

Iran RAZES US Marine Barracks! Trump's FATAL Mistake | Johnson & Wilkerson

Fmr CIA analyst Larry Johnson and Col Lawrence Wilkerson discuss the mass casualty event rocking Trump and the Pentagon as Iran retaliates hard against US bases following a horrific war crime on a wedding party in Southern Iran. A deployment of US Marine Corps just took heavy casualties and we break down exactly how devastating it all is in this must watch show. <https://sonar21.com/>
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#Danny

Welcome back to the show, everyone. As you can see, I am joined by good friends of the show, former CIA analyst Larry Johnson and former Chief of Staff Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, to go over the latest developments. And boy, were there a lot of developments, gentlemen. We must talk about Iran's retaliation. So, in Sirik, U.S. strikes hit a wedding, killing at least four children. I believe those death counts are rising. Fifty more were injured at a wedding party yesterday. And Iran absolutely leveled U.S. bases last night in so many different locations, from Kuwait, Bahrain, the Sheikh Isa Air Base.

But most notably, a new target for Iran, or at least a target that it hasn't targeted in a while. I don't know if I'm saying this right: Taji, U.S. Marine barracks where U.S. soldiers were located, helicopters, and other areas that this, according to Iran, led to mass casualties. Here are the medevac helicopters that were over the scene after these strikes occurred. And there's some incredible images coming out, as U.S. air defenses are obviously depleted, and very few were being intercepted, although Jordan says they intercepted 10 of 13 missiles.

Iran has now verified from the UAE, Bahrain, Jordan, and other areas of the Gulf that they fired at least 20-plus missiles and 50-plus drones that night. So these were the scenes last night, gentlemen, and it was all in reaction to this. Now we have 18 people killed and over 108 injured in U.S. strikes last night. They began yesterday quite early, actually, in the day. I believe it was around noontime. Gentlemen, why don't we begin with you, Larry? What do you make of this? This is now the second attack in three days. Iran's retaliation has gotten bigger. U.S. Marines have come under fire, and it appears this war is back on. What is your take on what's going on?

#Larry Johnson

Well, 24 hours ago, I would have said, yeah, it's back on. I got word from a friend that the battle staff at CENTCOM had been stood back up, which meant they're going 24/7, which means they're preparing for multiple operations. But here we are now. It is, let's see. So we're a little after 4 p.m. Eastern, which means just add seven and a half hours. That's 11:30 p.m. Tehran time. No attacks so far. Yesterday at this time, the United States was attacking all up and down the Persian Gulf. What happened? Is Trump doing a TACO? I think he is. He, after all of his tough talk and bravado, I think the economic side of this bit him in the ass. You know, when he launched this attack on Sunday, that was... I thought that was bizarre because previously what he'd do is he'd launch these attacks on a Thursday or a Friday and then Saturday, a chance for a cool-off period.

#Larry Johnson

Then Sunday there'd be some announcement like, "Oh, we've restarted talks," or, "Oh, the Iranians are calling and asking for peace," or, you know.

#Larry Johnson

Some nonsense like that to manipulate the market so that when the stock market opened on Monday, it was going up and the oil market was going down, and the insiders were making money. Well, this time he launched the attacks on basically Sunday afternoon, Eastern time. And, you know, as soon as I heard that, I said, boy, it's going to be a bad morning on Wall Street. And it was. The stocks went down across the board, oil went up. And then we get to Tuesday, where he doubled down on Monday afternoon, which meant come Tuesday it was even worse.

And now then we got some report last night that I was thinking, well, okay, maybe we've now hurt Iran enough. Now there's no way that they can stop ships coming out of the Strait of Hormuz. Nonsense. But Trump has put a halt to it. Now what else is going on during this time frame? Well, the yields on the U.S. bonds are going through the roof. And, you know, Scott Bessent is like an engineer on the Titanic trying to bail out water from the engine compartment with a little bucket that's got a hole in it. So no matter how frantically he's bailing, he can't stop the market from crushing his efforts to control the price of U.S. bonds.

