

Pepe Escobar: Iran's Strikes PIERCE US Missile – US Army EJECTED

Pepe Escobar discusses Iran's blistering offensive that is hitting US bases in Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq and elsewhere everyday even as US strikes subside. The geopolitical analyst and journalist has written two columns on the matter and will apply them to the latest developments in this must watch show.. Pepe on Telegram: <https://t.me/rocknrollgeopolitics> Pepe on X: <https://x.com/RealPepeEscobar> Transition Protocol: <https://www.youtube.com/@UCewRbK22LRnNi6N3EcGjbow> NEW ARTICLES by Pepe: <https://strategic-culture.su/news/2026/07/29/the-deaf-dumb-and-blind-empire-of-piracy/> <https://strategic-culture.su/news/2026/07/29/the-deaf-dumb-and-blind-empire-of-piracy/> 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 #pepeescobar

#Danny

Welcome back. As you can see, I have Pepe Escobar, a geopolitical analyst and independent journalist, with me to break down the latest news. First, we begin with Iran going on the offensive, as you, Pepe, have talked about quite a lot in recent days. No U.S. strikes last night, but Iran did target U.S. bases in both Bahrain and Kuwait. The Sheikh Isa Air Base in Bahrain, as well as the Ahmad al-Jaber Air Base in Kuwait, were both targeted, with power generators, navigation systems, administrative support buildings, fighter aircraft shelters, satellite communication systems, equipment storage facilities, and the like having been targeted. These attacks are starting to have an impact, Pepe.

We see that the Pentagon is reconsidering its U.S. military presence in Kuwait, with U.S. officials already saying that there have been massive evacuations from U.S. bases in this country in particular because of Iranian attacks. Now, Iran also struck and stopped two oil tankers, and four others were turned back in the Strait of Hormuz. And Iran announced shortly thereafter that, because of the United States' insistence on trying to push ships through the so-called Omani corridor, the Strait of Hormuz is indeed closed. Now, there's also Saudi Arabia forming a so-called naval coalition with GCC states in conjunction with the United States against Yemen. But overall, Pepe, the U.S. was relatively

quiet last night. What do you make of the latest developments and the fact that Iran, it seems like, is taking the initiative now? I know you've written about this as well, not waiting for the U.S. to attack any longer. Yes.

#Pepe Escobar

Thank you, Danny. Thanks, all of you. It's good to be back on a Friday. For me, it's already almost Friday night. And I wrote three columns back to back, examining everything that you just touched on, Danny, in your intro. For me, the most extraordinary aspect of it all, in terms of the escalation ladder, we are already back on the escalation ladder. And the famous tiny window of opportunity of coming back to the MOU becomes smaller and smaller by the day. Okay, so let's start with this. The column I wrote this morning, it's already on. I started with Yemen and this new Saudi Arabia coalition, which is in fact a Saudi-American coalition. But the Americans, of course, are leading from behind. They basically told the Saudis, "Deal with Yemen." Of course, the Americans will never try to deal with Yemen. Exactly what happened the last time.

The Yemenis expelled the U.S. Navy from the Red Sea, period. So, what is this coalition? It's absolutely outstanding. I was mentioning to Danny before the show, eagerly awaiting the introduction of the Qatari Navy in the Red Sea. What are they going to do? Guys, there is no Qatari Navy, no Kuwaiti Navy, no whatever. These GCC vassals, they don't have navies, but they are part of the coalition. Maritime war by Saudi Arabia to be unleashed against Yemen. And, of course, the bombing. The bombing is another story. We have a NATO member as part of the coalition, Turkey. Could we imagine, and it's a quite plausible scenario, that we're going to have, in fact, NATO bombing of northwest and southwest Yemen, from Saada in the north to Saada in the south, with plausible deniability, because this is going to be effectuated by Saudi jets, right?

So this is what's going to happen, essentially. There's going to be a NATO organization behind it, the Saudi jets in the front line, and it's practically inevitable that there's going to be some sort of bombing of Yemen relatively soon, as it happened before, even before the 11-plus years of a Saudi blockade against Yemen. So we should never forget the origin of this whole story. There is a memorandum of understanding, which was signed by the Saudis and the Yemenis in 2019. The Saudis broke it when they bombed the runway of Sana'a airport as an Iranian flight was bringing back the Yemeni delegation that went to the funeral rites of Ayatollah Khamenei in Iran and also in Iraq. So the response of the Yemenis was two to one.

