

Iran REPELS US Attack, 43 Warplanes WIPED OUT as Trump BACKS DOWN | KJ Noh

KJ Noh discusses the restart of all out US war on Iran, what precipitated the over 80 strikes along Iran's coastal cities, and the beginning of Iran's retaliation. 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 Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho> #iran #iranwar #trump

#Danny

Welcome back to the show, everyone. Danny Haiphong here with KJ Noh to break down the latest developments. We begin with Iran, where the United States has decided to stop strikes on Iran. Two straight days now of no strikes. And we'll get to reasons about that later. But I wanted to pull up a major list published by Iranian military sources on all of the military assets hit in just 13 days. And I scroll down to the aircraft losses here. If you count up these, from the fighter aircraft to the reconnaissance drones, operational drones, F-15s, P-8s, E-17s, it equals a whopping 43 aircraft in 13 days. Now, the damage of the total number of military assets in dollar terms has been \$20.6 billion. This, of course, is still Iranian sources, but it's all we have because the U.S. does not report these things.

But what they are reporting, KJ, is that Trump has shelved plans for a major escalation in the war on Iran, stating that both Chief of Staff Dan Caine as well as J.D. Vance said that the Patriot interceptors have been nearly exhausted, and escalation would basically deplete them to nothing. And another report has said that U.S. forces were reportedly allowing missiles to hit U.S. bases because they were so concerned, CENTCOM was, with the Patriot interceptors and the air defenses. KJ, this is major news. Many people have said this is a major taco by Trump. What have you made of what's happened in the last 24 hours and what it says about this war and the geopolitical situation more broadly?

#KJ Noh

Well, I think, once again, the U.S. is reaching its capacity. MAGA is certainly one of the key issues. As we said, MAGA, markets, midterms—these are all core issues. But the larger issue is that the U.S.

is not capable of winning this war. It is not capable of imposing its will on Iran. It is not capable of forcing the Strait of Hormuz to be opened. So it signals in a very, very clear way that the U.S., in a very, very concrete sense, is extraordinarily enfeebled. And of course, we can talk about the depletion of air interceptors. We know from the estimates of RUSI, from CSIS, and then from the Iranian reports, the U.S. is really, really depleting its strategic assets. One of the key things I want to highlight: it's not simply the number of airplanes that have been hit, but the number of radars.

So seven command and control centers, three satellite communication systems, six Patriot air defense radars, three air and maritime surveillance and monitoring radars, eight early warning radar systems, seven air missile defense radars, three AN/TPY radar systems, two AN/TPS-117 radars, five long-range radars, two air defense radars, one tactical radar complex. What that means is essentially that Iran is blinding the United States. And as I said before, you get into a fight, somebody hits you, you get your retina detached, you cannot fight. And I really think that that is making that very, very clear for the United States. I think the other thing we want to look at is... the original battle plan against Iran was also the battle plan against China.

It was drafted, actually, in 2009, and it was supposed to give the U.S. overmatch and strategic—it would give them an immediate strategic win over Iran, most certainly, and certainly over China. And the Undersecretary of the Navy, Robert Work, in 2010, explained it. He said, "The doctrine of war, air-sea battle, at its core, is about winning a guided munitions salvo competition." What's very clear is that the United States has lost this guided munitions salvo competition. As I said before, in Gulf War I, 30 years ago, the U.S. was doing 3,000 sorties a day. During these last 14 days, it was doing perhaps 100, 150 sorties a day, trying to escalate up to double that. But it shows that the kind of strategic overmatch and this total and complete air dominance that the United States is used to having is now history. It really is not able to enforce its will.

#Danny

Yeah, I found the report by NBC News so interesting, that the Pentagon was allowing, they say, Iran to hit U.S. bases just to preserve these air defenses. And without the radars, I mean, these air defenses become next to useless. But nevertheless, this is being framed as a temporary pause, KJ. According to NBC News, these interceptors and everything else that goes with them, including those radars, take years to replace. So temporary could be a while. How do you see the United States maneuvering here then? Because it doesn't seem like it—Israel, there are prominent people around Trump's administration who say that this war isn't necessarily going to end because of this. But then what? It seems like a very big quandary, that you do need these things if you're going to fight a war, especially a long war, which Iran is now calling a war of attrition in its own right, and maybe doing that because it sees it has the advantage in a war of attrition. Your thoughts?

#KJ Noh

Well, you know, the U.S. has always had three options, none of which are good. The first is bombs. This is the bombing war. This is what, you know, Robert Work called winning a guided munitions salvo competition. The U.S. seems to have lost that competition, certainly does not have air dominance. It's not able to assert its will in the standoff contestation. It also has the capacity for boots on the ground. As we've said before, that would be an act of madness. Anything that the United States does in terms of boots on the ground—let's forget the fact that it doesn't even have, you know, the troops or the capacity—but let's imagine that there are boots on the ground. That would essentially be a kill box.

