

Victor Davis Hanson: Trump's Weeklong Strategy to Bleed Iran Dry

By [Victor Davis Hanson](#)

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Victor Davis Hanson: So, basically, what the United States is doing is saying, we're going to control the strait, and we're going to let anybody who wants to do business with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, but not Iran.

And Iran's island, Kharg Island, where almost 90% of its oil is, you think they were so smart that they would—they have a port on the other side of the strait, but they were so arrogant and thought that they were always going to intimidate everybody, and no one was ever going to intimidate them.

They never did what Oman, the Emirates did, and put a port that was a sizable—they have one—but a sizable port in front of the strait. And then had a big pipeline. And they could have got around it because it would have been harder to police outside the Gulf.

So, basically, now where we are is Iran is quickly going broke. It's going to implode. The population is restive, and we're in the driver's seat. So, if you game it out, you say, well, how many days can they survive? Probably a week, 10 days. So, maybe we should do what they're doing.

They want to just drag it out, and they can go back to that old metaphor: Can't hear you, I don't know what you want. Oh, you want to negotiate? It's Friday afternoon. Let's start it next Tuesday. Oh, you want to go to Pakistan? Oh, it's too far. Let's go to Saudi Arabia.

You could do that all day long, and we're not killing anybody; we're just sitting here, and it's not that costly. And if they keep—if they say, well, you know, if you're going to try to do this, we're going to unleash hell on Saudi Arabia, and we'll destroy ... Oh, you are, are you? Well, we've got 10,000 Marines, and we have to decide whether to blow up Kharg Island or take it from you and take your oil. We can do either one. So, they're in a rough spot.

Then there's another dimension, two more dimensions, that nobody talks about. So, they got this population that's restive, and all this is coming out. They don't have internet, but the word's getting out that they're broke. And the population is thinking, do I really want to spend half a trillion dollars and build more tunnels and more missiles and drones and give it to all these Arab terrorists? No.

And they justified their reputation and their oppression of our 93 million people on one thing. Well, you may hate us—this was the subtext—but we are the terror of the Middle East. Everybody's afraid of us. The United States doesn't dare go in here. Forty-seven years, we've killed Americans with impunity. We've got proxies in Syria. We got proxies in Iraq. We got proxies in Yemen. We got proxies in Gaza. We got proxies in Lebanon. We have a ring of fire. Everybody's afraid. Europeans come begging, and they make these little deals on the side that nobody talks about. Well, we'll let you in the Gulf, and you can buy ... You know, we won't harass you, but we don't want any support for Israel. So that's what they were thinking.

And now what? The people are going to say, you incompetent buffoons. You told us that everybody ... We didn't like you, but at least everybody was scared of us, and now we're the laughingstock of the Middle East. The Israelis are laughing at us. The Gulf states know that we're nothing. Even the Europeans now say that they want to open the strait after the United States has opened it. Let us in, please. We want to get credit. I'm Macron. This is the Napoleonic fleet. As soon as you do take all the heavy lifting and maybe you guys, Americans, can go home and turn over this prize to us.

And so, the people are going to get very, very angry. They're going to say, I don't want you spending any money on Arab terrorists or any more money on your stupid missiles and nuclear program. I want to eat, and you're stealing our money. And you know what? We're not feared anymore. We're laughed at.

So, I think that this, you know, as I said earlier, the Berlin Wall fell, and then some of the Eastern European countries were free within a month, some three or four months, and the Soviet Union took two years. But it was all predestined once the Berlin Wall fell because they saw what was going on. The Germans couldn't stop it.

So, I think if we don't give away the prize—because now what the Left is going to do, European and American, they're going to say, oh my gosh. This thing, we didn't anticipate this. He's flipped the whole narrative. If he bankrupts Iran, and they come crawling on their knees to negotiate, or if the people rise up, we could lose the midterms. He could have a big foreign policy success. It would change the entire world. And with Venezuela and maybe Cuba next, and then the economy coming back, and all this oil money, the U.S. is... this is bad, so we've got to stop it. So, they'll do everything they can to stop it.

And the only thing I'm saying is, I hope that Trump does not stop and negotiate with these clowns. I hope he drags it out. I hope he goes in there and says these are wonderful people. Let's talk. And then gets on the phone. How many million do they lose today? Keep it up. Keep it up. And then at some point, they're going to implode.

Because if you let them off the hook and you say, well, you can't have any nuclear weaponization for 20 years, you're going to get Gavin Newsom or Kamala Harris or Pete Buttigieg as president one day, and he's going to say, oh, I feel so bad what we did. Will you take my apology? Morocco gave you 400 million. Well, I'll give you a billion at night on a pallet. And please, please, please. That's what you'll get. So, this is a once-in-a-lifetime chance.

Sami Winc: Yeah, it sure is. I think that the Left and the press has, sort of, relied on the frailty of human memory when they come out with all—because I heard you and Jack talking about The Wall Street Journal and all. It picks on every little thing it can just to say things are going bad.

Hanson: Yeah, it does. Every day. Every day. Every day. The columnists have even got in on it, who were superb. I don't know what's happened. They've lost the narrative. I don't understand why The Wall Street—do they understand that they're going to lose all their credibility with their conservative audience if they keep this gloom and doom and everything's so terrible, as this Iranian monstrosity may, may, may just implode? The editorial board has been good, in the sense that they said to Trump not to negotiate.

But the news section is the one that's—they're all, as I said earlier, they're ex-Politico, Atlantic, Washington Post, New York Times reporters. And I don't know why they can't get people out of that circle that are empirical.