

Scott Ritter: Iran Assassination Plot BLOWN by Israel

Former UN Weapons Inspector & US Marine Intel Officer Scott Ritter discusses the shocking developments in an alleged Iranian attempt on Trump's life plus new details emerging on the crisis aboard the USS Lincoln as 5,000 US Sailors face the brink of catastrophe. <https://scottritter.substack.com/> PATREON.COM/DANNYHAIPHONG Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhai...> Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho> Follow me on Telegram: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> #iran #iranwar #usslincoln #trump #israel

#Danny

Welcome back to the show, everyone. As you can see, I am joined by Scott Ritter to go over the latest developments. First, we begin with, I know you have covered this on other programs, Scott, but there have been updates on the cowardly escape of Donald Trump during the NATO summit, where he took another flight and left essentially the whole White House press staff and the rest of his administration staffers behind on Air Force One, which was said to be targeted by Iran—an Iranian cell inside of Turkey during the NATO summit, armed with MANPADS, ready to assassinate Donald Trump. Well, Turkey is now saying they suspect Israel fabricated this assassination plot to derail U.S.-Iran talks and a deal.

Well, there's more to this now. The CIA today reported in The Washington Post that they had low confidence in this Iranian threat before Trump switched planes in that humiliating fashion last month, saying that this was an Israel-derived communication and plot with absolutely little reality to it. Well, in other news, this story keeps on getting worse. The USS Abraham Lincoln, the 5,000 Marines and sailors on that aircraft carrier, have faced a self-harm, self-injury incident and a major crisis on the ship, where unrest, shortages, deteriorating conditions, endless shifts, and now a 200-plus-day deployment is set to end after a brawl, according to Iran. There was a brawl on the ship after a CENTCOM advisor visited.

There were water bottles thrown. There were skirmishes that led to, actually, they say, seven dead. No confirmation of that. But now, after all this pressure and all of the talk about what's happened on the USS Abraham Lincoln in the last several days, the USS George Washington is going to replace the USS Lincoln at sea. And that will take about eight days to happen. Scott, how about first start with the news about this Israeli, now it seems like, plot to hype up an assassination threat on Donald Trump. What do you make of what's happened in the last few days with this and the revelations about it? And then we can get on to Abraham Lincoln. Your thoughts on that.

#Scott Ritter

Well, I mean, this is one of the most humiliating episodes in the history of an American president. You know, the United States is supposed to be a superpower. Presidents of the United States don't travel casually. I know firsthand when, for instance, the president of the United States comes to New York City to speak at the United Nations, the security arrangements are terrible beyond comprehension, you know, and most of which you don't talk about. It happens, you know, because he's the president of the United States. You have to keep this man secure. But, you know, the U.S. intelligence community is singularly focused on detecting threats to the president of the United States. And when the president of the United States travels abroad, it's not a spur-of-the-moment thing.

We have coordinated extraordinarily closely with our Turkish allies. Turkey has a vested interest in ensuring that the president and all other participants in a high-profile event like the NATO summit are secure in their work. And, you know, we weren't born yesterday. We know how they operate. We've been looking at them for a long time. And we also understand that the president is traveling in a time of conflict and that there are nations out there that could possibly be seeking to do harm to him. And so the idea that the president traveled to Ankara and suddenly, out of the blue, a threat emerged of such gravity that the president humiliates himself in this just ridiculous catering cart caper.

It's a disgrace to leave his secretary of state on an airplane together with staffers, White House staff, and, you know, a press pool, leaving them exposed to this threat. What kind of coward does that? It's not a matter of OPSEC either. You know, this isn't a wartime contingency. You know, one can make the argument, for instance, in World War II that, you know, when, in the lead-up to D-Day, we found that the Germans had broken—they were going to attack using E-boats, attack an exercise—we didn't stop it because we didn't want to let the Germans know that we had detected that we had broken their code. So we allowed the attack to take place. And, you know, hundreds of Americans lost their lives.

It was determined that that was a price we were willing to pay to preserve the codes. But we weren't preserving anything. If this was a threat, there are ways that you can secure the president without this top-secret stupidity. You know, Turkey has a base near Ankara, the Murted base. We used to have American nuclear weapons stored there. We know this base inside and out. You take the president to Murted, a secure facility. Air Force One relocates, or this other aircraft relocates there. If it's too dangerous for Air Force One to fly, then you find another aircraft to come in. There's just so many different things that could have been done that were correct. That this was done shows that this was a gimmick.

It was, you know, this president has been guilty of relying upon almost exclusively Israeli intelligence in the past. In fact, we went to war against Iran because of Israeli intelligence. His insider group in the White House were all pro-Israeli sycophants. And so here what you have is a case where Israel

manufactures something out of thin air, feeds it, bypasses the normal security protocols, intelligence protocols, feeds it directly to Trump's insiders, who hatched this horrific plan. It was all theater designed to create the impression that the president was a wartime president, that there was a great threat, that Iran is a threat to the United States, to get the United States to stop talking about peace and go to war.

All it did is show once again that Israel is not our friend. I hope everybody understands that Israel is not our friend. They're our enemy. They behave like a hostile power, feeding false information in. And the president's one of the most disgraceful, cowardly human beings on the face of the earth. No president would have approved of this. No president would have approved it. You know, the president can tell the Secret Service no. Just say, "No, that's not happening." Where was the chief of staff to bitch-slap whoever came up with this idea and say, "Do you understand you're talking about the president of the United States, the office of the presidency, the commander in chief of the American military?"

He doesn't escape in a catering cart. You know, he walks out with his head held high because he's the world leader. Donald Trump showed himself to be a disgraceful coward of the most despicable kind. And this is a condemnation, not just of him, but it shows you the character of the people advising him. These are sneaky liars. These aren't honorable people. We'd like to believe that the people that do public service are doing it because they love their country and they want to serve their country. These are people that serve as part of a cult of personality. And they don't care about their country. They don't care about, you know, what image this sends to the world. You know the Lego guys in Iran?

