Will Iran Break The U.S. Blockade?

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Dimitri Lascaris (DL): Good day, everybody. Dimitri Lascaris and Rami Yahia coming to you from Montreal. That's where I'm situated. And my comrade Rami is somewhere in Argentina and has been there for a good while. Rami, if you can tell us, because you are doing some investigative reporting, so maybe you can't be too precise, but what part of the country are you in? And just briefly, how long you've been there.

Rami Yahia (RY): Mm-hmm. Um, I don't know if this will be leaking too much because for the enemies it's quite obvious where I should be if I mention... Basically, I'm in the heart of the Israeli induced wildfires in Patagonia.

DL: Enough said, enough said. So you're going to be sharing with us a lot more information into what you've seen on this fascinating trip in the second half of this live stream. In the first half I'm going to be dealing with some late breaking news about the US blockade on Iranian ports and vessels because this news has the potential to result very quickly in a massive escalation of the war. Before we get into it, however, I just want to say hello to Alexander K6-4 who is joining us from Corinth, very close to where my sister lives with her family. Thank you for joining us today, Nava Gunali, I may be mispronouncing that. Thank you for joining us out today as well. Bijan Cook and all others who are in the stream or will join the stream jointly. We're very happy to be with you today. We don't do the live streams often enough. It's hard for me and Rami to find the time to do this because we're both so busy reporting on various different stories in different parts of the world and something we are going to be trying to do more often in the weeks ahead because we greatly value this interaction with our audience. Hello also to I am Aloof and Simply Sharing Tips, who apparently is catching us for the first time live. Thank you, welcome, for joining us today. And also Thomas Sheria and Antonio Zed. So with that folks, let's get into it. And by the way, please remember to like and share this video if you find it to be informative. And if you're not already a subscriber to Reason2Resist, we hope you'll become one. Help us to expand the reach of our unapologetic, on-the-ground resistance journalism, help us do the type of reporting that Rami has been bravely doing during the past couple of weeks in Argentina.

So, what is this late-breaking news? Well, starting this weekend on Friday or so, multiple Iranian and alternative media sources, and then the corporate media, began reporting that Iran is preparing to mount a challenge, a very serious challenge to the US naval blockade. And here you can see one of the many articles that was published over the weekend about this blockade or attempted challenge. This one is in the Maritime Executive and this particular outlet said that the reports seem to have originated, the report of the Iranian plan to challenge the blockade from the Iranian Fars News agency, which it says is linked to the IRGC. And the claim was that Iran was preparing a convoy of tankers to resume oil shipments to the Far East. This comes as the Iranian regime, as they love to call it, is growing increasingly desperate. Okay, so then they say, "The speculation about the convoy and a resumption of shipping appears to have come from the Fars News Agency." And it became a report saying "that 14 tankers had been loaded at Kharg Island with crews assigned to the vessels and they had proudly hoisted the Iranian flags. Fars backed up the report with a threat against any intervention with the convoy. It said disrupting Iranian oil exports would cause a new round of attacks on the oil facilities of the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain."

So according to this report, the Iranian government is putting the Trump regime on the horns of a dilemma, a huge dilemma, and I'm going to come back to that in a few minutes. Now originally we read from various outlets that ship tracking and sanctions monitoring data cited by Bloomberg and Euronews had confirmed the assembly of this fleet off of Kharg Island. And it also bears noting that CENTCOM, the arm of the US military that is responsible for West Asia, announced this week that it expanded its blockade to include vessels loaded using ship-to-ship transfers and repeated warnings that any Iranian vessels attempting to run the blockade will be boarded, diverted or fired upon. By the way, that is a threat which Donald Trump himself reportedly reiterated just within the past several hours. And sources told the Iranian agency that three tankers destined for China had already set off. So that was the claim. Now, shortly after these reports emerged, a video began circulating on social media of a young Iranian man on what might be a fishing boat floating near a fully loaded Iranian tanker. This is what that video showed.