So you've got that. You've got the Japanese rescue program falling apart. And then you had the bad news on the stock market and the oil prices going up. So, you know, I think some combination with the economics of it behind the scenes just said, okay, we've got to stop this. Because if they continued, if this war had continued to escalate, I guarantee you that the negative consequences for the U.S. economy, the global economy, would have been multiplying with each passing day. So, you know, we'll see, right? If this holds through the night with no more attacks, that tells me it was the economics that bit him in the ass.

#Danny

Colonel Wilkerson, there are reports that Dan Driscoll, the former Army secretary, resigned in large part because, when speaking to Trump about how the Iran war is breaking the U.S. military, Trump started to talk about the great ballroom that he's going to build in Washington, and that this led him to think that this administration is indeed doomed. Do you have any information or knowledge, or maybe just understanding, of whether Iran's retaliation, especially at this Marine barracks in Jordan, indeed caused U.S. troop casualties? They're also claiming troop casualties in Iraq as well, in Erbil. Now, this isn't verified, but there was quite a fierce response to this horrible war crime that occurred at the wedding party in Zurich. So, your thoughts on all of this?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Well, I can't imagine that there aren't casualties on both sides, given the exchange, and I can't imagine that the casualties aren't significant on the U.S. side. Let me back up for a second. You started out talking about the Secretary of the Army, and that's an indicator of what incredibly bad shape the U.S. military is in, in a way that's so graphic that it is in your face. I mean, this guy, despite what we might think of him in other dimensions and in other ways, after all, he was a member of the MAGA team, if you will, or the Trump team. This guy was actually trying to do some very important work for the United States Army.

And let me tell you, the Army is in such bad shape under Hegseth that it was about the only positive thing going on, particularly after Hegseth got rid of Randy George, the Chief of Staff of the Army. And let me tell you what I mean by that. This guy was embarked on, first of all, an overall initiative to modernize and bring the Army up to date. And one of the things he was doing in that process was very important, in my view. He was lobbying Congress, going after them hammer and tong to pass legislation to stop this proprietary maintenance business that Lockheed Martin, in particular with the F-35 program, is robbing the taxpayer every single minute of every single day through. It's an incredible program. You've got an F-35 aircraft that in itself is expensive as hell, most expensive in history.

And what Lockheed did to ensure that the profits continue to roll over their threshold infinitesimally, as it were, is they made most of the maintenance that was significant. And, oh, by the way, in all the models across the board, they're only running about 50% OR, operational ready rate, and even less on full mission capable rate. So that means 50% of the time or more, these models of F-35s in all their configurations in all their countries—but we're talking the U.S., who has the predominant number of them—are making Lockheed Martin a windfall in profit because the maintenance done on them most of the time is software and other highly technically related equipment on that aircraft, which is probably the most highly technical aircraft in the history of aviation.

And we're talking about a lot of aircraft here. And Lockheed gets to do the maintenance for mega bucks, and the military can't even do it. So that was the first thing that he was after, and he was after it with vengeance. And the other thing he's really brought to the attention of, I'm told, the president even, and that is that with Randy George, the Army lost its Senate-confirmed four-star

chief of service. Then he turned around and fired the DCSOPS, which is probably the second most important job in the Army. That's the three-star deputy chief of staff for operations. He is Senate-confirmed. There is one there now who's Senate-confirmed.

Adding to that, there's no one in Europe in command of the Army under General Grynkeiwich, the SACEUR. There's no one there that's Senate-confirmed. So we've wiped out the four important three-star positions in the Army that are Senate-confirmed, and we just have someone there. I don't even know who they are, but they're not the people who should be there. So Hegseth—and on top of that, Hegseth is lying to the Congress about his recruiting success. I checked the other day on Donald Rumsfeld during the course of the Iraq War. Donald Rumsfeld was no friend of mine, no question about that. I don't think he was a real friend of my boss, Powell, either.