You know, they're the most effective propaganda outlet I've seen in modern times. They're having a field day for this, an absolute field day. And, you know, their movies resonate tremendously, greatly amongst the American population because they found a way to identify with the American people through, you know, Legos. Sort of America doesn't get much more American than that, The Lego Movie, but also music and the language. And so this president, once again, has just opened himself for humiliation. There was no threat to the president of the United States whatsoever, and he's just proven himself to be the most despicable coward imaginable. I'm ashamed of him.

#Danny

Yeah. Well, here's some of that footage of some of the videos that have been circulating from Explosive Media about this incident, which, yeah, I mean, Scott, even let's say 100% everything Israel was saying was true, the very first—the very information that was being reported in the Western mainstream media about what Israel said is quite interesting, because they said a cell inside of Turkey armed with MANPADS was supposedly prepared to strike Air Force One, which, you know, the scandal was, was it doesn't have any of the fixtures needed to protect from any kind of, you know, any kind of strike or targeting of that plane.

And the fact is that Iran—I was reading Ynet recently, and the Israelis were complaining about how there's infiltration all up and down the Israeli defense forces from Iran. They found all kinds of willing participants to do this. Why wouldn't Iran think that this could also be a scenario where he would try to escape on a decoy? It's so ridiculous to get fed that information and then buy into it and go through this whole song and dance, which only makes you look really stupid. And it's really humiliating, to say the least. Your comments on this before moving on.

#Scott Ritter

Well, the other thing we have to understand is the Iranians—you know, what's happening here is a lot of projection. And the United States is guilty of this, and Israel knows this, so they exploit it. We tend to project onto our opponents our behaviors. We're the ones who assassinate world leaders. We're the ones who, you know, use assassination as a tool of diplomacy. You know, we undermine negotiations by assassinating people. And so, you know, having conditioned the American public to the normalcy of assassination as a matter of public policy, the American public is likely to believe when we project our behaviors onto others whom we deem to be of an evil character, like the Iranians. We say that the Iranians are positioning themselves to assassinate the president of the United States while he's in Turkey.

But nobody ever stepped back and said, why would they do that? Especially at this time. Iran just won the war. I mean, when the president showed up in Ankara, the war was over. We lost. We ran out of ammunition. We ran out of—you know, we have no ability to project our military power meaningfully into the region. We can't seize the Strait of Hormuz. We can't seize Kharg Island. We can't seize Isfahan. We can't do anything. Except the longer this war dragged on, the more Iran was able to damage us with ballistic missiles that we couldn't stop. So Iran, having won the war, was now in a position of trying to negotiate the best conflict termination event possible. Understand that that is the priority of Iran. They're not going to surrender their sovereignty. They're not going to give in to the United States, but they don't want this war to continue.

They're looking to bring this war to an end. That's their strategic goal and objective. So why kill Trump? It makes no sense. Now, people say, of course, Iran's threatened him because the United States helped Israel kill the Supreme Leader, and Trump assassinated Qasem Soleimani, and the Iranians have pledged revenge. But there's a time and a place. The Iranians are strategic thinkers. They're not going to assassinate a president at the moment he just lost a war. By killing the president, what you guarantee is America will rally around the martyrdom of an American president and bring the wrath of America down on Iran. The last thing Iran wants is America to strategically shift the totality of its capacity to the destruction of Iran, which we would do if they killed our president. And the Iranians know this.

So right off the bat, there has to be an intelligence officer inside the inner circle that says, "This doesn't make any sense. This is really, really stupid." And where does the intelligence come from? Let's look at it. Let's parse it out. But that wasn't allowed to happen because Israel was the source of

this. And Israel went straight to the president's inner circle, who cooked up this stupidity. No real intelligence officer worth their salt would have said this assassination plot makes sense. It doesn't make any sense. And therefore, you have to dig deeper into the source of the intelligence.

And now that it's coming from Israel, you have to demand. This is a threat against the life of the president. You demand access to the primary intelligence information. I want the SIGINT hit. I want to know everything about it—how you collected it, what frequency, where were these people at, what's going on? You got a human source? Give me the damn name. This is my president. I'll bitch-slap you into oblivion if you don't respond, because you're talking about the security of the commander in chief of the United States. It's not a game anymore. And that we treat it like a game, a stupid game, a game of hide-and-seek.

It's humiliating. I'm just here to tell you that real intelligence professionals, real security professionals, would never have allowed this to happen. And you can bring them in. Bring in the Secret Service. They'll tell you the same thing. Real Secret Service officers. What a horse crap load of garbage this was. I mean, because you actually made the president less secure, because you're violating all sorts of protocols. For what? Put him in a cart so he can get on another airplane? You know, what happened to the other threats? I mean, was this C-38J suddenly not vulnerable to Iranian MANPADS?

#Scott Ritter

What the hell was going on? This is just a horrible thing, humiliating for the United States. It shows we're an amateur country. Literally, we're a banana republic.

#Danny

Well, in the other news, Scott, that I know is dear to your heart, which is the condition of those who have been forced to spend nine-plus months out toward the Indian Ocean, just outside of the Persian Gulf, because of this ongoing permanent blockade, which Pete Hegseth said is going to go on as long as it takes. Now, the USS Lincoln—the crisis aboard, where those 5,000 Marines and sailors are going through such a crisis that several have tried to take their own lives—now it's being replaced by the USS George Washington, almost seemingly to repeat this process all over again. So what have been your thoughts on this crisis? Iran went so far as to say there was a big skirmish, a big brawl on the ship that led to deaths, unverified for now, but your thoughts on what's been going on in the USS Lincoln and U.S. Navy in general?

