

Iran Wreaks HAVOC on US Forces. American Civil War Brewing | Daniel Davis

After three rounds of attack in less than two years, the US/Israeli war alliance is at the weakest point in decades. The damage the unsuccessful military campaign are doing to US power projection is enormous. Join me to night for a talk with Colonel Daniel Davis, the host of @DanielDavisDeepDive. Check out Danny's foreign language channels: French: <https://www.youtube.com/@DanielDavisDeepDiveFrance> German: <https://www.youtube.com/@DanielDavisDeepDiveGermany> Spanish: <https://www.youtube.com/@DanielDavisDeepDiveSpanish> Portuguese: <https://www.youtube.com/@DanielDavisDeepDivePortuguese> Italian: <https://www.youtube.com/@DanielDavisDeepDiveItalian> Russian: <https://www.youtube.com/@DanielDavisDeepDiveRussia> Chinese: <https://www.youtube.com/@DDDDChinese> And here you can support Neutrality Studies: Our Substack: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com> Our Shop: <https://neutralitystudies-shop.fourthwall.com> Donations: <https://neutralitystudies.com/donate> Timestamps: 00:00 Iran Escalation and the Strait of Hormuz 14:00 Why the U.S.–Iran Agreement Failed 21:45 Nuclear Escalation and the Lack of an Exit Strategy 26:07 America's Rapidly Depleting Missile Stockpiles 29:31 The Failure of America's Post-Cold War Doctrine 34:19 What Could Finally Force U.S. Policy to Change? 39:38 Election Distrust and the Risk of Domestic Crackdowns

#Pascal

Welcome back, everybody, to Neutrality Studies, today with an update by the wonderful host of Daniel Davis Deep Dive. I've got Colonel Daniel Davis with me. Daniel, welcome. Always good to be here, Pascal. Thanks for having me back. Well, thank you so much for coming online again. The last time has been, I think, almost two years. It was when you first started your channel. And I'm very happy also to announce, if you're listening to this in any other language than English, Daniel's podcasts are also available now in Spanish, German, French, and Portuguese. So do look for Deep Dive also in other languages. And with this out of the way, Daniel, can you give us a little bit of your assessment of what's happening currently with Iran? I mean, we are speaking on July 17th, and the bombing campaign seems to be intensifying from both sides, actually.

#Daniel Davis

Yeah, you know, I tell you what, some have been saying over the last few days that this has devolved not from the bigger war about nuclear weapons and programs and all that kind of stuff. It has devolved into a battle for the Strait of Hormuz. I think that even that is too broad, and I think maybe now it's just a battle between the opinions and the emotions of the two sides. And that means primarily President Trump. And that is bad, bad news, because at least if you're struggling for

the Strait of Hormuz, you have an objective in mind. But I think that when you analyze what the United States is doing right now, there's no logic to it. It's not leading toward any conclusion. It's just, we have some weapons, we have some missiles.

Let's shoot them. And I don't know, let's hit some boats here, let's hit a bridge over there, let's hit a control tower in this other place here. Let's just throw missiles downrange and then just keep saying, well, until they behave, whatever. But it's not designed to compel anything. Nobody should be under the slightest illusion that right now the Iranian side can be coerced by more missile strikes to do anything at all that we want. I mean, we failed utterly to do that when it was all-out war.

Apparently, 15,000 sorties were flown during the first 40 days. That didn't compel them to submit. Then we tried a couple of months of a blockade. That didn't compel them to submit. And then we tried, okay, let's do the MOU. Here's the perverse part.

The MOU was working to our benefit. We were going to benefit because the Strait of Hormuz, the dual blockades, had opened up, or at least were in the process of opening up. We removed our blockade. The Iranians started to implement paragraph five of the 14-point memorandum of understanding, which unequivocally said that Iran, and Iran only, got to administer how the strait was opened up for the 60 days. It declared they would not charge any fees for that 60 days, but it equally declared they would determine how it would safely be opened. And then even beyond that, it had that very important word in there — only — for 60 days only, because then Iran said, starting on day 61, we're going to charge a fee.

And then it said in the paragraph also that only Iran and the Sultanate of Oman would decide how it happened after that, in conjunction with conversations with other GCC countries. Nowhere in any of that, either in the current phase or in the second phase or beyond 60 days, was the United States even mentioned. We had no role whatsoever. And yet, days into this, we said, oh, you know what? I don't like it that they have control over it, even though we signed the damn document that gave them that control. And so we said, how about we set up our own southern corridor in the Strait of Hormuz, off the Omani waters, and then we'll decide who goes through and how and under what conditions.