Wherever those two young men were, I commend them for their courage. It takes a considerable amount of that stuff to go into the Strait of Hormuz nowadays in broad daylight, especially. And as one person's noting in the chat, yes, that is a big vessel. I understand that that was an Iranian supertanker. Now, following this news, the emergence of this video, yesterday evening multiple reports emerged that a fully loaded Iranian supertanker had actually entered the Strait of Hormuz and here is one of those many reports; this one was on the Middle East Spectator. "An Iranian oil tanker is now moving through the strait and attempting to pass the US naval blockade. The maker's name is Khat Shekhan, literally meaning line breaker." So that seemed to be a pretty direct message to the US aggressor that indeed the Iranians were about to challenge this blockade. And according to Middle East Spectator based on the location of the tanker in question it would reach the blockade line in the Gulf of Oman about 24 hours from now. That would have been right about now, actually,

because this report emerged about 24 hours ago. And indeed, within the last few minutes, there have been breaking reports about what is happening in the Strait of Hormuz.

Now, with respect to this particular vessel, the Khat Shekan, almost immediately after reports came out that it was entering the Strait of Hormuz, not immediately, but several hours later, people began to question whether this was real because – and this was also something that was picked up by Middle East Spectator – the vessel didn't move in approximately nine hours. And the Spectator speculated that someone was spoofing the vessel and that the vessel likely doesn't exist. By the way, AIS spoofing for those who don't know is the intentional manipulation of a ship's automatic identification system or AIS broadcasts to falsify its true location, identity, speed, or course. So that's where things stood up until about an hour ago. There was just a serious question about whether this was, in fact, a challenge that was going to occur. And to this very moment, I have not yet seen an on-the-record statement from a senior Iranian official confirming that Iran is about to attempt to break the blockade.

So what happened next? Well, as I mentioned, there have been late breaking developments. Today, the UKMTO, just a very short while ago, issued an advisory. This is the arm of the British Navy that provides alerts about incidents in the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab al-Mandeb Strait off of Yemen. And as you can see here, this particular alert says that the incident to which the alert relates happened today; it involved a vessel that is in the Gulf of Oman and it's just off of the Iranian port of Chabahar, which is near the border between Iran and Pakistan and it is the last major port on the Iranian coastline before reaching the border. Now Middle East spectator speculates that this incident could involve an Iranian oil tanker attempting to break the US naval blockade. And you can see here what the UKMTO says: "The UKMTO has received a report of an incident involving a tanker and military forces in the Gulf of Oman." So it's not clear whether the military forces attacked the tanker. And if there was an attack, whether they were US military forces attacking an Iranian tanker or Iranian forces attacking a tanker from a hostile state but this did involve the military and because of the location of the tanker and its emergence amidst all of these reports about challenging the blockade it seems that this could be the first or one of the first Iranian vessels to attempt to break the blockage. If it is, it apparently has been met with fire, almost certainly from the US military.

And in addition, there has been another important update, publicly available data shows that two other Iranian tankers or Iranian affiliated tankers, including the LPG tanker Tania Star are switching on their AIS and beginning to show up in the Gulf of Oman, suggesting that they had turned off the AIS in order to navigate discreetly through the Gulf of Oman and quite possibly this information about the Khat Shekan was just some kind of a psi-op or a distraction to keep the Americans focused on something that wasn't real while real oil tankers were transiting through the Strait of Hormuz.

Now, I have a couple of overarching observations about this and I'm going to echo something that somebody in the comment section just said. Buzz Vibe Central, I pray for these people. I cannot imagine the courage that is required on the part of the crew members of these vessels if in fact they are heading through the Gulf of Oman with the intention of challenging the