They bombed one Saudi military base, one Saudi civilian base. And later on, because their intelligence confirmed that the Americans were preparing a massive offensive against the whole axis of resistance, including Ansar Allah, they started their own blockade against the blockade as a preemptive move. This was confirmed to me by one of my—he's a friend—one of my top Yemeni friends who's also a source, and he's very closely linked to the political council, the 13-member political—11-member, sorry—political council in Yemen. Well, the blockade, as it is installed by Ansar Allah, the Yemeni armed forces, is against Saudi Arabia.

This means that the Red Sea continues to be free for navigation, and crossing the Bab al-Mandeb continues to be free, but not for Saudi tankers. And there are exceptions among the Saudi tankers. If this is a Saudi tanker exporting oil through the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandeb to China, no problem. He can go because there is a direct agreement between Beijing and Sana'a about that. So obviously, this is the Saudi response to all that, is to organize this coalition, basically to restart a war against Yemen. This is what it's going to be. So we can expect fireworks in Sa'dah, in Hodeidah, in Sana'a, and of course the Yemeni response is going to be catastrophic for Saudi interests.

So then everything will be in play: Yanbu port, the East-West Pipeline, all other ports, Saudi ports, which are already counter-blockaded by Yemen. And if we have interference from different air forces, from different GCC players, for instance, Yemen will respond because they have the missiles to respond anytime they want. The key, the very, very complicating factor is not even the Muslim nations that are very, very far away, like Nigeria and Bangladesh. What's the point of having Nigeria and Bangladesh in a coalition like this? So one of my other very good Yemeni connections, he explained that as psychological pressure, as if that would have any effect on the Yemenis.

Like, if you get the collective populations of Nigeria and Bangladesh, it's over 400 million people. Is this going to intimidate the Yemenis? Forget it. You could have zillions of people from Mars, and they will not be intimidated. But the problem is the three top nations part of this coalition: Pakistan, Turkey, and Egypt. Egypt is a member of BRICS. Iran is a member of BRICS. Egypt will not attack a very close ally of Iran directly. Indirectly is another story. Turkey is a NATO member, and Turkey always plays a double game. They could, but if they do, there's going to be an Iranian response. And the Turks know it.

And, of course, Pakistan, which, that is the immensely complicating factor. How can possibly Pakistan pose as the top mediator between Iran and the U.S., which is what they have been doing for the past over two months, in fact? The story that Larry and I follow very, very closely through our new channel, Transition Protocol, we always have very, very serious questions to the mediators especially. And usually we have good answers. And sometimes they tell us, look, we're doing our best. We cannot answer your question 100% because this is a matter of national security. Okay. But we do know that they are breaking their backs to make this return, possible return to the MOU, side by side with the Qataris and also with help from the Omanis, something viable.

How can they possibly coordinate their position as mediator when they are part of a coalition with Saudi Arabia that is bound to attack Yemen, a close ally of Iran? One of the mediators, you know, I put that in my column that I wrote this morning, he defined it as a difficult and dangerous balancing act. No, it's an impossible balancing act. For the moment, the Iranians are—okay, this is the first day—they are just looking. They are waiting for actions on the battlefield. If the Pakistanis are implicated, and because they have this military agreement with Saudi Arabia that was upgraded only a few weeks ago, in fact, in Riyadh, when Asim Munir went to talk to MBS in Riyadh to upgrade their military agreement, if Pakistan is part of this imminent attack against Yemen, that's it.

All their mediation efforts will instantly collapse. And they know it. And they don't want it. And they have been dragged into this whole dementia because of Saudi Arabian dementia, to, you know, restart their war against Yemen, which, by the way, they lost. The last time there was a coalition led by Saudi Arabia, it dissolved because everybody left. The Saudis were left together. And in 2019, they were forced to sign a memorandum of understanding with Yemen because they were running the risk of being devastated. Their whole oil installations would be devastated. And this is something that the Yemenis can do without even blinking.

So, you know, it... There's no rational explanation for that, Danny. You know it, and I'm sure most of our audience will know it. So this is the complicating factor in the chessboard at the moment. I would say this is even more complicated than the possibility of bringing them back to the negotiating table. Okay, everybody knows that this is practically impossible, but there are logical explanations that, if we have a White House willing to listen, would finally force them back to negotiate because they don't have any Plan B. Apart from Trump's vociferations every day, which are beyond the limits of the pathetic, in fact. They are unqualifiable.