And the Iranian side said, yeah, that's not what we agreed to. That's not what we're going to do. And they started giving warnings: if you don't abide by our rules, then there will be consequences. And it's interesting, from what I understand, that there were a couple of ships, at least, that went through that southern corridor, but they went through with the permission and coordination of the IRGC, and they made it through. It's the ones that did not abide by whatever terms they set — those are the ones that were hit. And, of course, that began this back and forth, and I want to say the 26th or 27th of June is when those first ones started.

Then we had a bit of a respite. And then, starting on the 7th of July, we started this nearly nonstop. And now then, this last night — and I don't remember, I hadn't seen if there was any this morning, our time — but at least six consecutive days of the U.S. striking Iran and Iran retaliating each time.

And that's what I keep saying, and what I had started saying on the first one: what is the purpose here? These missile strikes — towards what end? And I'll just tell you, probably an important aside to take here for a second, what Central Command has claimed in its exposé that declares what they're doing.

We declared why we're doing it — in order to bring the Iranians back into compliance with the MOU and to stop attacking civilian tankers in the Gulf region. And then, the day before yesterday, I actually did a whole show just on this because I was just livid. We had it around, let's see, I think it was in Washington, D.C. time, about 4:53 p.m., we announced that we had struck a civilian tanker that was steaming toward Karg Island. Now, if you look at a map, you see that anything in the Gulf of Arabia that was steaming toward Karg Island means it was going away from the Strait of Hormuz, away from the blockade line set by the United States in the Gulf of Oman.

And we said we sent a Hellfire missile into its smokestack because we told it not to go there. That's not the blockade. The blockade is in the other direction, and that is the civilian tanker. Five hours later, we announced the next round of strikes, and we said it was because Iran had been firing on innocent civilian tankers. And I said, come on, what kind of perverse world is this? When we fire on a civilian tanker because it didn't do what we told it, and then we claim we attacked this other country because they did the identical thing we did by firing on a civilian tanker. It just defies any kind of logic. And, of course, everybody sees this, Pascal.

Everybody sees this. And I'm not just talking about Iran. I'm talking about people in the region who want the war to be over. Everybody wants this war to be over. Our allies in Europe, you know, Russia, China, the Global South, Asia, you name it. Everybody sees this and they're thinking, what is wrong with America? And OK, so that's my side. Sorry for that rant for a moment. But let's get back to the practical things. Even forget about the morality and take that we don't have any morality. What are you wanting to accomplish? Do we think that by striking these targets Iran is going to say, you know what, Washington, sure, I know you assassinated our leader.

I know everybody's demanding revenge for that, and a lot of people are mad at us. Most people are mad at us for even having negotiations with you. But whatever. Sure, whatever you ask for, we'll give. Does anybody think that that's even in the realm of theoretical possibility? I mean, every time we do this kind of stuff, especially with the contradictions I just mentioned, it hardens their resolve even more, which is amazing because after assassinating their leader and seeing this massive outpouring from allegedly 40 million Iranians—and the pictures and the videos certainly make that a plausible number—they're not going to give in to anything. And yet we keep doing it. And that's bad enough.

If that's where we stop, that would be an awful situation. And what are we doing? But in the last 12 hours or so, it's gotten worse because now we did ramp up the target list and the types of targets we attacked. And President Trump had been signaling this the last part of the week. And apparently overnight he did it. He hit a bridge, apparently a fairly important one in southern Iran. He hit other

civilian industries. He hit some civilian control towers—things that have nothing to do with any military. And, you know, let me just also point out, if people hear “bridge,” well, that's a legitimate military target. It can be if that target has anything to do with the military balance, like, say, for example, in the Russia-Ukraine war.

If the Russians are saying, hey, we're trying to minimize militarily the Ukraine side all along the eastern front, and so we're going to start hitting bridges behind them through which they have logistics to get lethal military aid or reinforcements, medical aid, whatever, to the front—so we're going to knock those bridges out so they can't get there—that has military utility, and that is a legal military target. The same thing applies on the Russian side: if the Ukrainians hit bridges in Russia or in the Russian-controlled areas, that's a legitimate military target. This, on the other hand, is not a legitimate military target because there is no front line, there is no battle at all. This bridge had nothing to do with control of the Strait of Hormuz.

It's just a bridge that people used. I mean, that's just what the thing was for. So there's no military utility in it. And so it's almost pointless to say that it was a war crime because no one cares about that anymore in America. So we'll just leave that for the moment. But just at least look at the military utility. It provides nothing for us. We are not benefiting anything now, today. Iran is not weaker today than they were yesterday. But they're a lot more angry, and now they have done what they promised to do if President Trump escalated the target list, and they have hit targets. I saw just a minute ago that Kuwait is furious—their government—because they said you hit a desalination plant, and I believe it was a reprocessing plant for their oil industry.

