doesn't require, you know, abusive loans and restructuring or changing your political system. It simply wants to do win-win development, win-win trade, which, if trade is done without coercion, is a win-win proposition. Both parties benefit, essentially, because both parties look to trade for equivalence. So that, plus China's massive subsidy, massive support of Africa's infrastructure development, primarily in the domains of electricity and water and energy generation, et cetera.

These are fundamental things that are changing the facts on the ground. And anybody who thinks that, quote-unquote, China is colonizing Africa is an absolutely foolish person because they know nothing about the history of what colonization looks like. Colonization underdevelops the periphery so that it can simply use them as extractive pools for raw materials and labor. But if you see what has been happening with Africa's engagement with China, it's massive development, massive indigenous capacity, massive indigenous industrialization. And these are things that move directly against the current of, you know, hundreds of years of colonization and are actually part of the process of development and decolonization, which China is clearly facilitating in this situation.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, I think a lot of people who follow something like Iran, for example, they get really caught up in the kinetic side of it and that, you know, by Iran settling for talks with the United States around this MOU thing, then that leads the United States to be able to recover. And soon enough, the U.S. will be back at war. No matter how true that may be, I would say that would have to be in the long term, as you stated earlier about the U.S.'s limitations in that recovery phase. I think the fact of the matter is that no matter what happens from here, and if war continues in West Asia the way that it is, these dynamics that we're talking about are only going to accelerate and get worse.

The U.S. cannot simply come out of this by doing the same thing over and over again and expect that the results around the world are going to be different. As you said earlier, the U.S. should just come to an agreement with Iran and behave in a far different manner if it's going to come out of this with any of its resolve and any hope that it can extend its lifespan even further. But I'm wondering, with all of these developments and the reality globally of the U.S.'s position, what could it possibly do?

And I think that's really the big question that the rulers of the empire are asking themselves as well: what can we possibly do to change this dynamic without actually changing the entirety of the ways in which the system itself works? It's a huge dilemma, it seems like, and it's one that is not only not

easily resolvable, but is it resolvable? And this gets to questions that I think are very existential for the empire in terms of, well, then, you know, the now is happening. The present is happening. These are big problems that need to be resolved right now. But right now, it doesn't seem to have the solutions. Your thoughts on this?

## **#KJ Noh**

Well, I think we're looking at, you know, sorry to be a broken record on this, but we're looking at the core contradictions of capital itself. It de-industrializes, it financializes, and because of that, it eats up its own capacity to resist and fight back, or, in this case, in its capacity to aggress and to dominate. It is not going to re-industrialize. You can't see the United States re-industrializing unless it shifts to a planned economy. In other words, the United States has to think of moving itself towards a socialist industrial policy that has some real industrial planning and policy built into it, plus the reskilling of its workforce and the de-immiseration of its population.

Can it do these things? Is it capable of doing these things? It's a little bit like asking, is a parasite capable of stopping being a parasite? You know, the leopard is not going to become a vegetarian. The parasite is not going to become—you know, it's not going to change. So I think it's very, very hard. And so inside that kind of logic, inside that predetermined framework and ideology, can they change? Can they do anything? What can they do differently? Well, as you point out, they can do the definitional insanity of repeating the same thing and expecting different results—in this case, doing less and expecting still bigger results.

If you were bombing for 39 days and it didn't have any effect, what effect is 10 strikes going to have? It's not going to make a difference. The other thing that's possible, and you know this is eminently, I believe, you know, I think they're thinking deeply about this, is again to resort to nuclear strikes—tactical nuclear strikes, very possibly strategic nuclear strikes. That's why you hear this genocidal threat language: "We'll wipe you off," you know, "you'll no longer exist as a country or as a civilization." I think that is one of the options that they have put out on the table. And, of course, it would be a catastrophe. But there are members of the ruling class who would rather see the end of the planet than the end of their power, privilege, and hegemony. So they may be willing to go that far. I've said jokingly, but only half-jokingly, if you look at some of the ruling class, they don't fear death because, in some sense, they're already dead.