blockade set up by a child murdering entity based in Washington. They are, in my opinion, heroes of the Iranian nation, whatever the outcome of this venture may be. Why do I say that? Because obviously, this criminal blockade – and let me assure you, it is illegal, there is no lawful justification for it – it is not just contrary to the principles of the UN Charter and an act of war, but it is also genocidal in nature because it extends to all maritime commerce involving Iran. So, whether the ships are carrying oil or humanitarian supplies, food, much needed medicines or ingredients used in agriculture or in medical supplies, whatever it may be, the blockade doesn't discriminate between things that have a military usage and a purely civilian usage. So, they are clearly trying to inflict massive suffering and death on the Iranian people. And it's not just a maritime blockade, it is a multi-dimensional full spectrum blockade. The Americans have also set up a task force to cut off of all land-based trade with Iran and they have put immense pressure on other countries that were allowing Iranian aircraft or aircraft to fly to and from Iran from their own soil to cut off all air traffic into and out of Iran and to some degree that initiative has been successful. So this is Iran's right to challenge this thing, but nonetheless given the record of the Trump regime anybody who does challenge it is likely, well, at least taking their lives into their own hands. So again, I cannot commend enough the crew members who are doing this in defence of the rights and well-being of the Iranian people.

The second observation I want to make is that I think that this is exactly what Iran should do. Because over time, these maximum pressure sanctions and this multi-dimensional blockade will have almost certainly devastating impacts upon the Iranian economy. And over time it could well destabilise the state and ultimately impede Iran's ability to defend itself in its own sovereignty. Iran cannot, I've tried to make this point repeatedly and it's personally one that I think the Iranian leadership understands perfectly well, they cannot allow this situation to fester indefinitely and I think that's exactly why the Supreme Leader recently ordered the government to put an end to what he described as the "no peace no war" status quo. Because he understands perfectly well that in the long run that is going to do immense damage to Iran and may impede its ability to fight back. So what better way to challenge this criminal and inhumane blockade than to send unarmed tankers into the teeth of the blockade and dare the Americans to stop them. If the Americans in fact attack those vessels, which would be criminal, would be a violation of international law, then the Iranians would be well within their rights to say we are not going to sit by idly. We're going to attack the oil infrastructure just as you have attacked our oil infrastructure and our means of selling oil, which is extremely important to the sustenance of our country. We are not gonna allow others to produce and sell oil. You're discriminating. You're allowing people who are surrounding us and are hosting US military bases that are being used to attack our country to sell their oil. You're even committing your own military forces to help them do that, placing your own military forces at risk in the Strait of Hormuz to enable them to smuggle their oil through. And so we're just not going to tolerate that. And the best way we can make you pay is to damage the oil infrastructure of these complicit countries that are facilitating the war of aggression on our country. And that will bring the matter to a head right quick.

I've already seen some reports in the corporate media, in the interest of time, I'm not gonna share them with you, that really, I think, appreciate the degree to which this places Trump in a bind, because it doesn't appear that Trump is in a rush to escalate the war in Iran. I think he's probably torn between these two options because he knows one path, the path of passivity leads to a strategic crushing undeniable defeat for his government and the United States. And the other one, which is escalation, leads to catastrophic damage to the global economy, quite possibly a global depression. And so we've already seen how unhappy the American people are in the midterms with the increasing cost of living, resulting from both this war and the NATO proxy war. So what is Trump going to do? Well, I always err on the side of aggression because that is his overwhelming tendency, and I think he probably will, if this is a real challenge, and I think it is, the balance of evidence suggests that Iran is, in fact, in the process of mounting a challenge to this blockade, although I cannot confirm that definitively, I think the most likely scenario is that Trump will attack one or more of those vessels, and then we could be within a matter of 24 hours into the hottest phase of this war to date. So, you know, let us hope that cooler heads prevail and that Trump finally shows a modicum of restraint and allows those vessels through. And if he does, yes, that'll be a sign of immense weakness, but it would be nothing more than a matter-of-fact acknowledgement at the end of the day that the United States cannot win this war. And the longer it tries, the more harmful it will be to people all around the world, including Americans themselves. So that is the status of the apparent challenge to the criminal US naval blockade.