But Donald Rumsfeld went across the Hill more than 60 times during his time as Secretary of Defense. And most of the time, it was during the Iraq War, the second Iraq War. And he was reporting with charts and papers and all manner of detail about where the money was going, and why it was going there, and what total was going there. Hegseth has been over there about 10 times. He has not brought a single chart. He has not answered fundamental questions from the Congress about this. He's not done anything in terms of exercising his responsibility to respond to the oversight of the Congress with regard to the expenditure of colossal amounts of money.

So he's not doing anything that he's supposed to be doing, but he is doing things to ruin the Army in particular. And I'm hearing that it's spread through all the different services, in terms of him getting rid of Blacks, in terms of him getting rid of women, and in terms of him interfering with the promotion process in all the services, with the exception possibly of the Air Force, where General Caine probably poked him in the head if he were to try to do something like that. All to say that the morale of the services is plummeting, and for good reason in the Army—not just the fact that the Secretary of the Army was fired when he was trying to do some very good things, but also because of these other things that are going on.

And look, I'm the last person to complain about generals being fired or complain about their numbers being reduced. That should be the case in all the services. We have too many flag officers. But these are extremely key positions, especially given the world situation right now. And he's taking people out of it. And let me tell you what he's doing with the middle category fours. Congress put a prohibition on middle category fours, or if you don't know about McNamara's 100,000 in Vietnam, these are people who can't read their name on a guard roster. These are people who got innumerable people killed, including themselves, in Vietnam. There's been a whole book written on this. Terrible, terrible deal that they put in place. These people should have never been in combat.

They can't read their name on the guard roster. Mental Category 4s were limited by Congress, limited by Congress to 4% of the force. And remember, the force is down markedly now because the Pentagon actually asked—the Army actually asked Congress to reduce its end-strength numbers. First time in history, as far as I know, it's happened. Certainly first time in post-World War II history.

Because they couldn't meet their goal, and they were sick and tired of being raked over the coals for not meeting their goals. So they thought they'd do it. Well, they still couldn't meet their goals. So they went and took 11%. That's one out of every 10 soldiers is a Mental Category 4. How did Hegseth explain this?

Not in a hearing, but in written response to a question from Congress, from the Armed Services Committee, I think. He said, "Well, what we did was we took 11%. Yeah, we did. But then we sent them to School of the Soldier." Well, what School of the Soldier? It's the school where they teach the test at Fort Jackson. So then they give them the test again after they've taught them the test. And then they pass well enough to come up to Mental Category Three. And then he got 7% of them out of the 11% that he recruited, and reported to Congress that he didn't top the 4% cap. This is how we're running the Pentagon now. And this is how they're running my Army, which is sorry. And it's going to reverberate mightily, I think, in the very near future.

#Larry Johnson

Well, hey, never fear, Colonel, because help is on the way. They're going to perhaps name Brian Mast to be Secretary of the Army. I mean, you know, nothing like having a failed bomb technician. And, you know, actually, I met him once in an airport, and I had made the assumption, oh, my God, he got his legs blown off in combat. You know, he was a wounded warrior. He's not a wounded warrior. He's a fuck-up who mishandled explosives and blew his own legs off. But he still has time to wear an Israeli uniform on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. And it's like, man, figure out which team you're playing for. You know, the national team or the foreign team. And it looks like he prefers to play for the foreign team.

#Danny

Yeah, yeah, and here's a commentary on that from a friend, Greg Stoker: all the Israeli loyalty aside, Brian Mast separated from the U.S. military as a staff sergeant. During Pete Hegseth's confirmation hearing for SecDef, Secretary of Defense, he didn't even know what a status of forces agreement is. We're done militarily. It would be a long and violent death, but it's over. And there are reports, as you said, Larry, that Brian Mast, known for controversially wearing an IDF uniform at Capitol Hill, is reportedly being considered to replace Dan Driscoll as Secretary of the Army.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Oh, from...