It would be Dien Bien Phu. It would be Khe Sanh. It would be, you know, one of the great strategic, obvious, visible strategic humiliations in the history of war. And we know that Iran is highly, highly prepared for a land invasion. In fact, that's probably what they want, because they're meeting the United States on their ground, on their home court, on their territory. And they are furious at the amount of, you know, violence, unjust violence. Let's not forget that this is a criminal, illegal war of aggression. But certainly, you know, the mass casualties that have been reportedly levied on their civilian population, I think that Iran has much, much stronger resolve.

And as I said, you know, the different asymmetries: it has stronger resolve, it has a faster learning curve, it has a cost asymmetry, it has a geographic advantage, it has a strategic advantage, it has economic, industrial advantage, et cetera, et cetera. All the advantages are on the side of Iran. So the U.S. has the potential of bombs, boots on the ground, and blockade. None of these things are working. And so what is it going to do? Well, you know, there's clearly attempts to engage and solicit proxies to wage some of the war while the U.S. recalibrates, regroupes, and tries to restock its magazine. That magazine stocking will take a long time.

You know, they make about 50 Patriot interceptors a month, possibly eight THAAD missile interceptors a month, if even that. And if you look at the actual procurement timelines, you know, they take between four to five years to actually go from order to delivery. And so I think there's certainly huge problems with the defense industrial base here, as far as sustainment and logistics is concerned. So the U.S. does not have a lot of options, but it does have the option, possibly, of engaging further with proxies, using proxies. It does have the capacity to go further up the escalation ladder, meaning using tactical nukes. And I think there's a large number of ruling class elites who think that that is the solution.

And then it also has, you know, the option of, you know, drawing out some kind of strange protracted war of attrition, which it will lose. Or it could do the logical thing and come to the negotiating table, fully implement the MOU approach, and make good on its promises, and find a modus vivendi, in which case the Strait of Hormuz would be opened up. The Bab el-Mandab would no longer be under threat. The Gulf states would no longer be facing existential crises. And globally,

the economy would sigh, you know, would take a big sigh of relief. Right now, what we have to understand is that Iran has a dog shock collar on the Strait of Hormuz. It can shock that any time it wants. And the U.S. has no options as far as that is concerned.

#Danny

Yeah, there are already reports that even with Oman and Iran apparently negotiating for some kind of final settlement on jointly managing the Strait of Hormuz on the Omani side, the so-called corridor the United States was pushing ships through—I guess there was one that was attempting to push through, probably at U.S. direction, and it hit one of Iran's naval mines that it had placed there. So that is going to continue because Iran has said, straight and foremost, it's never going back. But as you said, KJ, even just for the purposes of the United States actually getting the pause, actually getting this pause.

It doesn't want to stop war with Iran. But if the United States Empire needs to build up its stockpiles again and it takes years, well, then you'll need a pause longer than... what was it? I mean, there have been now two, since the ceasefire, two flare-ups, and both of them require the same munitions that were being used in the initial part of the war. A lot less effective, a lot fewer, but nonetheless, the same munitions. So what do you think about this? I mean, the United States would have to take a long pause then, no, if it's going to replenish, if we're just thinking in the eyes of the twisted empire.

#KJ Noh

If it were thinking logically, that's what it would do. It would take a very, very long pause. And hopefully that pause would run into some real self-reflection, and the empire would stop waging aggressive war against countries that it sees fit to bully and dominate. But I don't think that is in the DNA of the ruling imperial neocon class. I can't see that happening, although, who knows? I'm not ruling anything yet. I certainly hope that the U.S. de-escalates and negotiates a meaningful diplomatic solution. But I think the core thing to understand is that, if you give the analogy of a chess game, in chess, generally, you want to control the center.

Once you control the center, you occupy the center, you threaten the center, then essentially, the game is a foregone conclusion. It's very, very hard to undermine that unless you have some extraordinary gambit, which is highly unlikely, right? Iran controls the center. It controls the Strait of Hormuz. And there has been this tit-for-tat exchange, which is, you're essentially just losing pieces. And at a certain point, you lose so many pieces, you can't continue. You have to resign. And I think the U.S. should resign. It is at that point where it really does need to just simply back off, go back and make good, and seek a modus vivendi. Remember, Iran has not pulled out all the stops yet. There is still a lot more that it could do. There have been attacks on Amazon data centers.