#Scott Ritter

First of all, we don't know if any of these stories are true. So we have to be careful about this. You know, it's in Iran's interest to put emphasis on things that make the United States and the United States Navy look bad. There's a lot of information warfare going on right now. And, you know, it

would be in Iran's benefit to get the United States public enraged over, you know, the extended deployment of the Abraham Lincoln and the horrific, you know, state of affairs on board for the crew. If I were the Iranians, I'd want to promote this kind of story. So we have to take a step back and be careful on the sourcing of this data. But what we do know is this: we are not in a state of war. No war has been declared.

The fact is, according to President Trump, we're not even in a military operation anymore. That ended. So here we have to look at, you know, what the U.S. military has become in recent decades. We're not the expeditionary fighting force that we used to be. You know, when I joined the Marine Corps, junior Marines weren't allowed to be married. I think you had to wait until you were, like, a sergeant. If you wanted to get married before sergeant, you had to get permission. You had to go and talk, because Marines belong in the barracks, and Marines trained hard, and there was no time for a wife. There was no time for families. Marines lived in open-bay squad bays in Quonset huts, not the glorified little hotels that they live in today, called their barracks squad bays. This was hardcore.

Fleet Marine Force was no joke. But when you deployed, you deployed hard. I mean, you were going on a six-month pump, and you knew it. And you also knew that contingencies could arise that extended that. And you were ready for it. You actually prayed for it. You prayed for war every day, every morning. Marines woke up and prayed for war because that's what they were training for. Today, we allow marriage, but understand that that's not conducive to a professional fighting force because now people have priorities that aren't learning to close with and kill the enemy. Priorities like, you know, I got to get my kids to school on time. I need more money, so I have a second job. I got to go work at Home Depot doing the night shift once I finish doing my Marine thing during the day.

I'm sorry, when you join the U.S. military, you're a soldier, sailor, airman, Marine, Coast Guardsman, or Guardian 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You don't get a second job. But today they do. They all do. And commanders tolerate this because, of course, you have to take care of your people. And when we deploy now, we, you know, there's a timeline. We talk about it. We say, okay, you know, what are you going to do about your schooling? When I was—my dad was career Air Force. We moved when we moved. I left in the middle of a school year every single time I went to school. I mean, I'd start a school year, and next year the government says, "You're out of there." Hey, I'm gone. They don't care. They don't care about my friends. They don't care that I'm in a school play or I'm playing football or anything.

You're gone. Unplug, go plug in. And you just did it every two years. And we didn't move in the summer. We moved in the middle of the freaking school year every single time. That's just the way it was. But today, everything has to be balanced. Families relocate. Things are done. Vacations are planned on when you're coming home. All this kind of stuff, all these plans are made that are

centered around family life and around the emotional well-being of the service member and his or her family. And then when war comes, everybody's shocked when people are like, "Wait a minute, this is very disruptive of my life." Well, no kidding. Of course it is.

But this is a leadership failure because you didn't prepare your sailors for this eventuality, that you didn't prepare them or their families. And when this happened, you didn't have the leadership programs in place to brief your sailors effectively. And they're saying that there's shortages of food. What kind of leader lets these shortages happen? Again, we're not talking about a nuclear war where there's no milk and everything's gone, and you've got to take your own urine and boil it up to get water and all that. No, no, no. This is the United States of America. If you're the commander of an aircraft carrier and you're out of milk, you get on the phone and you say, "Give me some goddamn milk now. I don't care what it costs."

You put it on a freaking airplane and fly it out here. I want milk for breakfast tomorrow because the morale of my sailors depends upon it. These are the guys—remember, aircraft carriers, they're cities. And the work they do, you don't want people screwing up. This is why you take care of your sailors on board. You know, you keep them—you gotta get that mindset focused on the mission. So, you know, you feed them well. We always fed our troops well, always on a ship. The sailors ate good. And you don't run out of food. There's no excuse for this. There's zero excuse for this. And the Navy knows this. The Navy knows how to—we've been supplying food to ships forever. So this is just an abysmal leadership failure.

And this happens when you have a Secretary of Defense that has lost control of the department that he's responsible for overseeing. He spends more time running with idiots, bench pressing, and doing things like this instead of sitting down and making sure that the basics are done first. Every military leader knows it's bullets, bandages, and beans. Beans, beans. You feed your freaking troops on time, on target. There's no excuse for this. This isn't war. The Japanese didn't sink your resupply ship. And if they did, you still have a backup plan out there, you know, where the destroyers bring on the provisions and come up, and then you cross-load them. Whatever you have to do. But this can't happen.

You can't have discipline like this falling apart on a ship. This means that the Navy's lost control of the Navy. You know, because again, the military isn't meant to be, you know, a convenient lifestyle, nine-to-five job. You join the military because you're prepared to go to war, and war is hell on earth. You don't get to sit there and bitch and moan. War is about dying for your country, you know, which is a hell of a lot worse than not getting cold milk for breakfast. But, you know, so you've got to be hard. You've got to be willing to drink water and eat bread if that's what's needed. You've got to be willing to skip a meal. You know, Marines were on Guadalcanal when the Navy sailed away because the Japanese were putting too much pressure, and the Marines were abandoned on Guadalcanal.

Did they sit down and bitch and moan and cry and surrender and wail? No, they dug in and they fought until the Navy decided to come back and get them supplies. You know, this military is just

soft as hell. Soft as hell. I don't have any sympathy for the sailors on the Abraham Lincoln. None whatsoever. Yes, they have a leadership failure. But you know what? Be a professional. Be a professional. You signed up for this. This is what you, when you raised that hand, this is what you said you wanted to do. And now it got real. And what, you're complaining because you've been to sea? You know, World War II, those guys were out there all the time. They didn't get to go home. But the fault, again, is the system. The system softened these sailors up. And this is just a horrific lack of discipline across the board.