#Danny

Better not comment. Um... Larry, I wanted your comments on this now. You know, Donald Trump was curious, and maybe you can help us understand the impact of Iran's response to especially the

war crimes, because a literal, horrific war crime was committed yesterday by the United States. And this is how Donald Trump was talking as Iranian missiles and drones were raining on several U.S. bases. He says, "I'm not trying to force Iran to the bargaining table, as ABC Fake News reported. I couldn't care less if they sign a worthless-to-them agreement. I like their position now much better, and with almost total control of the Strait of Hormuz and their economy totally collapsing, they are just playing out the inevitable." And then this is the kicker: "When are the Iranian people going to rise up and fight?" That is Donald Trump's words while Iran was retaliating. When are the Iranian people going to rise up, Larry? They have.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, they have risen up. They're fighting. They're fighting us, okay? They're kicking our ass, all right? Trump, and what happened to "you got total control of the Strait of Hormuz"? Now he's even sort of waffling on that. "Well, we got sort of total control." If you had control, why would you be bombing Iranian positions? You know why? Because you don't have total control. Iran's got control, not you. So again, Trump's act is just—I've gotten beyond tolerant of it. It is despicable. It's disgraceful. He embarrasses himself, the country, the legacy, the office of the presidency, you name it.

#Danny

Yeah. Larry, to keep it on you before going back to Colonel Wilkerson, what was your reaction to Iran's retaliation? They're saying, up until now, that they're not necessarily going to stop just because the United States stops.

#Larry Johnson

No, I think they're going to take out the United States' assets anywhere. KC-135s at any location, say in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, or Saudi Arabia, they'll take them out. They're not going to wait. UAE, I guess, got hit a bit too. I know that Judge Napolitano was actually flying into Dubai during all this mess. He was a little nervous, but he made it out. Iran is, I don't think, going to play this game anymore of waiting until they're struck to strike back.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

And, Danny, while we're doing all this, just to highlight some things that are going on right now, there are at least six, and three of them very important, conferences going on in places like Vladivostok, St. Petersburg, other locations. Conferences coming, like the one on BRICS in India, the SCO, that are deciding on the fate of the world in terms of finance and in terms of currencies and so forth. And it is stunning to look at the attendees at these meetings. They include such people as the Japanese, the Indonesians, of course, the usual characters. And I don't use that in a disparaging way. I mean, the BRICS and their augmentation forces now, because they're up to about 30 who are

interested or are signed on the dotted line and awaiting accession. This is happening while we're doing all this.

And as Larry pointed out, making our economy potentially far worse than it already is by what we're doing, with the Iranians having their hand on the lever on doing this in a colossal sort of way. We're letting the world get a leg up on us that is going to be haunting for a long time to come, not least of which is in what they're doing with the economic situation in terms of currencies. Even out in Vladivostok, they're talking about having a regional currency. The Japanese are talking about participating. The Indonesians are talking about participating. This is far more important than the tactical crap that's going on in the Gulf. That's a significant part of it. The world is shifting before Donald Trump's cretin face, and he is paying no attention whatsoever to it. And if you want to talk about what is happening with regard to Bessent and that idiot and his meeting.

#Danny

The general. He's the general now, right?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Oh, yeah. He's showing himself to be absolutely incompetent. And when he meets someone else, like he was supposedly in talks with—I was reading about it just a few minutes ago—with his equivalent in Russia, it's a disaster. It's a disaster. I don't think he's going to have anybody who will talk to him very shortly here because he's not competent. He's not on his brief, and he's not competent. And yet he's, you know, representing us in all these forums. Meanwhile, Xi Jinping's meeting with Sisi in Cairo, I guess his second day was today or yesterday. And they're talking about all kinds of new relationships and so forth. The world is shifting, and it's shifting fast.

And Donald Trump is just sitting there making his usual inane comments that have about as much relevance to this huge power shift that's taking place. And his people, Elbridge Colby and others like them, are designing a redoubt for the Western Hemisphere, a redoubt into which we'll retreat, and take Marco Rubio as he works Paraguay and Argentina and other places that have a substantial supply of Nazis left to get Bolsonaro back in power and get rid of Lula. That's his—Rubio's working on taking Cuba. He's working on taking over Brazil, and he's working on running for president. That's it. That's our secretary of state's national security. All this is going on while the world is shifting in enormously speedy and fast and effective ways for them, not for us.