I think there's been one attack on energy and desalination plants. But Iran could actually wipe the slate clean. They could wipe out the entire infrastructure of all the Gulf states, in which case those states, U.S. vassals, U.S. power projection platforms, would no longer be viable as countries. And along with that, also what would be destroyed is the U.S. strategy for its, you know, AI development. Because what has been happening is there have been \$2 trillion worth of pledges to the Gulf states, or from the Gulf states, to develop AI data centers in UAE and et cetera. All of these Gulf states were supposed to be the new mecca of investment for AI, in particular AI compute, i.e., AI data centers, because they have abundant energy and vast amounts of space, et cetera. That entire model is completely gone.

And AI data centers require water, electricity, and also humans to service them. If that can't be done, then the seven major corporations that are involved in AI, that are propping up and that are responsible for almost all of U.S. economic development, will be wiped out. And so all of this is to say that Iran has not even begun to start fighting. It has been pulling its punches, and it has many, many steps up the escalation ladder, each one of which will be extraordinarily damaging, not just to the United States, but to all the global capitalist states. And so hopefully the U.S. is thinking about this. It understands that Iran has a dog shock collar on the global economy, on the U.S. economy, on the future of the U.S. as a viable economic state. Hopefully it realizes that. But that remains to be seen.

#Danny

Yeah, well, that is 100% true. Rationality isn't the forte of the warmongers. Now, KJ, I think also a big problem with a pause, taking any kind of pause, there must be a kind of competing pressure: the pressure to reserve military stockpiles, air defenses, etc.; the pressure on the economy that builds, as you were just describing, if this escalates.

But then the counterpressure to that, on the opposite end, is the fact that Iran gets more and more effective as time goes on with its ability to strike back. So you have now this Washington Post excerpt taken by RT, where it's been admitted that they've calculated, CENTCOM has, that it takes only about 30 minutes now for a U.S. strike to be responded to immediately with missile and drone attacks on bases. So that's a very short turnaround time, and that could very well get shorter if Iran is now battle-hardened. And second of all, they say all the time that they are perfecting and investing a lot of time, energy, and resources into improving their own stockpiles. So, yeah, this is a major contradiction that the U.S. empire is in, and the Trump administration dove right into it, dove right into it. And now it appears it's not able to get out, or at least that's what history has shown us thus far.

#KJ Noh

Yeah, I certainly think the U.S. is in a quagmire. You know, it has hugged the tar baby, and it really doesn't know what to do. It's a zugzwang. But, you know, once again, as you point out, notice the rapidity of response, the counter-battery strikes. Again, notice the way in which Iran is able to blind and hit U.S. strategic assets. And the U.S. doesn't seem to be able to do that, because if it had been doing that, it would mention that. Notice that when Iran talks about its strikes, it gives you very, very clear specifics. As I said, you know, 37 radars, six fighter jets, 12 fuel storage tanks, et cetera, MQ-9 drone hangars, command centers for HIMARS missile launch platforms. Very, very specific about what it's hitting.

And when the U.S. says it has hit things, it just kind of says generic things. In other words, we don't know what it's hitting or if it's hitting anything. But certainly the diminished sortie rate, the lack of specificity, and Iran's clear and focused responses show that really the United States is losing this in a very, very big way. Once again, going back to battle doctrine, the United States has had a long history of gaining immediate air dominance and then pummeling countries into submission and then sending in the military for cleanup. Now, this works when you're working with countries that are very, very poor, that do not actually have real militaries. And we saw this, for example, with Afghanistan.

We saw this with Iraq in the first and second Gulf Wars, et cetera. But Iran is a completely different animal. And they've been preparing for three decades for this fight. And they've shown that their strategies and their, you know, their asymmetries are different, literally unbeatable. You know, as far as I can see, I cannot see a winning strategy for the United States. And so the U.S. is in a very, very difficult position. It also doesn't have, you know, the usual capacities that it has. It has gotten fat and flabby and useless because for two decades it focused on COIN, or counterinsurgency, which essentially means that you're bombing, you know, goat herders from the air and then giving them, you know, little, you know, solatia packets and soccer balls, you know, to counteract that.

They were doing what they referred to as armed social work. And that doesn't work anymore. That COIN paradigm doesn't work anymore. They don't really understand the nature of combined arms maneuver against a peer. And they never saw Iran as a peer. They considered it a non-peer. But as I said, once again, you know, AirSea Battle, this is the doctrine of war that they planned for Iran. Also, what they have planned for China has been shown to be completely ineffective and actually 180 degrees in the inverse, in the sense that it is Iran itself that has blinded them, that is Iran that has decapitated most of their forward assets, and that it's Iran which has shown clearly not only missile dominance, but really, you know, that they have won, you know, the guided munition salvo competition, as they call it.