This ship should be brought back to port, and everybody should be subjected to review. And if there's a leadership failure from the captain or admiral in charge all the way down, they should be relieved of command and relieved from the military. This isn't how we win wars. This is how we lose wars. This has to be a lesson. I know that's probably not the answer people want to hear. They want to hear me talk about sympathy for the poor sailors. No way. None. You signed up. You took the oath. It's a volunteer military. You knew what you were getting into. So I have no sympathy for them whatsoever. It's another disgraceful act. I don't believe they should be there. I don't agree with what they're doing. I don't agree with the mission. But that's no excuse. You're in the damn Navy. Do your damn job and quit bitching and moaning about it.

#Danny

And Scott, what if the job told you, you don't agree with the mission and all of this? Then wouldn't also an option be similar to what I've heard others say as well? And I believe you've said this as well: don't follow illegal orders. Don't follow orders that, you know, are, you know, counterintuitive to the interests of the United States, which you said you're defending.

#Scott Ritter

There's no such thing as, "Don't follow an order that's counterintuitive to the interests of the United States." The sailor doesn't get to make that decision, okay? And when you say, "Don't follow illegal orders," you have to be very careful here, because an illegal order is, you know, "Don't torture a prisoner of war." That's a patently illegal order. "Don't murder children. Don't, you know, do this." But, "Launch this plane"—you don't get to sit there and go, "Well, sir, what's the target of that airplane?" None of your business, sailor. Launch the damn aircraft. Load that bomb on that plane. "Well, sir, I have to know where that bomb's going."

No, you don't, ordnanceman. Do the damn job. See, we have to be really careful about here, because every order given by the military is presumed to be legal at face value unless it's facially illegal. We don't get to have constitutional discussions at the tactical level. And just because you don't agree with war—I don't think we should be bombing Iran—tough shit. You join the Navy, put the bomb on the airplane, launch the aircraft on time, or you're going to be court-martialed for failure to obey a lawful order. War sucks. Straight-up sucks. And you're not going to get the perfect war every time you go out there. Bad stuff's going to happen.

But to sit here and say, "This is illegal," blah, blah, blah—you don't get to make that decision as a sailor unless it's so patent. If I say to you, "Execute that prisoner," you get to say, "No, sir, that's an unlawful order." If I say, "Waterboard that prisoner," "No, sir, that's an unlawful order." If I say, "Shoot into those civilians," "No, sir, that's an unlawful order." You get to do all that. "Get up at 5 o'clock in the morning." "Sir, that violates my constitutional right." No, it doesn't. Get up at 5 o'clock, have breakfast by 5:30, be on the flight deck by 6 o'clock, ready to rock and roll, and obey every order I give you.

And you know what? I can give you all sorts of orders you're not going to like. You're staying up for 48 straight hours. Sure, there's no constitutional right to sleep. You're in the military in a time of conflict. People need to understand that military is hard duty. It's not meant to be easy. And get this constitutional crap out of there unless it's flagrant. You don't get to question the orders of your superiors. I'm sorry. That's not how the system works. You don't get to become, you know, your homemade constitutional scholar and say, "I think this war with Iran is a violation of the Constitution." Really? You want to have that conversation right now, Corporal? You want to have that conversation?

Tell me how it's a violation of the Constitution. Let's get into it. Really, all the people in there are saying it's unlawful. The Congress of the United States gave the President of the United States war powers authority. The President of the United States could go to war for 180 days without the approval of Congress. So nothing he did was unconstitutional. Do you guys understand that? Do you understand that Congress abrogated its constitutional responsibilities for war a long time ago with the War Powers Act? So don't sit here and pretend that you all are constitutional scholars. The president can order the military to bomb anybody at any time without congressional authority.

And it's a lawful frickin' order unless he's murdering civilians and things of that nature. So we have to be really careful about invoking the Constitution here. And the last people in the world to get to raise their hand and say, "I'm not doing this because that's unconstitutional," are the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines. You only get to say that if it's a straight-up, flagrant violation of the law of war: executing prisoners, torturing prisoners, killing civilians. But doing your job? I'm sorry, you don't get to say it. "I'm not going to do my job because it's unconstitutional." But this is reality. This is the hard truth.

#Danny

Right. I mean, it is certainly the reality, as you said, Scott, of how the system actually works. And I guess I'm curious then, because what does this say then about—you said, you know, you don't agree with the mission, why they're there in the first place. What does it say about that? Because it seems like you said that there's this contradiction between, you know, not being at war, but yet being permanently deployed, and the conditions are getting worse and worse, and yet there is no war footing.

But there is a blockade, and Iran sees the blockade as a war, and that's why they're there, right? They're there to enforce the blockade. So I guess my question is then, what does this say about, overall, the U.S.'s military posture? Because now Iran is saying they're going on the offensive. They're going to wait this out until 2029. They don't have any problems with the U.S. continuing to pretend like it's at war or not at war or any of this. But it seems like it's having a really big effect on the morale of the U.S. military forces, Navy, et cetera. So your thoughts on this?

#Scott Ritter

Well, now we get a different discussion, okay? Because now you asked me a different question altogether. Why do you serve? What motivates you to serve? I can straight up tell you that I volunteered to serve. I enlisted in the summer of 1979 because I truly believed that the Soviet Union was an evil force. I lived in West Germany. The Soviets were over there in East Germany. And I truly believed they were wanting to come over and end democracy as we knew it. And I was serving to defend my country, to defend my way of life, to defend democracy. And I truly believed it. I mean, now that I'm a little bit older and studied history a little bit more, I realize it was all a crock of shit. But at the time, I truly believed it. And I joined ready to die for my cause. I believed in it 100%.