#Pepe Escobar

They still have some missiles. They still have some drones. Not too much, but we'll keep bombing.

#Pepe Escobar

Nobody even pays attention to that anymore. And, of course, everybody knows that Iran runs the clock. Iran runs the diplomatic clock as well, because either you return to the MOU or there are no negotiations. Iran runs the timeline leading to the mid-August fateful depletion of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve's red line. And, of course, which is the latest, absolutely fantastic, in fact, this Iranian strategy of concentrating on pounding these bases over and over and over again until they are completely decimated.

Especially the key bases, including that one in Jordan, which basically was the brains of CENTCOM. That forced the Americans, the Pentagon and CENTCOM, to relocate their operations, guess where? The death cult. So, you know, the brains are going to be in the death cult, which means Iran already succeeded in something that they had planned before. Okay, we decimate these bases all across the Persian Gulf. We will force the Americans to relocate everything to Israel. And then, for us, Israel is very, very easy. We can decimate all of them, including almost everything that Israel has, anytime we want. So this is where we are now.

#Danny

Yeah, well, Pepe, I think, you know, this is—I want to revisit this because I think this gets at exactly where the situation is with Iran, which maybe simplifies things a bit. Iran is continuing to, as you put it in one column, make the United States deaf, dumb, and blind when it comes to its military

operations against Iran. And now the Pentagon is considering actually ejecting themselves from Kuwait, yeah, and perhaps other parts of the Gulf, because Iran cannot be stopped. And Iran is saying quite clearly that U.S. air defenses are absolutely worthless right now against Iranian strikes.

And so I wanted your, you know, I wanted your thoughts, assessment of, you know, how is Iran doing this? And then how does it affect the regional situation? Because what is quite stark and I think very important is that as Iran's strikes become more effective, the war seems to be expanding on other fronts. And I think that's a very interesting parallel. You just mentioned Yemen, and we also have Saudi Arabia and the U.S. attacking the PMF in Iraq. Things are exploding despite the fact that the U.S. is getting less effective. Help us understand this dynamic.

#Pepe Escobar

Well, the most important intel element of it all is what Yemenis detected a while ago. And obviously, they were sharing information with Iranian intel. They understood that the Americans were preparing a massive offensive, not specifically against Iran. And this was during the 13 days, the 13-day bombardment of Iran. It was an offensive against the whole axis of resistance, which would be Ansarallah, Hezbollah, and the Hashd al-Shaabi, the Popular Mobilization Units in Iraq. So we have, I would say, a two-vector approach after they were sure that this was the most possible scenario. And it makes total sense, because then it would become crystal clear that this war from the beginning was never a war only against Iran.

It was a war against the whole Axis of Resistance. The focus was on Hezbollah these past few weeks, two, three months, but, of course, Iraq and Yemen as well. Well, with Yemen coordinating this new opening, which included the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab, they started to preempt this American offensive. And at the same time, this attack against Iraq proved to them, proved to the Axis of Resistance as a whole, that this was the objective from the start. This attack against the PMUs, the Popular Mobilization Units, was coordinated between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. It was a U.S.-Saudi Arabia attack. And Trump lied on the record once again, saying that this had been coordinated with the new Iraqi government. This is completely, completely absurd.

If that had happened, this new billionaire playboy prime minister of Iraq would fall in five seconds, literally. There would be instant regime change in Baghdad if he had authorized something like this, an attack against the nation, against its own territory. And, of course, even though the Popular Mobilization Units are not part of the Iraqi government, they respond to the Minister of Defense. And the name says it all. They are immensely popular in Iraq, which I have seen in my two previous visits to Iraq. And, of course, they are blessed by none other than Ayatollah Sistani, the most important religious, spiritual, moral, ethical authority in Iraq. So the Iraqis now have the proof that the war is against them as well, the Popular Mobilization Units.

So there will be responses against Saudi Arabia, inevitably. And Saudi Arabia is, I would say, in the middle of the mother of all pickles, because they picked, at the same time, three very, very

weaponized, very hostile and seething-with-anger enemies: Yemen, Iran, and Iraq. And they don't have what it takes to... It's not going to be this pitiful coalition that is going to support them. It's not going to be their air force. It's not going to be anything. And also the numbers. I love quoting the numbers because they tell a huge story as well. Saudi Arabia has basically 20 million Arabs, not more than that, Arabs. Because 10 million, at least, are migrant workers. They are there just to work, make money. They don't have a dog in Saudi Arabia's fight, own the country.