#Danny

And to add on to maybe the pain, KJ, as we move into the broader situation. But before that, you mentioned proxies earlier. Iran has—this has been the most underreported part of this war, I

believe—is throughout the conflict since February 28th, but especially since the MOU period, Iran has been preemptively striking these so-called Kurdish forces involved on the Iraqi border in places like Erbil, where the United States has been training forces to act as a proxy.

Even Donald Trump says periodically that we have other people who will do this, and he's most likely referring—other people that will do a ground invasion—he's most likely referring to the so-called Kurdish forces, which have in the past actually rejected going into Iran and wreaking havoc. But that was the plan. But Iran has been striking the U.S. infrastructure, the assets, and the literal forces there almost every single day since the MOU was depleted. And now they're declaring that it's essentially nearly all gone, if not all gone. So that's a big hit. And that will also take time to rebuild, because we know they're going to try. I mean, they have a big foot—the U.S. is a big political foothold there. What's your thoughts on this?

#KJ Noh

Yeah, I agree. First, I think it's very, very foolish to try to use proxies, especially the extremist proxies that the U.S. seems to be cultivating. I have good Iranian friends, comrades who actually despise the current regime, the current government. But they said, "If the U.S. uses proxies, I will go to Iran and I will pick up arms to defend Iran." And so I think they really, really misunderstand the nature of the resolve of the Iranian people to preserve their dignity and their sovereignty. I also think that, as you point out, U.S. assets are severely depleted.

Can the U.S. wage, once again, this kind of long, protracted, small, dirty wars? They can try. I mean, this has been their modus operandi after it lost the Korean War. The U.S. waged, for another two decades, dirty wars from Myanmar using the stragglers and the remnants of the KMT, and also inside China itself, using Tibetans and other groups. So the U.S. has a long history of doing that. Will it be successful? I don't think so. I think it will be less and less successful because as the U.S. loses power in general, even the proxies will understand that it is really not in their interest to get involved in a losing proposition.

Once again, the U.S. is used to having dominance, easy dominance. It's like the U.S. has golf courses on all sides, on about half of its major military bases, about 230-plus golf courses. And you go out to the golfing green and you just take your putter or your five iron or whatever that is, and you just kind of slam and you hit out onto this clear field. And then you feel good about yourself. That's the way the U.S. has gotten accustomed to waging war. It doesn't realize that it can't do that anymore. It's deep in the thicket, and it's a completely different day. They're not in Kansas anymore.

#Danny

No, definitely not. Yeah. And now for some of the broader implications, KJ, of what's happened. So, of course, we know Yemen got into the war when Saudi Arabia struck it at this very sensitive time when the U.S. and Iran were engaged in war. But two days have passed since Ansar Allah hit

Aramco. It hit oil refineries in the Jazan area in Saudi Arabia. It's still burning. So this caused major damage that's still being borne out now. And then we have, let's say, the war is intersecting, to use the popular liberal phrases.

Now you have, in the Caspian Sea, Ukraine having attacked an Iranian vessel and killing a sailor, saying that Iran has now notified Russia and the EU about this and the possibility of striking back. And this is—this is actually quite remarkable. Iran is saying Israel was the one who provoked this, saying that, you know, Israel wants to continue the war. So why not try to bring Iran into the Ukraine situation? It's very strange. I wonder what your reactions are to this. You know, all these wars are connected, KJ, and now they're literally bleeding into each other.

#KJ Noh

Well, it's as Kurt Campbell said. He says it's one unified field. And he said that what he would do is he would unleash a symphony, you know, a symphony of death. Well, it's happening, but it's happening the other way around. You know, once again, U.S. casualties are increasing. We know that, you know, the casualties are most likely undercounted. Just recently, you know, the three most recent casualties, or actually four most recent casualties, were removed from the roll because they said it, quote unquote, happened under peacetime, which is just, you know, the worst kind of insult. So we know the casualty counts are increasing. We know that that was the case right from the get-go.

When the war started in late February, Dover Air Force Base was recruiting for personal effects specialists, that is to say, people whose job is to clean, photograph, and mail the personal effects of dead soldiers. You know, they were urgently recruiting new personnel for this. So we know that there are significant casualties. And also, you know, the Ramstein Air Base, you know, changed its entire, you know, service. It cut out its—you know, it shut down its maternity ward because it anticipated massive casualties that it had to deal with. So all of these things get signaled. You know, casualty rates are much, much higher than are actually signaled. And it also signals, you know, it's just once again, it's more indication that the U.S. is in this losing battle.