And later, as I transitioned to the Marine Corps, I continued to have this belief system that we were on the side of good. Now, you know, you begin to see things and realize that not everything's perfect, but you believe overall, I'm serving. I'm in service of humanity, good, of justice, of righteousness, and you let it balance out. Today, what good are we doing? What are we serving today? If you wanted to join, you know, I've always struggled with this because I've had people come up and say, "Scott, my son, my daughter wants to join the Marine Corps. Would you advise that?" And I would say, you know, they've got to have a long, hard conversation with themselves, understanding that you give an oath to the Constitution, that you serve the nation, not the president, but you have to obey the president's orders.

You can't join the military because you're happy with the president you have, because in four years, while you're still in, you might get a president that you don't support, and you have to be willing to obey those orders from that president because that president is the commander in chief. So you have to be honest with why you're joining, what service you're providing, what you believe in. Is this a cause worthy of your life? And if it's about economics—I'm doing this for the money—you're making the wrong damn choice. Because believe me, your paycheck doesn't matter a hoot when you're getting off a helicopter and rounds are zinging through, your buddy's brain just blew out on your chest, and you're sitting there watching another guy bleed out. You're saying, "I had it pretty good." No, no, no, no, no.

Now you're into a whole different environment. Why are you there? What are you doing? I just had a—you know, I wrote an article about a statement made by a German journalist, Michael Martens, when he talked about killing Russians. And, you know, in the article, my response, I brought up David Grossman's book *On Killing*, which talks about—you know, because let's just be straight up,

guys. War is about killing. It's not about anything else. War is about man killing man. That's why it's the worst thing in the world. That's why you should never want war. It's humankind acting at its basest moment. It just makes mankind ugly as hell. And what Grossman said is, you know, and this is sort of the good news, the vast majority of soldiers in World War II didn't fire their weapons. And then when they did, many of them didn't aim.

Why? Because they didn't want to kill. Killing is hard, and that's good. You should make killing hard. But today we made killing easy. We've changed up our training. We've done it. But the end result of making killing easy is that—understand that when we make people kill, they're broken for life. And then they come back, and it's done. This is all the reality of going to war. So I keep telling them that, you understand, if you join the Marine Corps and you go to war and you kill, you're never going to be the same. And the parents need to understand that little Johnny will never be the same. That doesn't mean little Johnny's broken forever, but little Johnny will never be the same.

Little Johnny is going to have some bad shit happen in his brain, and it's going to affect him for life. And he may become an alcoholic. He may become a wife beater. He may become a drug addict. He may become a criminal. It's going to break him. Little Johnny went out marching off. He's not coming home. But even then, sometimes you have to say, okay, that's the price I'm willing to pay for the greater good. I'm defending the greater good. What greater good are you defending today? And this is the question. And the answer is there is no greater good in America today. The oath you take, the oath of service, is to the Constitution.

But right now, if the American people can't tell me what the damn Constitution is, that means we aren't a constitutional republic. Because we can only be a constitutional republic if we, the people of the United States of America, have read the Constitution, absorbed the Constitution, lived the Constitution, held others accountable to the Constitution. Then we're a constitutional republic. The vast majority of American citizens couldn't take a test on the Constitution. They couldn't pass it. They couldn't pass the citizenship test. So if you become a citizen, you take a test. I think the passing grade is 100%. And if you fail, you don't become a citizen. Well, imagine if every year, every American citizen had to take a citizenship test.

We wouldn't have any American citizens. So right off the bat, the people joining the military today are serving what? Not a damn thing. Because this isn't the United States of America. This is something else. This is a diseased society that has been taken hostage by a cult of personality that has said straight up he doesn't believe in the Constitution. And we have a Congress that isn't doing a damn thing about it. We have a judiciary that's basically said the president can do anything he wants in office and it's not a crime. And so the president is doing everything in office that is a crime, like fluctuating the market and insider trading, making billions of dollars.

#Danny

This is what you would be dying for if you joined the military today.

#Scott Ritter

So my answer today to anybody saying, "Would you advise anybody to join the military?" I say, hell no. Hell no. This isn't a country worth dying for today. It's not. And until we fix this country, and that needs to be our number one priority, I wouldn't advise dying for this country. And I would advise everybody on the Abraham Lincoln, the George Washington, every ship out there, that when your enlistment expires, get the hell out. And I would advise everybody thinking about joining this military to think long and hard and don't. Because all you're going to be doing is servicing a broken society. It's not the job of the military to save America. It's the job of the citizens to save America. And when we, the people of the United States of America, get our act together and fix this thing and make a society worth defending, then I'll say join and serve. But right now, I wouldn't die for this country. Not for this country. This country's broken.

#Danny

Yeah, well said, Scott. Then, you know, your thoughts on right now Iran's particular posture, how they have been reacting. You know, Iran, I believe it was Araghchi who said, you know, they didn't really have any plans to assassinate Donald Trump because Trump is already killing the United States. There was no—almost like the do-nothing-and-win mentality.

#Scott Ritter

That's the best weapon that Iran has: just let him be Trump.

#Danny

So your thoughts on Iran's posture right now? Because they're saying they're just going to keep going, that they haven't met their ultimate objective anyway. They're not even talking about any kind of MOU talks, anything like this. Things have really—and this is now reflected in the oil prices—we see those either staying steady or ticking up and up and up. So, not to mention the fact that, perhaps as you said, broken society, broken military. You have also in the United States, every single month, more and more people have disdain for this war, don't think it's worth fighting, that there are no objectives that the United States is actually going to meet in it. So your thoughts on Iran's position, given these factors on the ground?

#Scott Ritter

Well, first of all, we just have to just be, again, honest. Iran didn't start this war, right? And if you want to get into it, Iran was actually doing everything possible to avoid this war. Donald Trump had articulated Iran's nuclear program as being a threat worthy of war. But at the time, in order for a threat to be imminent, it means that no steps can be taken to remove the risk of conflict, the threat. But we were actually actively negotiating with the Iranians. And indeed, on February 27th, we had a

deal that was in the hands of the Omani foreign minister, who was flying to the United States to finalize the deal, which would have resolved all of the outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear program, which Trump said represented the existential threat worthy of war.