They just want to get paid. Of these 20 million Arabs, the absolute majority is fiercely against the House of Saud, fiercely. We're talking about over 100 tribes which historically have been warring tribes. And they are just waiting for the right pretext to become warring tribes again and topple the House of Saud. So they have their internal popular support. It's pathetic. It's the upper middle class and the oligarchy in Riyadh and Jeddah, Max, and their daughters because the daughters are now allowed to drive their own SUVs. That's about it. This is the support for MBS and his gang. So around them they have 40 million Yemenis armed to their teeth. On the other side, they have 40 million Iraqis armed to their teeth and seething with anger.

And in Iran, they have 90 million people. Many of them are also armed to their teeth. So if one day the scenario would come up of, okay, let's take over Saudi Arabia. Why not? This could be easily done. And nobody's going to run to save the House of Saud from anything. And on top of it, the House of Saud, they have to look around. In terms of the princes, they are sidelined from positions of power. They are also sitting with anger. Not to mention the American guy, the CIA guy, Prince Nayef. He is currently under house arrest, but he can be, okay, let's bring him back. Let's do our regime change. So MBS, essentially, for all his lofty rhetoric and plans of building Star Wars in the middle of the desert, all that crap.

He has nothing, nothing to support him. And even worse, Danny, all the money is not in Saudi Arabia. It's in London and in New York. So who is going to support these creeps? Nobody. Nobody. And they mount a coalition to go against the Axis of Resistance. It beggars belief how stupid that is. So we are particularly worried about the role of Pakistan. The Pakistanis have to be very careful. Otherwise, all the hard work that they put in this mediation business can collapse in one day. Turkey, well, we know they hedge all the time. But if Turkey gets in, this means NATO is in. And Egypt, they don't have what it takes to go frontally against Iran and Yemen. The other ones are there just for show, of course, including the non-existent Qatari navy.

#Danny

There are reports, Pepe, maybe you can understand, because, you know, with the Iraq factor and the Popular Mobilization Forces, there's also the fact that Iran, almost every single night, even when they aren't striking, let's say, U.S. bases in Bahrain and other parts of the Gulf, Kuwait, they are almost daily striking Kurdish proxy forces along the shared border with Iraq. And now it's being reported that actually the U.S. is moving air defense systems out of Erbil, the area where it's often a target for Iran, of these Kurdish proxy forces. So, how do I understand this?

What is the dynamic here? And why is it I feel like the United States actually ignores this part of the war quite dramatically. They'll talk, they'll, you know, say it's calm. Oh, the bases are fine. Everything's fine. But they won't really talk about Iraq. They'll talk about the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf bases, but Iraq is kind of there. So what's going on here? And does it have anything to do also with this targeting of the Popular Mobilization Forces as well, which are independent in many ways, but also seen by those doing the attacking of Iraq, Saudi and the United States, as Iran proxies?

#Pepe Escobar

No, they're not Iran proxies. Obviously, these imbeciles say that because they've never been to Iraq, and they never saw how the PMU's Hashd al-Shaabi work. Well, I was there. I was at their headquarters. We had, on one of our visits, we had a session in a cell that they had inside the Green Zone, and even the Americans didn't know where the cell was. So these are badass motherfuckers, really very smart, very well weaponized, with tentacles all across especially central and southern Iraq, but also very well positioned in Baghdad. I'm not talking about the Green Zone. I'm talking about big Baghdad, including especially the suburbs, which are all Shiite majority.

Sadr City, sorry. I remember because I visited Sadr City during the Petraeus surge in 2007. And when you spend time in Sadr City, it's basically like a gigantic Brazilian favela full of, by now—not at the time—heavily weaponized Shiites, and now educated. They went to university. So it's not gangs. It's a completely different story, extremely well organized. So obviously the Americans are not paying attention. And the Popular Mobilization Units, there are several different militias and groups. There are, for instance, Kataib Hezbollah. It's a completely different organization from the traditional Hashd al-Shaabi. And there are many other groups as well.

And they specialize in what they do. And these attacks against the American-Israeli base in Erbil, Iraqi Kurdistan—it's grifter-central, crammed with American and Israeli operators. It's an absolutely disgusting place, really. But, you know, because it's not so far from Iraq—in fact, it's the northern part of Iraq—they know how it works very, very well. So these attacks are coming from their southern neighbors in Iraq, many of these PMUs. And the Americans apparently only noticed that recently. And, of course, they have the capability to attack the American forces in Al-Tanf base, in the middle of the desert as well.