It's losing on all fronts. If Yemen can strike Saudi Arabia's Aramco, that must put shock and awe into the U.S. Strategic Command. Certainly, it does that for the Saudis and all the Gulf states. Apparently, and this remains to be confirmed, Ansar Allah hit the storage tanks, but it has not yet hit the processing infrastructure. We'll see if that holds, but it shows, first, the capacity to hit and also the tremendous control and precision that they have, which I think is actually even more frightening. So once again, in terms of, you know, the second front and the second choke point, Bab el-Mandeb, and then Iran's capacity to raise the costs, not simply economically, but in terms of actual human casualty costs.

And then also this connection with Israel, where the U.S. and Ukraine and Israel see this as a single front. Well, I mean, it is. It shows that it is a single front. It shows the Israeli connection as this one,

you know, kind of clearinghouse for global imperialism and global fascism and global atrocities. It shows how Israel is facilitating all of that. So it is not a surprise, but what is surprising is that they're boasting about it, and they seem to have no issue with, you know, stitching these different fronts together. That will be to the great detriment of Ukraine, Europe, and the United States, as well as Israel.

#Danny

And, you know, on this theme of these wars kind of bleeding into each other, there have been many reports. And I think when it comes to the United States, the United States is really, really, really dependent upon military force. It really needs to exert military force to ensure that a country like Iran, and if we talk all the way up to China, that the United States is able to topple them. That's ultimately the goal here. Now, there's all kinds of interesting reports about China, in particular right now, that they're building full-size models of warships and aircraft to hone their missiles, and there's some satellite imagery of that. They've built an array of replica ships, aircraft, and bases in its desert expanse to focus on targeting and other kinds of data collection.

Very impressive feat. And then when it comes to Iran, I just want to highlight this theme of even just innovation, military innovation. The Wall Street Journal has reported that one of Iran's cheapest missiles, the Khyber Shikhan, has been adapted and altered so that it can evade air defenses, different flight path speeds, and drones, you know, attached to their launches, which have made it very difficult to intercept even these cheaper models, which we don't have the exact cost, but Wall Street Journal says a fraction of the cost of these million-dollar, you know, three-, four-million-dollar defense systems that the United States has been wasting away on.

So, Kit, maybe you can talk about this, because oftentimes we talk about China, we talk about economic might. When we talk about Iran, yeah, we are talking about the military, right? But we don't often talk about the adaptation, the ability to maneuver, the ability to change when conditions change. That's something I think we're seeing demonstrated over and over again, is that these countries are making necessary changes to prepare or, literally, in the case of Iran, fight the war that's in front of them.

#KJ Noh

Yeah, I think you're absolutely right. Danny, on this show, we actually have spoken about, you know, learning curves. And we've said that, you know, the side that adapts faster, the side that learns faster, wins. War is essentially a contest of learning curves. The U.S. learning curve is essentially flat. As I've said, it's air-sea battle from air-land battle. They're simply rehashing what they tried to do in 1991 and having less success. At the same time, both Iran and China and other Global South countries are adapting rapidly and transforming. And so the U.S. basically cannot deal

with the fundamental cost asymmetry. Saudi Arabia, the U.S. vassals, they all rely on these extraordinarily expensive boutique weapons. I think of Jay Leno's garage. Jay Leno has all these very, very expensive foreign cars.

But he has all these cars, and they're very expensive and they're very impressive. But Jay Leno is not going to win a driving contest anytime soon, despite his expensive array of cars. And Saudi Arabia is the same thing. It has one of the largest military budgets, but clearly it cannot win, even with, you know, advanced weaponry, even with mercenaries. It cannot defeat one of the poorest militaries in the world, Ansar Allah. Once again, it shows the failure of air-sea battle. And the same thing is that they are adapting and learning quickly. China is adapting, learning quickly. As I said, the doctrine of air-sea battle, this war that is being fought against Iran, was actually a rehearsal for war against China. It is the same war doctrine that the U.S. was going to apply to China.

That is to say, essentially blinding, taking out all of its reconnaissance capacities, decapitating its leadership, and then putting on a long and punitive blockade. All of that has shown to fail on every dimension. And Iran has the upper hand, and China has—if it comes to war, which the U.S. does seem to be continually preparing for against China—it will be of a magnitude more responsive, a magnitude more powerful than what Iran has responded with. And so I think, once again, one would wish, one would hope that the ruling elite understand the facts on the ground, but it doesn't seem to be the case. They seem to be, above all, not only fighting reality, but fighting just basic reason and rationality.