So there was no imminent threat when we launched a surprise attack, which means we committed an act of perfidy. And the reason why I want to bring this up is not only did Iran not start this war, but the way this war started was, you know, an act of infamy carried out by the United States. Again, look at the history of the United States: December 7, 1941, a day that will live in infamy, according to Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The Japanese launched a surprise attack against the American fleet in Pearl Harbor, a surprise attack. And we called it an act of cowardice. It is. And the same thing when they attacked us in the Philippines and elsewhere. We did this. Now here we are, a nation that was raised.

I was raised with the notion that what the Japanese did on December 7th was a horrible thing. I lived in Hawaii. I went to the Pearl Harbor Memorial, and it resonates with me. So now my country has become that which we have condemned, despised. We are a nation that carries out surprise attacks, using diplomacy as a cover, an act of perfidy. And so the reason why I bring this up is that, you know, Iran is the wronged party, the aggrieved party here. The good news for Iran is that they sort of knew this was coming. They expected this, and they had prepared for it. And they were better prepared for war than we were, the United States. And Iran prevailed in this conflict. The Iranian position now is that this has to end now.

This can't be something that is sustainable. They can't allow a repetition where the United States simply comes back in five years and bombs the next Supreme Leader and kills them and rolls in with a bombing campaign. Iran is saying this is over now. Now that the United States has taken this to an existential level, then Iran's saying we're all in. They've pushed all the chips in. We're all in. You know, Trump can sit there and go, you know, call, pass, fold. Iran's all in. That's it. This is the only hand that's going to be played. And Iran's holding, you know, a straight flush, ace high. It's over. They're going to ride this thing out. Now, they're not going to commit suicide. They're not stupid.

As we sort of joke, but it's the truth, the best weapon Iran has is Donald Trump, which is why Iran just said, "We're not going to talk to Donald Trump. We're going to let this weapon of mass destruction loose on the people of the United States for two more years, and on the world for two more years. And we're just going to sit back and say, screw you. Do what you need to do. We're done. We're not playing this game anymore," because the problem is the United States. Iran needs the United States out of the Middle East. The United States is a cancer in the Middle East, or it's a subset of the greater cancer, which is Israel. But Iran wants the United States out and is not going to accept anything other than that.

And Iran's holding all the cards, which is why we have a situation today where the president is desperately looking for an off-ramp. You know, this whole thing about the steel wall that he talks about, the blockade, there is no steel wall. Understand that. People, please look at a map of the

Arabian Sea and imagine 16 ships on picket duty. What's their span of control? Even if you give them helicopters doing patrols and you have other airplanes, how can 16 ships represent a steel wall? They can't, especially when they get close to the Iranian shore. The Iranian ships will sink them. So they have to stay away from the Iranian shore, which creates a giant buffer zone where ships can skirt the coastline and get past the steel wall. So there it is.

I mean, just imagine that. Take a look at, you know, right up there where the strait is. It's vast. I mean, that is. So, you know, what they're saying is, you know, I can't—I mean, it's hard to point—but you see where Oman is, and you go, you know, off that little tip of Oman up to the border of Iran and Pakistan, right? Right there. And, you know, that would be an area where you could say, okay, you have a steel wall there. But now understand that Iran has missiles that will project, you know, deep into that. So our steel wall is only halfway up there. And as it gets closer, it's not really half. It's sort of maneuvering because you can't stay still, because the drones will come and get you. So half of that water there is a path for shipping to bypass.

So you get through the Strait of Hormuz, you hug the coast of Iran, and next thing you know, you're in Pakistan, offloading at the port or making a swing around India, going to China. We don't have to steal anything. This is the reality. But the president can sell this to an American public that is dumber than dirt, and they'll buy it. And so that's what the president does. He says, "I control the Strait of Hormuz because nothing can get in and out of the Strait of Hormuz without going through my steel wall." Now, that's a lie, but the American people aren't smart enough to recognize the lie. So he can solve the Strait of Hormuz problem. Who controls the Strait of Hormuz? He'll tell the American people, "I control it." And therefore, I can walk away as long as I got my blockade in place. The Iranians are like, "Well, your blockade sucks. So keep it in place."

We'll keep doing what we do. We don't care. You know, so you can claim you won. We know that you didn't. And we'll just keep doing it and surviving. On the nuclear thing, the president kept saying, you know, you got to give me everything. I got to control it all. And the Iranians kept saying, "Pound sand." And now the president's come to the mind where somebody came to him and said, "Hey, just say you won. Stop talking about the need to get American hands on the nuclear dust. The following should come from your lips: I have destroyed the totality of the Iranian nuclear program. I, Donald J. Trump, through Midnight Hammer and other military actions, I am the greatest leader the world has ever seen."

I command the most powerful military the world has ever seen. And our magnificent bombers, with their massive force, have completely destroyed the Iranian nuclear program. I am declaring victory, and I'm going home. And the Iranians will be like, "Okay, we don't care. You can say anything you want to say. Go. Leave." And I think that's the direction we're heading right now, where the president is going to declare victory in the Strait of Hormuz by this imaginary steel wall. And he'll say that the nuclear program has been annihilated and that there's no need to go forward. And he'll leave. And that's the status quo we'll have for two years. And eventually, what's going to happen is nobody's going to give a damn.

The U.S. Navy will come home because we can't maintain it. I just, again, hate to give war stories and things like this, but I was a weapons inspector in Iraq. We served at the pleasure of the Security Council, Security Council Resolution 687, Chapter 7 resolution, which means military force was authorized to be used if the Iraqis didn't comply. And I know that, for instance, in February, March of 1992—in March—I took an inspection into Iraq that we thought we were all going to be taken hostage because we were confronting Iraqi lies. And the U.S. Navy surged aircraft carriers and everything into the Persian Gulf, and we were ready to go to war.