So the Americans will be forced to relocate from Iraq, which, by the way, the previous government, they were telling the Americans virtually every day, "You have to leave Iraq. You have to close your bases and leave our territory." And obviously, the Americans were procrastinating. Now they're going to have to do this by force, which is the only way these wars are won, of course, all of them, on the battlefield, which is something that the PMUs know very, very well. And on top of it, they have

popular support. So that's it. In many aspects, there are comparisons that you can make with the last years of the Taliban in Western Afghanistan, where they had popular support everywhere, in Helmand Province, everywhere. So that's the same thing now in Iraq.

#Danny

Well, this just came in, this graphic here. What's so striking about this dynamic, these developments, Pepe, is Saudi Arabia gets more entangled now into this war on Yemen, on Iraq, and of course, by extension, against Iran. The consequences are now coming in. Now, in the second quarter alone of this year, it is being estimated that Saudi GDP is now contracting 4.81%. That is a major number. And this is because of both the Bab al-Mandeb Strait, which is being actually minimized right now since it's under siege, as well as the pile-on effects of the Strait of Hormuz having reduced in activity so dramatically since February 28th, especially, but even in just the last month or so with the renewed escalations. Is this sustainable, Pepe? The regional situation is only going to get worse, but I know the United States doesn't generally care about this kind of thing, but I'm guessing somebody does in the region.

#Pepe Escobar

I like the way you put it. Somebody does in the region: the populations, not the so-called leaders or the petrol sheiks, the oligarchs, the one-man-deciding families, whatever, you know. The populations are going to pay the price, of course. And, of course, if the Iranian response to what is going to be thrown against the Axis of Resistance soon includes attacks on desalination plants, then it's a real bye-bye.

#Pepe Escobar

You have to leave.

#Pepe Escobar

There's no way you can survive over there. You have to go somewhere. So we might even approach this point. Are the oligarchs in the West worried about that? No, of course not. Because one of the possible scenarios explaining the whole thing is, yeah, let's have a big, big war on both sides of the Persian Gulf, so we can, at the same time, immobilize the Persians, immobilize the Arabs, and provoke even more divide and rule and absolute hell on both shores of the Persian Gulf. It makes perfect sense. It does. We can connect the dots any way we want, but this is one of the top scenarios, of course.

Considering that if you cannot control it, you destroy it. And that's the logic of the empire of chaos, plunder, piracy, lies. We lie, we cheat, we steal, and we destroy it. That's the inner logic of a dwindling empire. Makes it even more dangerous. And they can destroy the GCC without the petro-

sheikhs even noticing it. Can you imagine that? They bought the fiction that they could pay the mafioso arrangement to the Americans so the Americans would provide security for them. Now they know that, no, they don't care. They don't care about anything. They only care about your money. That's it. And that you sell your oil in petrodollars.

Everything else, they don't care. And nobody is going to save you, much less your own populations, right? So the whole dysfunctional scenario is so completely absurd. Probably the only auspicious aspect nowadays is that the whole house of cards all across West Asia is collapsing in real time in front of everyone. But we don't know what's going to happen later on. We don't know how this is going to end. Nobody knows. And what will come out of the ashes? No answers for all of that. But the process of collapsing this completely fictitious order, non-rules-based, is already in effect.

#Danny

Well, let's look at some of the myth and reality that is becoming harder and harder to discern if you listen to the mouthpieces of the empire of chaos, as you call it, Pepe. Here's Donald Trump's thoughts on Iran's capabilities now versus what you said on X versus what CENTCOM said as well today. Here is Trump.

#Pepe Escobar

Their missiles have been largely— they have some left, they have some, but they have far fewer than they had four or five months ago. Their manufacturing capacity is almost gone. Their drone capacity is almost gone. Very few, but they have some.

#Danny

So they have some, just some. Pepe, you wrote this on X that I thought was really good, where you said, "The way Iran operates the escalation ladder is a thing of beauty. Iran completely destroyed the ops room controlling all U.S. bases in West Asia. The Americans had to run for the exit with their air forces from nine bases in the Persian Gulf and Jordan, relocate them to the death cult entity Israel. Iran has now placed Israel inside the box, just as they planned from the start."