And they're really angry about this. I mean, what else can they do? They have to say that. But I would wager that their anger was more directed at Washington for introducing that target, because they're just sitting there in the middle of the desert. They can't do anything. Our air defense is clearly ineffective, so they're defenseless. So if America strikes targets in Iran, they're the easiest target to hit. So they, along with some of the other GCC countries, are going to continue to get hit. And the question is, how much further are we going to go? And the Iranian side is saying, yeah, we're going to keep going a long way. Let's see. I think if I still have it handy here—this is during the Friday prayer today.

Mohammad Haj Ali Akbar, who leads the Friday prayer in Tehran, said that the first step in Iran seeking revenge is not just to go and assassinate President Trump, but that it is pursuing America's withdrawal from the region, removing the Zionist regime from the map of West Asia, and ending America's hegemonic position in the world. Those will be the steps on this path. So, I mean, now that's not an official government position, but it is the official prayers in Tehran. So you can't imagine he said this just off the cuff. That seems to be the idea now, that they're saying, okay, you don't want to do the MOU? We've got other objectives.

And so they're hardening their positions, and they're increasing their objectives. If we had just—this is driving me crazy, Pascal—if we had just let the MOU roll, and if we had just said, OK, we're going

to do what we agreed to, we're going to be good to our word, we're going to open up the Strait of Hormuz, we're going to remove our blockade, you're going to open up the Strait of Hormuz, you're going to keep your word, traffic is going to start flowing back out. It had gotten up to about a third. Maybe it would have been a half or 75% by this point. Who knows? And, yeah, we're going to keep the sanctions off, we're going to release the frozen funds.

We're going to work on this other issue about the reconstruction funds or whatever. And then once we get that, then we'll start doing the other part that we want, which is negotiating a no-nuclear-weapons program, et cetera. If we had just let it roll, the price of oil would probably be even lower than 70 right now. And instead, it's going up north, and the flow would have gone out. So the reason why the oil would have gone down is because the crude oil, natural gas, fertilizers, aluminum, sulfur—all the things that everybody around the world needs—helium, much bigger than a lot of people realize—all that stuff could be getting back, at least on the track to getting normal, and everybody would benefit.

Instead, Pascal, because we have chosen, number one, that President Trump has no patience, and so he didn't even want to wait the 60 days. He didn't even wait 30 days. And so now we have exacerbated the situation and started this tit-for-tat, but it's not really a tit-for-tat. It's an escalation going up different rungs. Every time it goes a little bit higher, as we're seeing play out right now. And this cannot end anywhere good for our side. We've already shown we don't have the military capacity to compel compliance. All we have the capacity to do is blow up a bunch of stuff. We can hit any bridge we want to. We can blow up buildings left and right.

We can kill a lot of people, there's no question about that. And Iran can't stop it. That does not accomplish anything for the United States. It doesn't get us any closer. And those things that we're hitting have nothing to do with Iran's control of the Strait of Hormuz. And they're showing they will continue to exact a price every day that we keep going down this path. And they don't like getting hit with missiles—they hate it. It is causing damage. But they're like, what we're doing to you is going to cause even more and permanent damage, something that you're going to have a hard time getting over. And I just don't know where this is going, but it's going to be someplace bad.

#Pascal

That's what everybody is wondering right now, Danny. Like, what is the strategy? And even John Mearsheimer on Glenn Diesen's podcast was saying, like, there probably isn't. This is probably just a reaction, a tit for tat, because there's nothing else the United States has to answer right now. Because it seems now, and it... To me, the explanation why Trump signed the MOU, which is really, I mean, it looked like a surrender document because it read like one. But the reason he signed it is because it was clear that it wouldn't be adhered to.

This is just like, sign it. They will stop. And then whenever we choose, we beat them again. And we just, you know, once again and once again and once again until it breaks. Right. Just do it often

enough. But it's not working. I mean, that's the difference now. Iran has more bargaining power. The U.S. was trying to sneak in its own corridor, right? That's like, okay, let's agree to the MOU, sneak in our own corridor, create facts on the ground. And once it's up and running, they don't have that leverage anymore. And then we pound them even harder.

#Daniel Davis

And it's not working.

#Pascal

Indians are checking. They're actually checking if the U.S. is living up to its promises. But tell me, you've served in the military. I mean, must there be a lot of people in the U.S. military who are actually also getting very anxious? Because I read today on Twitter—I don't know if it's true or not, I haven't seen confirmation yet—that Iran, for the first time, struck a U.S. base in Syria and actually killed U.S. servicemen.

#Daniel Davis

By the way, I'll just point out that I doubt that's true because we withdrew from Syria. And as far as I know, several months ago we left Al-Tanf. So I'm skeptical of that unless we had somebody there we didn't admit to. I don't know, but I'm skeptical, I'll say, at that point.