#Danny

Yeah, I definitely want, Larry, your comments on that as well, and we can couch it in. You know, what's striking about all of this, gentlemen, is that Scott Bessent—I called him the general, and that's because it seems like he's become the face of the Iran war in many ways. Hegseth is nowhere to be found. Bessent is getting a media appearance after media appearance, and here is him. You

know what's so interesting about this is he speaks only in the language of punishing even allies, and European countries were complaining at the G20, too, about how a lot of Trump's policies are targeting them in many ways, despite claiming they're against Iran. But here is Scott Bessent speaking in that language today.

#Danny

Sorry about that, guys.

#Larry Johnson

Come on, Scott.

#Danny

I don't know what's going on. I got a new mouse. Keep him frozen.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

That presents him as he is.

#Danny

I don't know why it's not clicking on it. Anyway, started. No, it's just so strange. I've never had this happen before. All right. Well, in any event, U.S. sanctions.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I'll do it for him. U.S. sanctions on Iran are crippling them, bringing them to their knees. China will not be able to bail them out, or Russia, or anybody else. Crippling them, absolutely crippling them. They'll be throwing their IRGC out of office very shortly.

#Speaker 1

To asphyxiate the regime. And we are telling friends. Can you hear that?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I hear it. Can't see it now, but I can hear it. I could.

#Danny

All right, I exited it. For some reason, it's not working. Anyway, the point is, is he's threatening to punish anybody and everybody that trades with Iran, but also trades, I guess, with anyone that trades with Iran. So it's becoming a complete and utter shit show, Larry. But your thoughts on what Colonel Wilkerson was talking about with regards to this changing world?

#Larry Johnson

So, I mean, it was on display yesterday, juxtaposed. So first you have the G20. It was actually the G19 because I think they refused after the U.S. invited Russia to attend. Europeans bitched and moaned, and so they didn't let Russia attend. Just the finance ministers, right? While that's taking place in Bishkek, halfway around the world, you've got the Shanghai Cooperation Organization meeting. There you've got President Putin, President Xi, Prime Minister Modi. You got the big players. Pezeshkian of Iran was there. Araghchi, foreign minister of Iran, was there. Araghchi was, you know, both filmed and photographed speaking at length with Foreign Minister Wang Yi of China, with Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan of Turkey. So Iran was anything but isolated.

And in contrast to whatever Chinese representative was at the finance ministers' meeting in Nashville, when it came time to try to issue a statement about Hormuz, the Chinese, I won't say politely, they just declined. No, we're not signing that. Not at all. Forget about it. You know, sort of a slap in the face to the United States, that they're not going to tell us what to do. Meanwhile, again, halfway around the world, in Bishkek, the Iranians were being protected, treated as members of the international community. Now, this is going to follow, starting, I guess, Wednesday, Thursday, or today, or maybe tomorrow, and Friday, Thursday, Friday, with the Vladivostok Economic Conference. So that Eastern Economic Forum, again, is going to feature Vladimir Putin. I think Modi will be there. So, again, many of the people that were in Bishkek for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization meeting, they're going to be there.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

And then next week, they're all getting back together in India for the BRICS meeting.

#Larry Johnson

And so what this is underscoring is the activity is taking place with Russia, China, and the Global South. The G20 is increasingly irrelevant. This reminds me a little bit of that scene from the movie Casino. And at one point, Robert De Niro, who's running this casino, he's at his big table having a great party, pretty women around him and everything. And then Joe Pesci is at another table, and he's looking because he doesn't get to be part of the big table where all the party's going on, and he's telling his people, "Hey, we're having a good time, too."

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Look at us. We're happy.

#Larry Johnson

And that was the United States yesterday, basically, with its G20 meeting, pretending like it was something important, something relevant, while with each passing day, the West is becoming less and less relevant in the sphere of geoeconomics.