But here's CENTCOM, Pepe, saying that thousands of ships have sailed through the international waterway of the Strait of Hormuz since the beginning of the past four months, which there's absolutely no data confirming that. There's no data confirming this. But again, this is—so people like us, we say one thing, you know, we make one argument, but the, I guess, narrative being spun right now that Trump has been doing since February 28th is Iran is completely decimated. And CENTCOM is always fact-checking with counterclaims. This time, though, did come out with a number: thousands of ships are going through the Strait of Hormuz. Your thoughts on this myth versus reality? It's getting bigger.

#Pepe Escobar

That's no wild guess, Danny. We should all be, you know, dancing in the middle of the sea. That's in the middle of the Red Sea. No, it's pathetic. Well, people don't pay attention anymore to the vociferations. Who is advising? Who's giving him numbers? Dumb and Dumber, you know, Rubio and the Secretary of Forever Wars. They don't know anything. And obviously, they don't know the real numbers. And if CENTCOM has the real numbers, they will never tell anybody. They lie all the time, period. What everybody sees is the facts.

And the facts are the Pentagon is being expelled from their bases all across the Persian Gulf, period. This is the only thing that matters. And this was apparently that meeting in Washington last Friday. In fact, one week ago, it was quite something. Somebody with an IQ over room temperature finally told Trump, "Look, our bases are being eviscerated. We are running out of everything—THAADs, Patriots, you know—and our bases are being eviscerated. So we cannot have the gates of hell bombing campaign that you are talking about." So, you know, one week after that, we have him—this was from yesterday—the clip that you played.

#Pepe Escobar

Oh no, they don't have anything.

#Pepe Escobar

They have maybe some drones, some missiles. Okay, idiot. All the really important and massive underground bases, they have not been touched, period. Most of them, the Americans don't even know where they are. Not to mention that the top-of-the-line missiles that Iran has developed over the past few months, over the past year at least, they have not been used yet. And, okay, just wait. They have not even started, the Iranians. This is a very, very long, meticulous escalation strategy, fine-tuned day after day. It's the centralized mosaic that they applied during the actual war, February, March, early April.

And this is the decentralized decision-making in terms of fine-tuning the response to the American attacks and now taking the initiative, which is a huge contrast compared to during the war, in fact. Now they are taking the initiative. They are not waiting for American attacks. And it is two to one at least, sometimes three to one or even more. And in the case of the Yemenis, it started with two to one, and then they went, you know, over the top. Okay, let's counter-blockade. Why not? And when the Iranians say that the Strait of Hormuz has to be shut down because the Americans are forcing them to do that, that's absolutely correct.

One absolutely crazy example. Pakistan is absolutely desperate for LNG. The energy situation in Pakistan is dire. So they make a deal with Iran to have a Qatari LNG supertanker cross the Strait of Hormuz and then go to Pakistan. So they made... Basically, one of the parties in the MOU and two

mediators made a deal, and everybody agreed, no problem. What happens to this Qatari LNG tanker? It's blocked by the Americans, of course. Cowards, because they're not in the Persian Gulf, in the extremity of the Gulf of Oman, almost the limit between the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.

#Pepe Escobar

Yep, there it is.

#Pepe Escobar

It's totally absurd. And the Pakistanis are mediating something that could help the United States diplomatically, and they are treated this way by the Americans.

#Danny

And economically, I mean, trying to negotiate the actual reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, which wasn't closed before February 28th, would benefit the U.S.'s overall economic situation, which, as you have pointed out, I know, in other programs and articles, Pepe... Eventually, the U.S. won't be able to dump oil onto the market. Eventually, the market manipulations won't be able to manipulate their way out of the reality, which is how slow the market has become, how far reduced it's become.

#Pepe Escobar

And we are approaching that date. In fact, now we are only two weeks away from the red line. The red line is mid-August. And that makes this period, these next two weeks, extremely dangerous because everything points to another mega-foolish move by the Trump administration. A last-minute desperate play.

#Danny

Well, Pepe, I showed the graphic of, you know, Iran released the data or the imagery of the cargo ships that were struck overnight in the Strait of Hormuz. The last time Iran did this, the United States began strikes again. You know, the United States makes the so-called protection of shipping in the Strait of Hormuz the justification for increasing war. But you just said, a last desperate play. I mean, do I even want to ask what that could be? Because it seems like, from what is going on behind the scenes inside of the war room, the Situation Room, or whatever it is, wherever Trump is meeting with U.S. officials, it seems like it's getting quite tense. There's multiple reports of very bad meetings happening where there is no agreement on what to do next. So what do you foresee in terms of last-minute desperate plays and how this is all playing into the frustrations that are plaguing the U.S. at this time?