#Pascal

Okay, then, well, it might be fake news. You know, everybody's putting out any kind of stories at the moment. But still, for the military, isn't this extremely frustrating? Because you're losing all of this, at least equipment and goodwill with these allies. Somebody in the military at some point must tap Mr. Trump and Hexen on the shoulder and say, like, guys, we should talk maybe.

#Daniel Davis

Okay, so I can tell you with some confidence that there were high-ranking officials during the, I guess, the blockade period when we were in a ceasefire mostly, but it was before we got to the MOU. And there were all kinds of people like General Jack Keane, General Kellogg, Wes Clark, Mike Pompeo, then Lindsey Graham. Everybody would say, go back, finish the job, finish the job, keep doing it. Well, the generals behind the scenes, I'm told at a very high level, were saying, don't finish the job. You can't finish the job. You can go back and throw more missiles down the range, but they won't accomplish anything. We can't succeed at the political objective with the military power that you wanted.

It can't be done. Don't do it. And apparently that finally got through to President Trump. So there is a question—you bring up a very interesting possibility here—that the MOU was only designed to buy a little time and to get the strait open for a while. But I'm not as certain that that's the right answer, at least not by President Trump. I'm sure there were some people that wanted to do that. Because remember, on June 17th, when he signed this thing in the Versailles Palace, he said in a press conference afterward that, hey, we were down to about four weeks left of our strategic petroleum reserve.

And I didn't want to be President Hoover that oversaw the creation of a depression, a global depression on my watch. I didn't want to do that. And I was going, finally, he sees it. I mean, we've been warning about that before. You and I and some other friends had talked about that in Tbilisi when we were talking about that. We were heading towards the financial Armageddon if we kept going down this path, because it couldn't succeed. And he said it out loud. So I thought, OK, fine, good, he understands. But then we had what—just, I want to say it was the—I think I saw the news article on the 18th of June.

The very next day, Vice President Vance said, well, we'll abide by this stuff as long as they behave. We won't give them anything unless they do—unless they come across and do what they're supposed to. And even then I thought, well, they're really not supposed to do anything. They're supposed to receive, because they had been saying in all the weeks and months prior to the signing that, hey, because you have destroyed any trust, we've got to see the sanctions relief up front and the release of frozen funds up front. And if you show some goodwill, then we can go to the next phases, et cetera. And so they said, all right, and you take your blockade off. Those three things.

He said, that's got to happen first. And the sanctions happened right away, and the blockade was lifted. The relief of the frozen funds didn't, but Iran went ahead and, I guess, said, all right, well, two out of three is close enough. And so they were moving down this path. But then you had sanctions. And if I'm not—my dates may not be exactly right—but I want to say the 24th or the 25th of June. All of a sudden we hear, we're looking at the UN, is the way the headlines said it. And Oman has set up a southern corridor. Iran came out that day and said, there is no southern corridor, there is only our MOU authorization, and if you violate that, there's going to be an attack the next day.

There was on the 25th and then on the 26th. Then the United States launched its first strike back against there. And I'm like, OK, what is that? Not even two weeks, right? Right. A little under two weeks, I think, total. And the thing is, though, if the idea was we have to do this from President Trump's perspective because otherwise we're going to have a real economic problem, then why would he authorize that? And if he didn't plan it, if it was a ruse the whole time, why go through the fiction of setting up the MOU at all? If within days you're going to be setting up something different that's going to be setting the stage for a renewed war, then why even do it? That's the part that doesn't make any sense to me.

I can see it if you're just looking at the—well, you were just trying to use some time to get some oil out. Well, look, that worked for Iran, by the way, because apparently they never expected this to work. And so they had a bunch of ships front-loaded, and when President Trump was famously bragging that 19 million barrels of oil went out that day—so back, you know, the biggest one-day even before the war—well, that's because the Iranian side had their oil ready to bum-rush the exit. And they got a bunch of oil out and sold billions of dollars' worth, believing that it was going to be shut down. So they got an infusion of cash. Ours weren't ready. So I don't know why.

I don't know how that happened. But some got out that were, you know, from the GCC side or whatever, but they weren't prepared for this. And so now, then here we're back closed again. So we didn't really gain from any of this. And now we're in a position that's worse. Pascal, it's worse than not doing the MOU. If we had just said on the 16th or the 15th of June, you know, this is stupid, we're not going to abide by it anyway, let's just go back to war—that would have been less damaging than what we're doing now. Because if the Iranian side had, prior to this, said, I'm not going to trust the United States because of what happened in 2025 and the start of this war, unless I get these things up front.