#Danny

Yeah, and Colonel Wilkerson, how much does the United States continuing this kinetic war against Iran, despite all of these limitations? I don't know if you saw the imagery. I wish I could pull it up, of the USS Lincoln porting in, or going to port, in Thailand. But that thing looked like it was about to come apart. It was so rusted, so decrepit. And everyone was commenting on, okay, if this is what it looks like outside, what's going on inside of this thing?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Well, sustained presence in the I.O. or the North Arabian Sea is a ways away anyway. And that was a real sustained presence.

#Danny

That was—it was 270-plus days, I think it was, right, Colonel? So how much does this also erode the U.S.'s position? So we're talking about this shifting world order. How much is striking Iran—these war crimes now on Iran that are once again blatant—almost like a microcosm, Manab school situation yesterday? And then the fact that right now, not only has the U.S. never really had a strategy, but it doesn't even look like it has tactical clarity on what it's doing, foreign-policy-wise, going from economic D-Day one minute to strikes the next. How much does this erode confidence globally, let alone domestically, in the United States' leadership?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Hugely so, but I'm not so sure there's any further to go. I don't think even our allies now, certainly not Japan. I'll be meeting with a group of Japanese later this week downtown in Washington, and they want to hear what I think. They're going to hear it. But I don't think they're going to be that disinclined to listen because they feel like they're in trouble. And they know that they've got to come to some sort of accommodation with China. There's a scholar who wrote an article that's right on point. He used some very graphic terminology. He said, "Ukraine barked and Russia answered. Japan barked and China answered. And now the yen is crashing and tariffs are being leveled against them. Who taught these dogs to bark?" And then he answers his own question: the United States of America.

Do you think that breeds confidence in the allies that are barking and getting paid back for their barking? It doesn't. And I can go back to the Six-Party Talks and tell you that Japan was more concerned, really very much more concerned than South Korea, with regard to North Korea's acquisition of a nuclear weapon. And that was not just because of the government that was in place in South Korea at that time. That was because South Korea knew that, in terms of defeating the North, they could do it. And it didn't make any difference whether they had a nuclear weapon or not, because they didn't think it was going to be used on them, because they had the deterrent effect of the United States' weapons. No question that we had told the North Koreans a number of times that Pyongyang and much of North Korea would disappear if they so much as thought of using a nuclear weapon.

It wasn't the same for Japan. Japan was much more concerned about Kim acquiring—Pyongyang, North Korea acquiring—a nuclear weapon or a stockpile than anyone else, and part of the reason was political for Japan because they saw they were going to have to abandon years of policy and so forth and probably become a full-up nuclear power themselves. They're back thinking about that again now, but one of the most life-changing ways that they're going to change, I think, is they're going to have to find a new ally or a new situation in which they can ensure their own security. So is South Korea, ultimately, and probably Indonesia and a number of other people. So this is not just a European-focused change.

It's a Pacific-focused change, too. And it's happening blindingly fast. And I had a discussion the other day with a couple of them. I said, and this is a very, very, to me, informative tactical picture that tells you about the farce that we're completing in the Persian Gulf, if you will. I went back to the time when we were doing Operation Earnest Will and Operation Praying Mantis, the two operations we ran in the late '80s when we were reflagging Kuwaiti tankers and so forth, and had a much more robust naval force and even had some really good minesweeping capability and mine-clearing capability. We have none of that now. Absolutely none of it. We're jury-rigging what we do have right now, and the reason we have very little is because we spread it out into NATO and everybody else had it.

We didn't have it, so it saved us a lot of money. But here's what I told them. I said, look, you know what you have to do in mine warfare to create a situation where insurers won't insure and shippers won't ship? Just have one mine and have it hit a ship. That's all you have to do. From that moment on, you have taken over that body of water, because shippers won't ship and insurers won't insure. All you need is one mine to hit a ship. And the Iranians have different kinds of mines, and they have more than one. So the idea that we have cleared the Strait of Hormuz and that anybody can go through it anytime they want to is sheer nonsense just because of that.