#Pepe Escobar

Well, it's not for us to foresee. We deal with facts. We deal with facts on the battlefield, facts on the ground. What is already clear is that no one among the Trump inner circle, very mediocre, obviously, they have no idea what this war is about, what are the objectives, and how they can end it. Nobody. So we have a clash of wishful thinking coming from everyone. Okay, face value. And this is not scientific, of course. The only party that seems to have engaged in the possibility of coming back to the diplomatic track is the Vance camp. And this, you know, we say that because, of course, we only have one source for this. And we tried to get more sources. We couldn't, Larry and I. But one of the guys in Pakistan who is at the negotiating table, or was, because the negotiating table has been destroyed by the Americans.

When there was an American delegation that visited early this week—it was on Monday this week—an American delegation visited the headquarters of the Pakistani army in Rawalpindi. They are sister cities, Rawalpindi and Islamabad. And this source told us, look, we are almost absolutely sure—of course, it's not 100%—that the people, part of this delegation, the Americans, this was organized by the office of the vice president. So this is very important information because we didn't see Tweedledee and Tweedledum, Dumb and Dumber, Kushner and Witkoff, as part of this delegation. There were other people. And obviously Pakistanis immediately understood that this is a different kind of negotiating team.

Of course, when they talked to the Pakistanis on Monday, what the Americans proposed was the absolute opposite of what the Iranians have been saying. The Americans want to start with the nuclear dossier. They want concessions from Iran, and if there are concessions from Iran, they will release a little bit of money. And, of course, from the Iranian point of view, it's the absolute opposite. So, obviously, the Pakistanis, as mediators, they picked up the phone and immediately relayed this information to the Iranians. And the Iranians said, point blank, no. It's never what we wanted. We cannot even discuss this completely absurd. And the Americans know our position very well. Our position is: come back to the MOU that you signed and start fulfilling your commitments.

Otherwise, there's no negotiations and there's no renegotiations. Forget it. So, could all of us believe that this alternative, let's put it this way, American approach, slightly more diplomatic than anything coming out of the blah, blah, blah from Trump, is it viable? Is it plausible? Nobody knows. But apparently it's on the table. But the thing is, they made a proposal that Iran has immediately rejected because it's completely absurd. So this means they have to retreat in their diplomacy. Is this going to happen within the next two weeks? Once again, nobody knows. But it's complicated, Danny. The only good point is that this tiny window of opportunity is still there, but it shrinks day after day.

#Danny

Yeah, and it seems like the success of it will be predicated on the United States essentially giving up and then giving in to exactly what the real situation is on the ground. But the U.S. Empire doesn't have—the Empire of Chaos doesn't have a great track record of that historically. It seems like Iran is very aware of that situation. I want to ask you a question about the intelligence gathering. Iran has made several statements, including yesterday, stating that especially from Jordan, it has received very useful intelligence, which has made its strikes even more precise and has made its planning operations and then undertaking them far more effective.

What do you make of this? They've cited Jordan. They've also cited Kuwait. And these are the two sites that they have been targeting the most outside of Bahrain. What do you make of this? And it seems like many are wondering, has Iran's intelligence just gotten so good now that it's difficult for the United States actually to plan any kind of offensive operation against Iran, especially from where they sit and where they occupy the bases that are being struck?

#Pepe Escobar

Well, that's the China angle, Danny. And all of us who follow China or have been to China, they know that they will never reveal what they are doing. So, you know, Beidou system, you know, exchange of ultra-high-tech info, surveillance, reconnaissance, and all that. The Russians and the Chinese, this is what they're doing in the background. And it works. And it works better and better. And Iran continues to receive top-flight hardware and, of course, everything, including state-of-the-art MANPADS from the Chinese, air defense systems, you name it. So that's it. I allude to it in one of my three columns this week.

The Russia-China angle is more and more precise, very calculated, and always with plausible deniability. Always. For instance, there is a myth cultivated by the Americans that these Chinese shipments, they go... they fly into Tehran. No, they go through Gwadar port. And from Gwadar—Gwadar is very close to Chabahar. It's 80 kilometers. So from Gwadar to Chabahar, they are in Iranian territory. And then they go overland in Iranian territory, and they continue. So, you know, of course, you won't have, I would say, a comment coming out of Moscow or Beijing about that. But it's part of the strategic military relationship between all of them.