#Danny

Now, KJ, when you said the U.S. appears to be preparing for war with China, I mean, that's quite literally over this entire period, including this Iran war period. It's just not getting attention. And I want to pull up one example of this that you can comment on. Let me get this ad out of the way. According to CNN, and these have been reports over the past week, starting July 21st, there have been numerous reported instances of the Philippines taking their naval ships into disputed areas of the South China Sea, the Ren'ai Jiao and the area surrounding it, the Thomas Shoal, in this instance, where there's been confrontations. China, they shot a water cannon. I guess CNN was on board of this, or whatever that's supposed to signify and how significant that is.

But in another case, a U.S. naval ship rammed into the Chinese Coast Guard, and they then, of course, attacked back. But it was very gentle sticks and various things like that. It didn't flare up into a major shooting war between the two. KJ, these provocations, according to China, are traced easily back to the United States, and Japan too. KJ, talk about this. This is happening, these provocations, the U.S. making comments about it too, showing that they're giving full diplomatic support and political support to the Philippines. What's going on here, and how is it that during the war against Iran, quagmire two in Ukraine, the United States is investing resources, time, and military resources into another proxy where it seems like this time the Philippines, a very interesting choice too? Your thoughts on this?

#KJ Noh

Yeah, not just in the Philippines, but also on the Korean Peninsula. Right now, there's RIMPAC going on in the Pacific, but there are also constant war games on the Korean Peninsula, including the rehearsal of massive logistical lift. I mean, this is very specific and concrete preparation for war. These are not abstract war games that are done on computer. This is like the actual dress rehearsal, the tech rehearsal before you roll out the actual performance. So there's some very, very real and concrete stuff that is going on. And it's astonishing because even as the U.S. is fighting essentially a full-bore, or close to full-bore, war against Iran, it is actually depleting and deploying vast amounts of airlift and material and troops and live ammunition in Iran, for example, on the Korean Peninsula.

So all of this signals that the U.S. has still not given up on war against China. In fact, very recently, one of the key neocons, Eli Ratner, he, you know, spoke about a two-front war, you know, against Russia and China. And of course, he doesn't even consider Iran to be worth considering as a war. But all of them see war with China as the main dish. It is the ultimate goal. Everything else is really peripheral. It's starter, appetizer, or dessert. And in some sense, they're telling themselves, we want to knock out all these rogue states, but their center of gravity, the country that is giving them support, economic support and political support, and is functioning really as a center of gravity that allows them to attain escape velocity against the predations of the global capitalist imperium, the global capitalist plantation.

This is China. So they see that they have to, quote unquote, go and attack the head of the snake. So all of this is currently ongoing. As I said, it's not to be redundant, but it's absolute madness, because if they can't win a fucking battle against Ansar Allah or against Iran, there's no way they can be successful against China. But that doesn't deter them. This is the grizzly bear fallacy: the 6% of the U.S. population that believes that they can fight a grizzly bear with their bare hands and defeat it. Let's just go a little bit into the history and the geopolitics of the South China Sea. The South China Sea is bordered by China, including Taiwan province, as well as Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia.

It's one of the core geostrategic thoroughfares, and it's sometimes compared to the Persian Gulf. About \$5 trillion worth of goods flow through the South China Sea annually, and about 10 million barrels of oil daily. Most of it is destined for China. And it's also a very resource-rich area, et cetera. And it's also contested. There are multiple islands that are contested by China. The different countries' or parties' claims bisect, trisect, quadrisect, et cetera. All of the countries have built militarized installations on islands in the South China Sea, but only China gets criticized for it. Now, the key issue is, who owns these islands, reefs, shoals, et cetera?

And the Chinese claim the islands back to the Han Dynasty. They can show continuous historical usage, fishing, habitation, travel, mapping, and voluminous documentation. And there are also independent Western documents that validate this. For example, from the 1870s until about the

1970s, there's a vast amount of official British and French cabinet documents and jurisprudential rulings, et cetera, that corroborate Chinese sovereignty, et cetera. But the Philippines now claim that, you know, that region is theirs. They claim that it was terra nullius and that, you know, they bought it for a dollar from an adventurer who sold it to them.

And the U.S. has been using the Philippines, and especially their disputed claims over the South China Sea, as a way to goad, provoke, and instigate conflict against the Chinese people. This has to do with the pivot to Asia. They understand that if they can close off the South China Sea and choke it off, as Air-Sea Battle describes, then China can be destroyed. And so one of the things that they did was lawfare, and they claimed that China was making claims to the South China Sea without justification. That is a complete PR hoax. That tribunal had no authority to proceed, let alone render a judgment on the sovereignty of the South China Sea.

But essentially what has happened is that the U.S. is using the Philippines as the proxy in the South China Sea, just as it's using Japan and Korea in the East Sea. And so the U.S. has nine bases. It has one of the largest naval bases, forward operating bases. That's Subic Bay. It's the world's largest weapons manufacturing logistics hub for U.S. military force. And it is constantly driving into the paint against China and seeing if they can draw a foul, upon which they will use that as a casus belli and escalate even further. So China has been very, very circumspect. It has never used military force. At best, it will fire water against the Filipinos.