Certainly, they're spiritually and morally dead. And I think they think nothing of destroying the entire planet if it ensures some chance at their continuing to control, dominate, exploit, and violate the rest of humanity. But I think that at the end of the day, these are critical situations that require, I think, people in the West to actually take action and to work to change their system—certainly make it less violent, less militaristic—but also to change it fundamentally from the ground up into a system that actually serves people rather than a very small number of plutocratic elites. Last thing regarding Iran is, I think, that people are criticizing Iran simply for having dialogue.

This is a section of, I think, the hyperactive regime pseudo-left that thinks that Iran should destroy the empire and imperialism all on its own, while they mention this with all the privileges of being Western imperialists themselves. So there's nothing wrong with talking. Dialogue is essential. The Vietnamese had to dialogue with the Americans. The Koreans dialogued with the Americans. Essentially, all wars have to end, and they end through negotiation, and dialogue has to happen. And Iran, as far as I can tell, has conducted itself in an ethical fashion and tried as much as possible to adhere to its own spoken commitments as well as international law. As far as I can tell, it has not abrogated international law in any significant fashion since the entire debacle has unfolded.

And also, when they say that they're going to control the Strait of Hormuz, they're within their rights to do so. First, as I said, because at least half of it is territorial waters. And secondly, because it is at war, and it needs, from its own standpoint, to make sure that whatever is going in or whatever is going out is purely commercial and not related to military logistics or other dangerous developments. So they're perfectly within their rights, within law, but also within the kind of logic of the situation they find themselves in. They are doing what they see as necessary. And the United States and the Western alliances around the U.S. have to understand that this is what's happening. These are the facts on the ground, but there are good rational reasons for doing this, both from a purely logical, rational standpoint, as well as from international law.

## **#Danny**

And, you know, I think we've heard this over and over again over the course of the last several years, especially since October 7th, 2023. But I think since February of 2022, when the Russia-Ukraine conflict started, we've been inundated—so I can't blame people 150%—but we've been inundated with incredibly massive protests, global-shaking wars. The United States right now really has no other option but to engage in these wars if it's going to obtain these far-flung objectives that are simply unattainable, but nonetheless must be obtained to reproduce itself. So you have Russia, Ukraine, you have Iran, you have these massive wars that have such significance globally.

I'm not shocked that in that space a lot of people may misconstrue the geopolitical and global realities and maybe impose their worldview of, well, the path to victory is, okay, you have this side versus this side, and it's going to have to be the just side that destroys the other side. When in fact, I think the reality is that what Russia, China, Iran, what they're trying to build actually has to be built now, and it has to be accelerated in the present, and it has to have a future. These countries are resisting in a far different way in the main and utilizing their capacity to defend themselves as simply a way to springboard their development of a different kind of world.

One that, yes, is not predicated on the destruction of anyone. And I think that is something that people are going to have to wrestle with and come to terms with, because at the end of the day, the focus should be on, as you said, KJ, for those who watch this program or any program from the Western world, it's got to be in changing the behavior or changing the way that a nation or an entity like the collective West is governed. If it's going to be governed on endless war, it's going to be

governed on endless capital accumulation for the very few, then you can't expect other countries who are trying to build something different and better to ultimately do everything for you.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of people residing within the belly of the beast to make sure the belly of the beast is no longer a beast. And however you get there, you get there. Those are tactics and strategy conversations. At the end of the day, that's the reality. And I think we've seen this over and over and over again. It's like, okay, Russia's not doing enough, China's not doing enough, Iran is now not doing enough. Everyone is not doing enough until someone looks, you know, until when? Until you look in the mirror and maybe say, maybe I'm not doing enough. Maybe we aren't doing enough. Maybe we don't have a collective sense of how to move. That's my thoughts. But your thoughts, KJ? Yeah.