Stuff that was discussed, for instance, only a few days ago at the SCO Foreign Ministers' Summit in Kyrgyzstan. Everybody was there. Wang Yi was there. Lavrov was there. Araghchi was there. Ishaq Dar from Pakistan was there. So that's it. But as you know, and our audience knows, it's absolutely impossible for Pakistan, for China, or for both to admit that, yes, we are supplying first-class stuff to Iran via a Pakistani port. Can you imagine? Neo Crassus, Baboon of Barbaria, whatever, Truth Social superstar? Man, he would go completely bonkers if this went out in public. But the intel connection knows that this is how it's being played nowadays. Danny, I'm sorry, but I got to go. I am so sorry.

#Danny

No, it's all right. We can close up here. I want to make sure everybody knows that your columns are all in the video description so they can find them, as well as your X and your Telegram accounts so they can follow your work. And we'll be with you soon, Pepe. Thanks so much for joining us today.

#Pepe Escobar

Definitely. And, you know, it's going to get hotter and hotter these next two weeks.

#Danny

Yeah, yeah. It seems like that's the trend. Well, always a pleasure, Pepe. I'll be in touch with you. Always a pleasure.

#Pepe Escobar

Take care. Cheers. Thanks, everybody. Cheers. Bye-bye.

#Danny

Bye-bye. All right, so that's Pepe Escobar. Always great as usual. Always incredibly informative program. And we have broken down the developments quite deeply here. So I'll just give you a few announcements and then head out myself. I want to thank all the Super Chats, of course. Thanks to Peace Love Forever. Thanks to Hussein Brazil, a member for 26 months. Appreciate all of your support. Pepe is the most traveled geopolitical and cultural analyst. Much love, brother. Thank you so much for that comment. Congratulations from Brazil. Thank you so much for that, Beto Macedo. All right, everybody. So tomorrow I am back on with Ben Norton to start the month, 1 p.m. Eastern time. Same time, we will begin August 1st reporting on the latest developments and, of course, his take as he reports out of China these days. So be sure to tune in August 1st, 1 p.m.

Eastern, Eastern Time. Also, for those who are members—Patreon members, Substack members on a paid basis—while I'm not doing exclusive programs publicly on the channel, I will be trying to do weekly to biweekly conversations with members as well, and I will put those out there. So things that I don't get to cover here, questions that you have for me, all of that are available. And of course, I always try to get to those who give Super Chats here, to their questions and comments too. So, of course, subscribe on Patreon, Substack, or here on YouTube, become paid members, and that's what you can access. I'm going to try to be doing more of this in the coming weeks and months. So do stay tuned for all of that. But yeah, without further ado, everybody, we are now in a state of, I think, a watershed moment in geopolitics.

We are in a very critical moment in history. There is a lot to cover here. But nonetheless, that's why you come here, and we will continue to provide it—or I will continue to provide it—for you as best I can. So, expect in the next couple of weeks that there will continue to be U.S. aggression against

Iran. It doesn't seem like they are willing to pull back on this anytime soon. The economic situation could get quite bad regionally, as well as globally, even worse, because we all know that so many people right now are struggling, not just because of these wars, but because of the economic system that undergirds it. So we'll be covering all those developments as well. Also, I have some work I'm doing on the Asia situation, on China, and so much more.

So, a lot coming. So do join me tomorrow, 1 p.m. Eastern Time, here on this program, August 1st, with Ben Norton. I do appreciate all of you coming out today. There's going to be more talk tomorrow about what I didn't get to get to today, which is talks of a land blockade by the United States and Israel. Now that it seems like the blockade of Iran by sea is not going too well, especially with Iran having such firm control over the Strait of Hormuz. But a land blockade in the air of the Belt and Road Initiative by China and Iran, as well as the rest of the Eurasia region, doesn't work quite well. And the United States and Israel just don't have the capacity to do this. But this is what they are planning for, and we could see implementation of this very soon.

It might actually come in the form of false flags and various attacks on infrastructure, as it has in the past, as our good friend Brian Berletic has covered so deeply on his program and on this channel as well. But we'll get more into that tomorrow with Ben Norton. Lots coming. So hit the like button before you go. That helps keep this show going in YouTube's algorithm far after we are done here. Go to the video description to find all of Pepe's work. But if you can, of course, subscribe on Patreon, Substack. You can give one-time donations, Buy Me a Coffee, and you can become a YouTube member here to support this channel's work as well. See you tomorrow at 1 p.m. Eastern Time, August 1st, with Ben Norton of Geopolitical Economy Report. Until then.