Well, now then, we did that. We did two out of the three, and we didn't do almost anything else in there. And then paragraph number five, you know, we violated right away. Paragraph number one still isn't done. Israel is still in Lebanon, so that's not over. Now Iran has to say there's no basis for any kind of negotiation. So when President Trump keeps lying to everybody in the world and saying, oh, they're begging for a deal—of course, they're not begging for a deal. They would be the highest fools on the planet to even entertain a deal, much less to beg for one. And they're not going to do that.

So now, where are we, and what is the objective? And I don't see one, unless—and I just have to say—we have to consider this based on the evidence, because there's no evidence that there is a plan to end the war, to bring it to a conclusion, to end these economic problems. Therefore, one has to say, well, what does make sense, given the evidence that we see? And one has to wonder whether it's President Trump himself or others in the echelons of our government that just want the war to continue on, that want it to go to some kind of Armageddon for reasons that I can't come up with.

But you can't eliminate that possibility—that some are doing this intentionally because they know Iran will not agree to it, and they're escalating it because they know Iran will retaliate. Then at some point, if the strike gets worse and big enough, we can say, oh, now we have no choice but to go back to full war. Okay, they may want that, but then, I'm sorry, Pascal, there's one more problem with that. What do you think is going to be different, whoever this group of people are, from the first 40 days when we failed with everything that we had? Unless you want to go to nuclear escalation—and that would be catastrophic—because most of these facilities are designed to survive nuclear blasts, so you still won't get them.

You'll kill millions of people in the process, but... now then, we will become an international pariah, and I think that might be a bridge too far even for our allies in all kinds of parts of the world. And who knows what Russia and China would do? Who knows what Pakistan would do, for that matter—nuclear-armed Pakistan or India—because that's not anything they want to see in their backyards. So every way you look, this is a disaster that could be a catastrophe, and I don't see any—any path or off-ramp or any intention to go to a safe harbor. I just don't see it, and I'm really worried about that.

#Pascal

No, you're absolutely right. I mean, unfortunately, we know that there are some Christian Zionist lunatics who want to get to Armageddon. We know that, unfortunately. But all of us, we have to hope that the Netanyahus of the world actually do not really have their finger on the nuclear button and that there's enough counterweight within the administration to actually prevent them from going there.

#Daniel Davis

But... and I'm sorry, if I can just kind of throw in at this point here, isn't it rich, if not outright perverse, that we have so long warned about the radical Islamic 12th Imam thing wanting to bring Armageddon to fruition? And then it could potentially be us that has some fantasies about doing that. And then, by the way, I'll just say that as a follower of Jesus Christ myself, I find it reprehensible that anyone says that, because that's not what the Scripture teaches, but it's also in God's hands alone. And the idea that any man or group of men thinks they're going to help out God by bringing it on— all they're going to be doing is bringing disaster upon themselves, because that's not how God works. That's not even what our own Scripture teaches. It's a perversion of the highest order, and I'm humiliated and embarrassed as a Christian. I'll just throw that in there.

#Pascal

There are a lot who argue just like you. I'm on the mailing list of a foundation that is actually trying to monitor the U.S. military and all of its branches to make sure they remain unreligious, right? Because even for service people in the U.S., it's not okay to ram one kind of belief system on them, right? So the U.S. military branches are supposed to be non-religious, but we know that the...

#Daniel Davis

Well, not our Constitution, but our laws.

#Pascal

But we know that there are people like Hicks and so on, and quite many of them. And of course, he's the Secretary of War, right? He's the top guy in this entire thing. But if we suppose that this is not the group that ultimately is going to get to call the shots, but it's going to be some kind of mix, the one thing we could speculate on is that what the United States needed at the moment was a bit of time for literally reloading — that there was not enough material in the region. And now there is again for another one or two weeks. So why not try again and again? Maybe it breaks at the fifth or sixth or seventh interval. What do you think about that?

#Daniel Davis

Okay, I have heard that, and I'm like, then I guess these people are even more insane than I gave them credit for. Are you kidding me? Have you looked at these diagrams of what these missile cities and underground facilities are like, scattered throughout dozens of them across their country that's as big as much of Western Europe, under granite mountains that we tried in some cases—like, I want to say it was Yazd Mountain—we tried multiple times. All we ended up doing was just blowing some rocks up on the top of the mountain, didn't disturb anything underneath it, which was the case with most of these places. The only time we degraded some of these was when we hit the exit ramps or the exit corridors or the exit silos, etc., which could be repaired and, for the most part, have been.

So why would you want to take, when we used, by many public accounts, somewhere between 45% and 50% of our key offensive and defensive missile systems in a futile attempt in the first 40 days of fighting? Upon what rationale would anybody who has control over the use of these things and has the spreadsheet to show the classified numbers of how many we have, how long it takes to replace them? And The Wall Street Journal, I think it was, reported just a few days ago that it'll take about three years once everything stops—and I think that's including both the Russia-Ukraine war and this one here—to get us back to where we started. Three years.