Now, separately and again, staying on the theme of the Iran war, a US F-35 jet basically came very close to being shot down in the Strait of Hormuz today. And here is, I'm sorry, let me just repeat to you what I've gleaned from the reports. OSINT observers tracking this F-35 jet's diversion from the Strait of Hormuz determined that it landed at Dhafra Air Base in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. And here is an image from Flightradar. You can see the blue line there. That is the path that the F-35 took after it sounded an emergency signal and landed at this US air base in the Emirates. And this was the second close call for the US Air Force this weekend in the Strait of Hormuz. This particular aircraft used the 7700 code which is apparently a universal aviation code for a general emergency and it's sent out to report mechanical issues, medical emergencies, fuel problems, and in the case of military aircraft, potential battle damage. And another aircraft which resorted to the same code this weekend was the US F-16 and after that happened the Iranian military released footage of the F-16's narrow escape from a surface-to-air missile exploding very close by to the aircraft and here is that footage.

Now, what appears to have happened here is that Iranian radar locked on this F-16, which reportedly is the white object inside the green rectangle, and then the Iranians launched a surface-to-air missile. The missile is not designed in such a way to actually hit the aircraft directly. Apparently, what I'm hearing from Western military experts is that Iran has limited ability to do that with its air defence system, to actually take down the more advanced USA warplanes with a direct hit. What happens is that these large missiles carrying significant warheads get close to the vessel and then they blow up either because of a device inside the missile which indicates its proximity to the warplane and therefore detonates the missile or

perhaps it's remotely controlled by people on the ground. What you saw here was that missile being launched and then exploding close to the F-16. And we'll just go back here. There's going to be a flash of light briefly here which is apparently the explosion of the..

So there you see the huge flash of light. That was apparently the SAM surface-to-air missile exploding. Now, quite apart from all of that, we have reports that Iran launched attacks on two US military bases in Bahrain and the details of those attacks are that the operation was codenamed Ya Umm al-Banin, O Mother of the Sons and it followed what the IRGC said was a violation of Iranian airspace by US MQ-1 and MQ-9 reconnaissance combat drones and this map shows where these two bases in Bahrain are situated there in red. And you can see that this is very close to the Iranian coastline, and these facilities are extremely vulnerable, as has been shown throughout the course of this war. And what they were apparently targeting the Iranians was Patriot air defence systems situated there.

Now, I just mentioned that this was done in retaliation to drones entering Iranian airspace. Well, the Iranians also announced that they had shot down their 20th American MQ-1 advanced reconnaissance combat drone this weekend and their 59th MQ-9 reaper drone. And they published a video in support of this claim, but in the interest of time I'm not going to show you that video. We've shown many of them on this programme. It nonetheless is the case that the US Air Force is suffering huge losses of its most advanced drones. And apparently what it's doing, in part the reason why it keeps sending these drones into the Strait of Hormuz, is to attract fire from the Iranians. And then once the fire comes from the ground up to the drones, the Americans are better able to identify the location of air defence systems on the ground, and then they send in warplanes to attack those air defence systems. That appears to be what the goal is in constantly putting these drones, these US drones, at risk. But this is a very, very expensive way to go about identifying air defence systems because these drones are so costly and they take quite some time to manufacture. So I think it's fair to say that this is not a sustainable way for the United States to conduct an air war in the Strait of Hormuz.

One other video which I'll share with you shows the Iranians launching their missiles and drones at those two US air bases in Bahrain. So as you probably noticed, those are jet powered drones, the more advanced versions of the Iranian drone arsenal and harder to shoot down because amongst other things they are considerably faster than the older model propeller driven drones. So before I leave the subject of Iran and just briefly talk about a major development in the war on Yemen, I want to tell you about an article that just appeared in the Wall Street Journal about the ways in which oil is being smuggled through the Strait of Hormuz by Iran's enemies.

This was published yesterday titled: *The UAE is shuttling oil past Iran in risky Hormuz operation*. "The high stakes shuttle service with US military help is crucial to breaking Iran's grip on the waterway." It's interesting that they acknowledge that Iran has a grip on the waterway that certainly doesn't support Trump's repeated claim that the strait is wide open. But in any case, I'm going to quote to you some of the more important parts of this article: "The high risk operation by state owned Abu Dhabi national oil company, or Adnoc with