More recently, apparently, they hit some Filipinos with a water cannon. And so they're really trying to keep, you know, things from escalating even further. But the U.S. most certainly wants some kind of kinetic conflict. If there is a kinetic conflict that involves the Philippines, then the U.S. will claim, quote unquote, that they are mutual defense allies. And that will be the justification for escalating to kinetic war. And they've planned it all out in intimate and intricate and incredibly rehearsed detail on the Korean Peninsula, in the East Sea near Japan, and then along the Taiwan Province and the entire first island chain, and then all the way going into the South China Sea.

And this is, you know, the first island chain and the shoot-and-scoot strategy that they have, and the dispersion. All of this is intimately and explicitly built out and rehearsed. And they're seeing if they can provoke something. Why are they doing this? Because they're desperate. They know that if China continues to grow and the U.S. does not take China down, then U.S. hegemony is history. And they do not want to give up their hegemony. They would rather end the planet than give up their hegemony. And so that's the really, really dangerous situation that we're facing right now.

#Danny

Yeah, KJ. And I think one thing that people don't generally understand when they look at that map that I pulled up in the South China Sea is that essentially, if the United States gets its way and if the United States pushes for China's claims to be fully rejected in the claims, so-called, of these other countries, which aren't all black and white—Malaysia claims this over this island versus China—it's

not all black and white. There is a lot of gray. But nonetheless, if it's pushed in that direction, what it amounts to is an effective blockade of China.

Because if anybody understands Chinese geography, the South China Sea essentially is the entirety of its capacity to move shipping cargo out of China from its southern coast into the world market, versus you cannot necessarily do that in the north. If anyone knows anything about geography and weather, northern China moving up toward that area is not where China— that's essentially pushing China into a corner and disrupting its capabilities greatly, its capabilities of doing maritime trade really in significant numbers. And that means, KJ, that China is pouring way far more now into the Belt and Road Initiative because of this and building those land routes. And that's been a big part of this.

And the Financial Times is sounding the alarm that a record 20.1 billion U.S. dollars has been a record increase in investment in green energy financing to the Belt and Road Initiative because of the Iran war. And that total BRI deals rose to a record high of 126.3 billion U.S. dollars in the first half of 2026 over the course of the war, in large part because China is building this kind of green Silk Road with partner countries in the Belt and Road Initiative. But it's a huge emphasis for China because it recognizes that a part of trying to get these countries that have so-called disputes in the South China Sea onto the U.S.'s side is to choke off China from one of the key points of maritime traffic that's in the world, but especially for China. But your thoughts on this?

#KJ Noh

Yeah, you're absolutely correct, Danny. I mean, the South China Sea, in particular the Strait of Malacca, which is one of the entry points into the South China Sea, is probably the most important choke point in the world. It's even more important than the Bab el-Mandeb and the Strait of Hormuz, simply because of the volume of traffic that's involved. So, as I said, the U.S. plan of war is called Air-Sea Battle, involves decapitation deep into the Chinese inland, as well as blockade, what they call distant blockade, which refers to choking out China at the South China Sea.

It's literally the carotid artery and the windpipe. Now, in order to bypass that, China—and remember, Air-Sea Battle was drafted in 2009, 2010. The pivot to Asia, which is the declaration of war against China, was declared in 2011. And then around about that time, China began to initiate the Belt and Road Initiative. And a very important part of the Belt and Road, it's not simply a kind of vascularization of Asia so that all the countries on the Asian continent can trade easily with each other as part of a renewed Silk Road, but a strong component was also geostrategic. That is to say, it was a way of bypassing the South China Sea and the Malacca Straits. And so the first leg, and one of the most important legs of the Belt and Road that was initially constructed, was CPEC, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, and China-Myanmar Economic Corridor. So these are both ways of bypassing the South China Sea and coming out into the Indian Ocean.

Notice what happened to these legs of the BRI. Essentially, they were all attacked by U.S.-funded NGOs or, even worse, by U.S.-allied terrorist groups. In particular, for example, the Baloch Liberation Front, which was not only attacking and blowing up parts of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, CPEC, but it was also beheading people, and they were killing off Chinese school teachers, and just sheer terror that they were trying to spread in order to choke off and prevent this alternate vascularization that China was trying to build out in order to avoid confrontation and war in the South China Sea. So from this, you can see how deep and determined U.S. plans to choke out China are, not simply over the sea, but over land as well.