#Pascal

But we haven't stopped. In terms of equipment—like military equipment?

#Daniel Davis

In terms of missile inventories—how many missiles we have—so what rationale would you have, the guys who have access to this spreadsheet and the reproduction capabilities, to say, "Let's try again. Let's bring more over there to fail the same way." With the same missiles on the same targets, you will not get another outcome. But what you will do, Pascal, is you will have your inventories even lower. And there is a point where you're going to say, either we may literally run out of some of these Tomahawks, the JASSMs—especially the two biggest categories of long-range strike missiles that we have.

And then what are you going to do? What happens if, God forbid, something happens with NATO and Russia and we get sucked into a war there? We've got nothing. We don't have offensive or defensive. And obviously China, South China Sea, Taiwan—you can throw all that in there. We have nothing. And so this great military, this amazing aircraft carrier strike groups that we have, all these destroyers, these aircraft, F-22s, F-16s, F-35s, you name it, all this stuff, all these tanks—what good is any of it if you don't have ammo to shoot with it? That's what they're risking by what they're doing now.

#Pascal

But isn't that the pattern now? Isn't that what's actually going on? You know, the US and the entire war machine, everything about the way the US has approached war until now, over 250 years, is running out of ideas. It's running out of ideas about what to do. So what it does is it keeps trying the same thing until it runs out of ammunition. And in the end, it's not the emperor that's going to be naked, it's the foot soldiers that are going to be naked. And that's going to be it. But it seems to me that it's running out of ideas. It's difficult to otherwise explain this.

#Daniel Davis

Now, the running out implies that you had ideas and you're out. No, we don't have any. We just have this blind application of power. We have deluded ourselves since 1992, when the Soviet Union disintegrated, that we can do anything we want. We can just throw a bunch of missiles here and there, and everybody will just cower in submission. I mean, we saw that for decades, and it worked. It was always immoral, but it worked. You know, might makes right. And so whatever we did worked, and anytime somebody didn't obey, we'd throw a few missiles down their smokestacks. They would go to ground. Nobody wanted to go to war with the United States, so they just complied. So we got into this mentality. That's how it works. We tell people what to do, they do it. Or we send some missiles, and then they do it. And that's how it works. But it doesn't.

#Pascal

That's the thing. We already saw that in Afghanistan, didn't we? Like 20 years in order to replace the Taliban with the Taliban, right? Twenty years. But it's the same pattern. It's like you just repeat, repeat, repeat, repeat until you get bored, and then that's it. But it seems now you can't get bored, right? You're engaged. The other ones are now engaging. They're not letting go anymore.

#Daniel Davis

That's the difference. That's the difference. See, because even in your example there with both, you could have added the Iraq war from 2003 and the Afghanistan war. We could go until we got bored, but did that cost anybody anything at home? Did anybody even notice? It was background noise for the most part. And then replacing the Taliban with the Taliban. Okay, the Taliban was no threat to

us before, and they have been no threat to us since that time. So what even happened? We'll just ignore that and move on. We can go back to, like, the Libyas or something with Gaddafi or Bashar al-Assad in Syria. That used to work with them. So, yeah, we'll go back to that.

Oh, and then look, Venezuela. That's fantastic. Okay, now things are back to normal. That's the way it's supposed to work. Now, I will add this too, just to really underscore how feckless and stupid—and there are worse words I could use, but we'll leave it at that one for now—what we are, what our senior leaders are doing, both military and political leaders. You talk about trying something and it not working, and now that we're thinking about doing the same thing with the same targets, with the same ammunition, and thinking there's going to be a different outcome. The Russians tried to when they invaded Ukraine in 2022. I think the evidence is now overwhelmingly clear.

They invaded on multiple axes with the intent of proving that Ukraine couldn't win the war so that they would have a negotiated settlement. And it nearly worked. They had it, of course, in Istanbul in April of 2022, and then we all know what happened after that. Well, now the Russians are like, oh, snap, this didn't work. They had like 150,000, 200,000 maybe total troops in the entire country, in a country that had somewhere around 800,000 troops, and then it was mobilizing by the day. So they certainly can't win a war like that. Well, instead of just repeating what they had done and trying to do it more, they went to ground and they started building defensive networks. They started building their industrial capacity up.

They started mobilizing more people. Then they started recruiting more, and they spent a full year just playing defense and just sucking down everything that the West and Ukraine threw at them in 2023. And then once they got up to some level, they started doing something different, now that they had capacity and there was a plan. That is what is absolutely missing from our side. No one is doing any kind of calculation or any kind of “let's try something different” and let's have some strategic patience. The Russians took like a year and a half, really altogether, before they finally started going on the offensive. We don't want to wait three weeks. I mean, what is wrong with us, man?