American military protection from Iranian missiles and drones is a crucial link underpinning US efforts to break it on chokehold on the strait. It also comes at a considerable cost to its ships and crews. The dangers were clear this past week. Eleven crew members were injured and another was missing after a vessel operated by Adnoc was struck Tuesday night. It was the latest in a series of attacks. More than 20 Adnoc vessels have been hit since April. People familiar with the company's operations said, again, this operation is not sustainable. The supply of tankers is limited and shrinking and they cannot be built fast enough to replace the ones that are being lost." The article goes on and says, "The UAE's role started with efforts to keep its own crucial oil export industry running. It expanded into a shuttle service for others as its tanker fleet and experience on the route grew, putting it at the centre of the Persian Gulf's wartime oil trade. Adnoc also buys Iraqi crude at a discount and resells it to buyers outside the strait. 'The Emiratis have proven to be the most aggressive and risk-taking of the Gulf states through the war', said Rory Johnston, founder of oil research firm Commodity Context. In Adnoc's operation, tankers typically load Emirati or Iraqi crude inside the Persian Gulf before crossing the Strait of Hormuz. They make the transit at night in convoys coordinated with US and Emirati military and security authorities. People familiar with the operation said, 'once through the strait, they transfer their cargo to other tankers that take the crude to market, while the Adnoc ships make the return trip to pick up another load'. And this zinger, the danger is no longer confined to Hormuz attacks on Adnoc vessels have occurred near the Emirati coast. According to a senior company executive, Adnoc officials view them as a warning from Iran that their ships could be targeted even before attempting to pass through the strait."

So at the same time as this is happening, I saw a report today and there have been several reports of this nature that an aeroplane apparently belonging to the Emirati government, flew from the Emirates to Iran over the weekend, briefly stayed there and returned back. These types of reports are fueling speculation that Iran is being paid to look the other way when a number of these ships go through. And that would explain why there has been generally speaking over the last few months an increase in the amount of oil which is reportedly getting through the Strait of Hormuz although the reports about the amount of oil getting through The Strait Of Hormouz are themselves of uncertain veracity to put it mildly. They're coming largely from Western privately owned maritime intelligence companies that are very much subject to pressure by the United States government and I would have no difficulty believing at all that the Trump regime is behind the scenes and posing intense pressure on these firms to overestimate the amount of oil that is going through the Strait of Hormuz. But even if it is being accurately reported and there has been a substantial increase, that may well be because Iran is being paid under the table, and of course, the Gulf dictators are not going to want to publicly admit this because, A) it's humiliating to them to have to admit that they're paying off Iran to get their oil through the Strait of Hormuz, and secondly, it could send Donald Trump into a frenzy. And he's already threatened to blow up Oman, literally threatened on camera to blow up Oman if it cooperated with Iran in the charging of fees to vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz.

So before I turn it over to Rami, I just want to share with you one final notable piece of information in regards to the war, the Saudi genocidal war on Yemen. Ansarallah has attacked the Ash-Shuqaiq power plant and the port of Jizan in Saudi Arabia with ballistic missiles and the attack reportedly caused a blackout in the Saudi city of Jizan. This video reportedly shows the aftermath of the Ansarallah strike on the Ash-Shuqaiq power plant. Now, just to orient us, I'm going to put up on the screen here a map showing western Yemen and the southwestern corner of Saudi Arabia. And they're just to the north of the border between Yemen and Saudi Arabia on the Red Sea coast. You can see the city of Jizan. So, it's very close to Yemen territory, and has been repeatedly struck. I can't confirm to you that that video is in fact the power plant on fire, but there should be no doubt in anybody's mind that Ansarallah has the capability to strike any major piece of infrastructure that is close to its border. It's shown an ability to strike infrastructure much further away, key infrastructure, including in the capital Riyadh and in the Persian Gulf, Saudi coastal city of Dammam, not to mention Jeddah and Yanbu on the Red Sea coast. So I think probably they have managed to inflict serious damage on this power plant and they said that this was done in retaliation for Saudi strikes on Yemeni power plants and they threatened further strikes on Saudi ports and energy facilities if the Saudi attacks continue. So that is my update for you all today on what is happening in the Strait of Hormuz, also in the Saudi Yemen war.

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