And of course, you know, China's response to that is to see what it can do to build out energy sovereignty, because energy flows are a key part of the BRI and the South China Sea. And so one of its ways of building out energy sovereignty is to encourage and develop and offer to the Global South, as a global good, sustainable energy. And so you see the massive exportation of solar panels and hydropower and wind power. These things make countries less dependent on oil traveling through these different choke points and arteries, which the U.S. has very, very definite, definitive plans to choke off and control, just as it has very, very definitive plans to choke off and control as it sees fit the global financial arteries moving through New York and through SWIFT, et cetera.

And so China is helping the Global South recover and reclaim some measure of sovereignty by allowing them energy sovereignty and financial sovereignty through alternate, you know, settlement and clearinghouse mechanisms. But all of that is a long and slow process. And in the meantime, you can see that the U.S. is continually escalating to war, continually waging both hot wars and small wars, dirty wars, against any alternative plan for development. Any attempt to escape the capitalist plantation is currently, as we speak, being sabotaged and attacked by proxies, by Quislings, by dictators running dirty wars, and by Quislings who have cast their lot in with the failing empire.

#Danny

Yeah, in the last two minutes here that we have with you, KJ, I just want to show the graphs. The BRI deals that are surging in terms of total billions of dollars—this is as of June, then July, here's the following month. Look at how it correlates with the demand for green energy, which, shocker here, we have June and really all the months after the Iran war increasing that demand dramatically, given what has happened to the oil markets. So that's a big deal, KJ. I think China is always the one that can step in. The United States seems to fight more so by trying to take away, by trying to choke off, by trying to sanction and destroy. And it's China that seems to be stepping in and providing the alternative, even on this energy front. What are your final thoughts, KJ, as we wrap up the last two minutes here?

#KJ Noh

Yeah, I think you're absolutely right, Danny. I mean, to give it a simple slogan, the U.S. bombs and China builds. And what it is building is, it's building an anti-hegemonic system, an anti-hegemonic coalition. It's building out the possibilities for the Global South to escape Western colonial capitalist subjugation. And that is very, very definitely tied to the building out of green energy, which, interestingly enough, Donald Trump is probably more responsible for promoting than any other leader in history. The Biden administration was doubling down on hydrocarbons, and they were dead set against collaborating with China on moving and developing sustainable energy. But Donald Trump, who actually believes that despite their knowing that global warming, global catastrophe, climate catastrophe is a real issue.

But Donald Trump, who believes, I believe firmly in his heart, that global warming, global climate catastrophe, is a Chinese hoax to undermine U.S. petrochemicals, has done actually more to promote green sustainable energies than any president in U.S. history, including Jimmy Carter and his cardigans and solar panels. Because by choking off the Strait of Hormuz, he has made very, very clear that nobody can rely on hydrocarbons as a form of energy anymore. As I said, the shock collar is on. It cannot be taken off. And because of that, they have to diversify into other sustainable forms of energy. So once again, this is Hegel's cunning of reason. Donald Trump essentially doing God's work, decarbonizing the planet because he thinks that he's going to destroy U.S. allies by choking them out in a place that they themselves cannot control.

#Danny

Very well said. Everybody, quickly, I just want to thank the singular super chat here, Farzan and Deem. Thank you so much. Quickly, just a couple announcements before we head out of here. Two shows coming up. So I actually have a members-only stream coming up that will—if you become a member of this show—so I will do that 7 p.m. Eastern time. Here it is. I will do this and send out an announcement. It'll be completely private. So I'm going to send out an announcement for members to join that. So do attend if you can, 7 p.m. Eastern time today. Tomorrow, Patrick Henningsen, 1 p. m. Eastern time, July 27th. And those are the announcements. Everyone hit the like button so more people hear what KJ has to say on all of these developments. We're going to keep tracking them. KJ, any final words for the audience before I hit the end stream button?

#KJ Noh

Oh, I'm going to sound like a broken record, but, you know, we all have to do our part to resist the empire and its final and lethal thrashings. That means not being suckered in, not being taken in by all the lies that we are being fed, and also doing your best, working with other organizations. That means hitting the streets, hitting the phones, writing, hitting your keyboard, whatever that means, making some effort to prevent this murderous, murderous escalation to war. It will get worse before it gets better. But in the meantime, we have to be prepared, galvanized, and put our everything into it, into resisting this escalation.

#Danny

Yeah, well said. I think that's a great place to end. Everybody, hit the like button. Thank you so much for joining. Hopefully, I'll see some of you at 7 p.m. Eastern for YouTube members. Join if you can. And tomorrow I'll be back, July 27th, 1 p.m. Eastern time, with Patrick Henningsen. Until next time, everyone. See you then. Bye-bye.