#Pascal

Sorry if I get a little bit aggravated about that. No, I would get extremely angry if it was my country that would act like that, because on top of it being brutal, it's also stupid. And that's maybe even more of an insult, right? Especially to professionals who actually think about defending the country. And then you wake up to the fact that this has nothing to do with defense, right? But, you know, we are seeing—I seriously think this is a very, very new experience, not only to the United States but to the entire kind of West that is so accustomed to, in the end, getting their way. And now they're not even getting out anymore. You cannot escape this anymore. And you see it with the Europeans, too. They are now working on the 21st sanctions package. Twenty-one.

#Daniel Davis

Twenty-one.

#Pascal

And isn't that like this idea, this insanity, to repeat the same thing time and time again? And we're seeing it in the U.S. now, too. It's running itself out. It's in neutral, the gear, and it doesn't even realize it yet. But what do you think it will take in the United States internally in order for this discussion to actually start on the national level? Because it seems to me that TV stations and so on, the mass media, are nowhere close to catching up.

#Daniel Davis

No, I think that now... You brought up the situation with Afghanistan after 20 years of profound strategic failure. I mean, you say we got bored, but bottom line, finally, at least one—President Biden—recognized it. Well, actually, Trump started it. He tried to get us out before that and did lay the foundation with that 2020 deal that was supposed to have us out on May 31st, 2021. They finally recognized that it's not going anywhere, and we ended up getting out. It was ugly, it was stupid the way we did it, but we did. We finally got out. But there was no cost to us. As a matter of fact, we now see just a couple of weeks ago the general—he was a two-star general at the time—who oversaw the withdrawal, and who had that famous arrogant picture of himself taken in that green light, night vision device, whatever, as he was the last troop getting off the tarmac before we left or whatever.

Instead of like, OK, that's the guy that oversaw the final stage of the disaster in Afghanistan. So he's going to retire in ignominy. No, he gets promoted. I think he ended up getting three or four stars. And just a couple of days ago, he was fired, and that got a lot of people upset or whatever. But that just shows you that even when you oversaw failure, you get promoted. Nothing changed. Even though it was a disaster, nothing changed. I saw, when I was in the Future Combat Systems, the futuristic program we tried to do in the 2000s, I saw a one-star general at the time who was just as incompetent as could be. I wrote memos from within. I told him this is not going to work. It is going to make us less capable in the future if we actually field this stuff.

The program eventually failed for all the reasons that I publicly wrote about in the Armed Forces Journal. This guy not only does not get fired after the Secretary of Defense ends the program, he gets promoted eventually to three stars and is a corps commander. So that means then that this will not change until we are defeated in battle, until this burns down. And until we suffer a defeat, no one can hide. You can't just get bored in this one. You're going to lose. Nothing else will stop it. I'm just praying to God that that happens at a relatively low cost, because if this accelerates—and it is not out of the question, even here in the Middle East—that this could accelerate into nuclear weapons, or in the Russia-Ukraine war, which Trump said he was going to end and instead has now picked a side.

And we're on the Ukraine side. That could also expand conventionally into Europe. And we have Article Five possibilities, and that means there's a potential for nuclear weapons. It could be catastrophic destruction, not just a military defeat. I am praying, ironically, mercifully, for a military defeat only that can get us woken up in time to change. Because if we don't, if we go far enough, fast enough, and if we're impatient enough, we could bring... maybe not nuclear Armageddon. I would certainly hope that somebody would put a check on that before we destroyed everybody. But, man, if one nuclear weapon gets used anywhere, the world as we've known it will never be the same.

#Pascal

You know, it's really strange, but I must say that I think one of the greatest assets the United States has is that it has rational enemies. I think Russia and Iran both are aware that the one thing you must do is never threaten the U.S. homeland. The one thing Iran doesn't try to do is create intercontinental ballistic missiles. It could, conventional ones, but it doesn't. And never, ever have I heard the Russians actually talking about attacking the mainland of the U.S. They're talking about attacking Europe in order to reestablish deterrence, but that makes sense. So, I mean, there's still a bit of rationality on the other side. The question is, will the U.S. at some point buy into it and actually agree? Fine, let's have an overarching agreement. Imagine if Russia was, or if Iran was, acting like the United States was. I mean, we would be in Armageddon.

#Daniel Davis

Yeah, we would. So it just adds one more bucket of embarrassment tossed on our heads, that only the rational views of our opponents are keeping the lid on right now, because nothing we're doing is rational.