## **#KJ Noh**

Well, I tend to agree with you, Danny. I think that we are not doing enough in, quote-unquote, the collective West—people of conscience who are opposed to war, who are opposed to imperialism, colonization, the kind of structural imperial violence. I think there's a lot more that can be done in the imperial core. And I think it's a little bit of an easy way out to simply get on your soapbox and say, you know, you and him fight, you know, or, you know—I mean, I think it's important for people in the imperial West who were born into privilege and who, you know, are nurtured and amplified through privilege, to continually tell other countries what to do, how to run their countries. You know, let them make their own decisions. And I think that it's important for us to focus on what we can do in the belly of the beast.

You know, where are the places that we can build collective power and create real, you know, pressure on the organs of violence, destruction, and oppression? I think that is the real question that we need to be asking ourselves. What is the rest of the world doing? What is the Global South doing? I think they're doing the best that they can. They're trying to build out an alternative system. It's going to be a long and slow process. The current structure that we live in was built over 500 years. It is not going to be dismantled overnight, and it is not going to be dismantled by using the master's tools, as some of the people from the master's house keep on shouting for it to be done. It has to be a different system. There are structures in place.

As I said, the shift from naval power to land power is the shift from zero-sum to win-win—different types of global initiatives, different systems of payment and clearing and transaction: the Global Security Initiative, which believes in mutual, indivisible security; the Global Governance Initiative; the Global Development Initiative, which believes in win-win development; the Global Civilizational Initiative, which believes that all cultures are equal and deserve equal treatment and development. All of these are critical parts of a much, much larger puzzle that is being built out at the current moment. And I think, you know, if you want to criticize these things, at least understand what's happening rather than having this knee-jerk critique based on a very, very ethnocentric and Western-centric capitalist imperialistic mindset.

I think that is not helpful. But I think ultimately we understand that there are tectonic shifts happening. They're not going to happen— not everything is going to change overnight. It's going to be a long, slow, and painful process, and it's not going to be instant gratification. But there are vast, profound changes. As they say, change is not seen in a century, or perhaps change is not seen in half a millennia, but there are fundamental shifts happening. Part of it, you can see, is that to the extent that labor is the metabolism of the economy, you see it shifting from an anabolic point into a catabolic process. This is what currently the U.S. is doing right now. And so the catabolic process— how is that going to be managed? How is that going to be dealt with?

I think that has to be understood as the rest of the Global South continues to develop and knit itself together. But in the meantime, I think our job, if you live in the Western core, is to prevent Western governments from further escalation to war, from further damaging the planet, from further creating intolerable risks, including nuclear risks, against the rest of the planet, which is essentially trying to build out an alternative system that could work better. But at the very least, we have to give it the opportunity to prove or disprove itself rather than critiquing it because it doesn't fit some of our imagined ideals of what we think the rest of the Global South should be doing at our command or whim.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, very well said. Everyone, that marks the close of the show. I want to make sure that you thank KJ by hitting the like button so that the conversation goes further. Thanks so much to Farzana Deem for the super chat. I appreciate it for the super chats. Thanks to all the moderators and members and everybody who engaged in the chat, moderators for your work and your time. But be sure, tomorrow I will be back at 1 p.m. Eastern with a new guest, Ehsan Sarfinijad, at 1 p.m. Eastern time. He will be coming from Iran, and so be sure to tune in to that. Also, today, I want to make sure that you know my friends at DD Geopolitics, they are streaming live later today at 4 p.m. Eastern time, and you can find that link in the video description. So please do save that date, 4 p.m. Eastern time, DD Geopolitics, they're streaming, they'll be continuing the conversation today. KJ, any final words before we head out of here?

## **#KJ Noh**

No, but remember, everybody has a part to play. Part of our job is to be critically thinking, not to be entranced or bewitched by the propaganda, which is pervasive and continuous. And also, yeah, support channels like yours. And also a big shout-out to DD Geopolitics. They're doing great work. Support your independent media channels and support critical thinking and independent voices.

## **#Danny**

Yes, indeed. Great. All right, everybody, see you tomorrow, 1 p.m. Eastern Time, June 29th. Until then, bye-bye.