And the Iraqis saw the light and cooperated, and the fleet went home. In the summer of 1992, we had a crisis at the Agricultural Ministry, where we surrounded what we believed to be the archives of the weapons of mass destruction. The Iraqis surrounded us. We had violent confrontations. The fleet surged back in. Aircraft surged back in. The Iraqis backed down. The fleet went home. In the fall of 1992, the fleet came back, boom, came home. In '93, the fleet came in. The fleet came back. And eventually the military went, "We can't do this anymore. This is too damn expensive." When we surge a fleet forward, it's ready for combat.

That costs a lot of money. When we bring it back, all these things go away. We have to redo it. So we're spending billions of dollars going through a cycle that never achieves a decisive moment. Right now, we have no operational budget anymore. We've blown through our operational budget. This is why the Pentagon is asking for \$350 billion more because of this war. Right now, we have units that aren't training because the training money is being allocated to keeping these forces deployed. This is an unsustainable model. Pete Hegseth should be fired for what he's doing here. We have to get these ships home, and we have to get back to, you know, what passes for normalcy. And, uh, because, you know, that's how we afford it. This is why we have such a high defense budget, because we waste it on stupid things like this.

This is an unsustainable model. So eventually, I would imagine that sometime after the midterm elections, when the president doesn't have to keep the pretense of victory up, the Navy will just quietly come home. And one day we'll wake up and there's no more steel wall. And nobody will care. Nobody will care because it never really mattered to begin with. And the Iranians will just keep doing what they do, strengthening their ties. And eventually the United States will just quietly leave the Persian Gulf. And I think that's what you're going to see. It's just going to be one of these things that just... Look, how many people understand that right now the American military is withdrawing completely from Iraq on September 30th? It hasn't been broadcast everywhere.

Most Americans are like, no, no, we got Americans there. We got Americans up there in Erbil, in Kurdistan, and we got Americans running around there doing that ISIS thing. On September 30th, every American soldier in Iraq is leaving, is gone, finished. It's just happening. We're already out of Syria. How many Americans know that? We're out. Finished. Goodbye. We didn't have a big ceremony. It just happened. And one day we're going to wake up and we're going to be out of the Persian Gulf. We're not going back to Bahrain. We're not going back to Kuwait. We're not going back

to Qatar, United Arab Emirates. We're leaving. And this is going to quietly happen. And that's what Iran wants. Iran doesn't need to have an in-your-face moment. Iran just needs the results. And this is what Iran's going to get.

#Danny

Yeah. Yeah. And what's quite stunning about what you're saying, Scott, is that Iran—what's so interesting is Trump has, and the United States has, throughout this entire war, throughout all the blunders and all the setbacks and all the losses, the defeats, and how all of it's come out, throughout the whole time, there has been a discontinuity even in just the messaging of explaining the war, why the United States is in this war, when what you just said as the possible offering could have been the narrative from the start to the end and made this process possible, seemingly even that much more easily.

Now, what you're suggesting is a lot more difficult in the sense that there are a lot of holes of history that can be shot through. And it seems that there are still forces inside of Washington that surround Trump, maybe even Trump himself in his very deranged mind, that keep the door open to some kind of renewed hostilities, which to me and to a lot of our audience would seem really stupid and counterproductive and probably will only get the United States further into trouble. But nevertheless, there are holes. And so I'm wondering what you think about that in terms of how this off-ramp, which is obviously so needed, will run into any kind of trouble in the coming days and weeks.

#Scott Ritter

The problem is the people that are advocating for a continuation of this conflict, mainly the pro-Israeli crowd, because Israel—you know, sort of feel sorry for the Israelis. Not really, but I mean, just think about it. They spent decades trying to get an American president to go to war with Iran. Decades. And they finally found one dumb enough to do it. And it didn't work. And now he's going to leave. They're never going to get an American president to go to war with Iran again. It's over. The door's closed on this thing. So they're desperate to keep Trump actively engaged in Iran. They're desperate to do this.

And so that desperation now, because they own Congress and they own the Trump inner circle, they're going to keep doing this stuff. The problem is the people that count. Remember, Donald Trump disregarded the advice of his Secretary of State. He disregarded the advice of the CIA director, the Secretary of Treasury, and others regarding starting this war with Iran. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—they all said, "Bad idea. Don't do it." Only Pete Hegseth, who, you know, I don't know what substance he was under, was like, "We got this one, boss. We can do this. I can press 315 pounds. I can kill Iranians." You know, and the president went, "Oh, good."

#Danny

That's what the Israelis want you to do too. Go.

#Scott Ritter

Well, it failed. So Hegseth has zero credibility. The president's called him out for his lies about munitions stockpiles and things of that nature. As we speak, General Caine's telling the president, "We can't do this. I don't know what you think you want to do, but we can't do it. We're out of ammo." Marco Rubio is saying, "We lost everybody in the Persian Gulf. We have no supporters anymore." Saudi Arabia is saying, "Hell no." Kuwait is saying, "Hell no." We're not going to be able to use any of the bases. You've got to fly out of Jordan, which complicates things now because the Iranians have missiles that can defeat our missile system. Everything is going to be concentrated in Jordan, and it isn't going to work, Mr. President.

Secretary of the Treasury is like, you know, none of this is working. And so the CIA director, same thing. We're not going to be able to overthrow the government right now. They've sort of rounded up all of our cells, and they're dead. And so you have all the people that matter saying no. Now, this is important because we've got a midterm election coming up, and, you know, some of these people can be hauled before Congress and asked questions. So the president can't just be dismissive of the advice of his inner circle right now. And I'm not talking about the inner, inner circle, you know, the insanity of, you know, Stephen Miller or Sebastian Gorka. Why is Sebastian Gorka allowed in? But these guys are there.