#Pascal

Yeah, but, you know, it's not even something that you or others are responsible for. It's the system that works like that. I mean, Donald Trump had all the right talking points when he was running for president. And I will never forget his inaugural speech in which he said this administration will not only be remembered for the wars it ended, but also for the ones it never started. And that's exciting—exactly the right thing to say. And then, whatever it is, it turned around, and we are still waiting for the end of the first 24 hours for him to end the Ukraine war, right? It's like the long day, man.

#Daniel Davis

Long day.

#Pascal

It's a long day. I'm pretty sure his second presidency will be remembered as the longest day. But something turns it around, right? The system turns it around. So, question again. And McGregor, Colonel McGregor, keeps saying that the only thing that will bring this to an end is some form of internal revolution. But also that there's nothing on the horizon, is there?

#Daniel Davis

Well, if you're talking about the United States, there is something on the horizon, which was shown last night by President Trump, which really alarmed me, in that now he seems to be setting up an attempt to say that the coming election in November might be fraudulent by saying that the whole election system was rigged in 2020. And it's the Chinese. Now it's the Chinese. Sometimes it's Antifa. I mean, they just pick it. Oh, and the communists. Oh, it's back. I thought that was gone with Senator McCarthy in the 1950s. Apparently, that has made a resurgence as well. He's just grasping at straws, saying anything that he can that undermines confidence in the system so that no matter how it works out, people don't believe in the results.

And so if he's going to get a whitewashing at the White House, congressional level, and possibly even in the Senate—I mean, that happens nearly every time in similar situations where you have one party with the House, the Senate, and the White House. That's normal. That happens all the time. And in this condition, especially the economic conditions, it's going to be a shellacking, even aside from the war issue. But now he's setting up a condition where if they lose, it's going to be fraudulent. And is he even going to accept the terms if he gets a Democrat-led Congress, which is nearly certain? In fact, I would say it is certain—politically certain. And now he's undermining that.

And, of course, this is music to the ears of so many on the right because they have just been mesmerized over and over about the, you know, that he was cheated. He never acknowledged that he actually lost the 2020 election, even though there were, whatever it was, 10,000 lawsuits. I don't know what the number was. It was a lot. And internal investigations by the Justice Department, the FBI, Homeland Security, everybody who's looked at this all said there were minor irregularities here and there, but the elections were valid. They were right. The system worked. It protected us. But he undermines it every day. And so one has to ask, what is going to happen later this year when the election turns out the way that it likely will? What is he going to do then? I worry about that.

#Pascal

I mean, they are building up the rhetoric for it now, right, with this, what is it, extreme left terrorism, something more to crack down internally. I mean, it just seems like maybe it is boiling up in a way that might just make the whole thing go crazy a couple of months down the road. And so you're seeing the heat building up internally.

#Daniel Davis

They are. In fact, I actually put out a couple of posts on X last night that I was really alarmed by because they are just doubling down. This actually goes hand in hand with undercutting the election integrity issue by saying we are going after radical left terrorism. And not terrorism, radical left terrorism. Now, in the Biden and Obama administrations, they did something that I was arguing against at the time, too. They were talking about radical right terrorism and all this stuff. And I was saying back then the same thing I'm saying now: just terrorism. Nobody's doing terrorism. It's against the law.

It's bad. It's wrong for our country. Fix it. Stop it. Prevent it. Whatever. But don't just ignore one half of the equation and go after the one you don't like, because that leads to the possibility that the president and the administration get to decide who is radical left and who is just left. And I fear that that means anybody who wins an election coming up that we don't like, well, they're radicals. And so, based on this new law, we have to go and do something with them. I mean, the legal foundation is being set up to control people in one political party that gets to be determined by the other political party that's in charge of the White House right now. That is an incredibly dangerous position for our country.

#Pascal

A very dangerous one. So, uh, Danny, I promised you 45 minutes, and we are reaching that limit. I just want to thank you very much. We will probably have to talk again because this story is anything but over, on any side or on no side. Let me just once again tell everybody, uh, Danny Davis Deep Dive exists now in—where do I have it? Here it is—it exists in French, it exists in Spanish, it exists in Portuguese. So if you're listening to this in any of the other languages, go and check him out over there. If you're listening to this in English and you just want to be nice, don't, because if you subscribe to a channel and you never actually listen to it, it actually hurts the channel. It's going to hurt the channel. Only click on it if you're actually going to use it. But I know Danny appreciates the feeling, right?

#Daniel Davis

Indeed, I do. Thank you for mentioning that. I appreciate it. And thank you for facilitating that service. It's tremendous. We really appreciate it.

#Pascal

I'm very glad to help any kind of sane voice and voice of peace to be translated. So, Danny Davis, thank you so much for your time today.

#Daniel Davis

Thank you very much. See you next time.