But the people that count, the big boys, they're saying no. And the president can't go against them. So I think that we're in a situation right now where there's nothing the United States can do right now. There's no chance for him to go to war. Now, the only thing that could happen is if you buy time and say, well, we're going to rebuild. But the American defense industry is so dysfunctional that even if you pour all the money in that you're talking about pouring in, you're not going to get these weapons for years, for years. And by then, we should have a change in political leadership, and hopefully one that goes back to saying going to war against Iran is a really bad thing.

#Danny

Indeed. Well, Scott, it was a great show today. I want to make sure everyone knows that ScottRitter.com, your website, and Substack are in the video description below, where they can support you. I'll pull up one—there was one question from Super Chats—and I'll pull up the rest of the Super Chats as you talk about it quickly. Oh, this is another question. Wow. Okay, so there are two questions. Black Sea: will Turkey get involved against Russia, especially Odessa? Will they blockade Russia? Yeah.

#Scott Ritter

Not on your life. Turkey might get involved diplomatically. But again, I just want to remind people that a blockade is an act of war. And Turkey is not going to commit an act of war against Russia. What Turkey will try to do is negotiate some sort of renewal of the grain trade deal, the access to the Black Sea ports and all that. But Russia's done with that. And Turkey's got no cards to play on this one. So no, Turkey's not—they'll sit there and talk and all this stuff, but they're not going to do anything about it.

#Danny

Yes. Thanks, Scott. And then, one last question. Flying Frog also asks, does Russia have anything like the Walter Reed Hospital for their wounded veterans?

#Scott Ritter

They do, actually. They have, you know, facilities in the major cities. Moscow has a big one. St. Petersburg has a big one. But every military district has military hospitals that take care of the wounded. And my understanding is that the healthcare, you know, at least the immediate healthcare, is pretty good. Russia has to wake up to—when I was there in August of last year, I talked to a veteran of the Afghan War, and he said, you know, they did a really horrible job of taking care of the Afghan veterans. They're sort of forgotten people, especially when the Soviet Union went away.

Because the Afghan veterans were Soviet soldiers. And now Russia was like, "That's not our war. That's not our thing." But then they had the old Chechen conflict, and they didn't do a good job with the Chechen guys. And it creates dissension. But both wars are relatively small compared to what's going on in Ukraine. Right now in Ukraine, you have a significant number of wounded that need help and a significant number of people who have served. And Vladimir Putin has gone out of his way to say that those who served in the special military operation are the future of Russia. And so there's a political empowerment for veterans.

And I think you're going to see that Russia is going to do a better job of taking care of their veterans than Russia ever has done in the past, except for after World War II. I mean, the veterans were very revered. But, you know, and I also think that Russians will do a hell of a lot better job taking care of their veterans than we will taking care of ours. You know, these people coming off these deployments, you know, they're not going to adjust well to society. They're not. And there's no normal for them to get back to. And many of them are going to fall victim to alcoholism or drug addiction. They're going to lose jobs. Families are going to abandon them. And they're going to end up on the streets.

When I was a firefighter here with Del Mar, I drove the ambulance, you know, when I wasn't doing firefighting. And, you know, every winter we'd go out—we had frequent flyers, the Vietnam veterans

who were homeless—and you'd just pick them up freezing on the street, and you'd take them to the VA hospital, where they thaw them out, get a hot meal in them, then they have to release them. And then, next thing you know, two weeks later, we're picking them up, and you keep picking them up until one day you show up and they're dead. And that's how we take care of our Vietnam War veterans. It's sickening. And we're doing the same to these Gulf War veterans, to these War on Terror veterans. You know, after 9/11, everybody, you know, "Oh, God bless our troops."

We love our troops. Well, then we found out about, you know, improvised explosive devices, IEDs, and things called TBI, traumatic brain injuries. And suddenly the veterans became inconvenient because, see, the veteran would be sitting there at the bar staring at his beer and not blinking. And you want to come up and say, "How many guys you kill? You kill anybody?" And he's just staring because he's broken. He's done. And then he stumbles out. Nobody follows. Nobody asks, "Hey, are you okay? Can I talk to you? Let's have a conversation. What do you need? You know, can I get you a place to sleep? Can I..." You know, we just abandoned these guys. And these are young kids now that are just going through society, disappearing in society. We're a disgrace.

This is another reason why I would say don't join the military, because your country doesn't appreciate you. Your country mocks you behind your back, many of them, and the ones that claim to support you won't. Ask yourself who's going to change your colostomy bag when you come back, because this is what's going to happen to you guys. You're going to go out there and you're going to get gut-shot. It's going to go right through your spine, so you're going to be stuck in a chair, and you're going to be pooping into a bag and peeing into a bag. And who's going to change it? Ask yourself that. And if you can't answer that question, don't join the military. Because you know who's going to be changing your colostomy bag? Except you. And you're going to fuck it up. And next thing you know, you're going to have a pile of shit on the floor. And that's your life.

#Danny

Don't join the military. On that note, Scott, everybody hit the like button. Make sure you do that because that helps boost the show after we are done here. Again, Scott's website, scottroeder.com, his Substack—it's in the video description below, where you can support all of his work and find all of his work as well. In the video description also, you can find all the places to support this show: Patreon, Substack, and much more. Also, thank you to all the members and all the Super Chats, and to everyone who moderated today and everyone who viewed. Scott, any final thoughts before I hit end stream here?

#Scott Ritter

No, just thanks for the support. I would ask people to go to my Substack and, you know, read what I post there. And if you can support, subscribe with a paid subscription or donate. I got a trip coming up at the end of September, and I'm still in need of some funds to help make that trip happen. So any support would be greatly appreciated.

#Danny

Yes. Great. Well, everyone, you heard him. Video description below, after you hit that like button. Tomorrow, 10 a.m. Eastern Time, I'm back with Alastair Crooke. So catch you tomorrow morning. All right, August 14th, 10 a.m. I'll see you then. Until next time. Bye-bye.