That's the—we used to say this in PACOM—that's the beauty of mine warfare. If you let it get started and you have a single contact, that scares everybody to death. And nobody's going to use that passage until somebody comes through with real bona fides and says, "I'm steaming up and

down this channel, and there are no mines. You can see it's clear." So they've accomplished that. The Iranians have accomplished that. And I dare say we're not going to unaccomplish it. So the idea that Trump keeps bandying about, that everything's copacetic in the strait and everything's open and going, and our blockade off the strait is working, is sheer nonsense. But it's an example of how stupid we are and how dumb we're making our military look.

#Danny

Larry, didn't two vessels just today get hit in these mines and take significant damage? I believe there were a couple casualties. I mean, there are some mines in the Strait, obviously, but this has all started again because Trump said, "Oh no, we're stopping." The report is that the U.S. is stopping Iran from, first, rebuilding their radars and hitting their mine launchers. Yet we see vessels in the Strait of Hormuz obviously tripping these wires.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

What we had to deal with in '88, '89, what we had to deal with that was formidable was a kind of boat with a contact mine swimming out there at night—or not swimming, but rowing out there at night—and dropping it off. That's all you had to do. And the next day, if somebody hit that contact mine, that was it. And we had Strauss, Joseph Strauss, I think it was. We had a DDG that hit one, had to tow it all the way back to Norfolk.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, I don't know about—actually, I thought those two were hit yesterday, not today.

#Danny

Oh, maybe it was. Maybe it was yesterday.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, it was yesterday. I haven't seen—you know, the whole Strait has been pretty quiet today.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Yeah, it has.

#Larry Johnson

Both sides. Yeah. So Iran's not going out and picking off U.S. targets. And the U.S., after, you know, reportedly standing up the battle staff, is, you know, back to keep your powder dry, boys. And again, I think it's a combination of the damage that Iran did yesterday has got the United States

thinking, okay, we can't continue to try to trade blows with them because they're going to hurt us more than we're hurting them. Absolutely.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

And they're going to hurt the world economy.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah. That's what's going on.

#Danny

Well, I wanted both of your comments on—you know, there's a Financial Times report, and this is, I guess, par for the course for the changing world. But first, there was a Russian cargo plane spotted over Iran, and there were some wondering about how this relates to, you know, the Financial Times. I don't know if it's completely made up or if it was true, but it says the Financial Times reports that Russia is covertly helping Iran develop advanced supersonic cruise missile technology in one of the most significant known transfers of military tech from Russia to Iran. The secret program, codenamed C430L, is meant to help Iran develop a new class of weapon that is able to threaten U.S. aircraft carriers and warships in the Middle East. I don't know if there's anything to this, actually, but what do you make of now renewed fears of Russia-Iran cooperation—to you, Colonel, and then Larry—given Iran's capabilities being quite demonstrative and impressive in the last couple of days?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

To this time, and, you know, we did this when we did battle groups. They called them battle groups, CV groups, CVG groups. They call them strike and attack groups now. But we did a lot of this at Newport. And I'm telling you that from what I'm hearing from my contacts there now—and these are Navy contacts for the most part, so some of them are civilian—so I trust their views, because usually the Navy is going to be lying to you half the time about carriers in particular, but cruisers too. And I asked the question, okay, if they're a thousand miles off and Iran were to launch a barrage of hypersonic missiles, what's the biggest defense? Is it the normal things that are arrayed around a carrier in order to provide essentially air defense?

And those things provide that air defense at the surface—that is to say, sea skimmers. They provide air defense above the surface, the old kind of missiles we used to deal with all the time, pretty fast missiles, but they're in the air a little bit. And oftentimes your Phalanx Vulcan gun is what you use on them because it's the cheapest and it's the most effective against them, especially at close range. And then you've got the ones that are higher altitude and dive on you. And then you've got the ones

like I'm told Iran has, and maybe hasn't shown yet in the, shall we say, sea capacity. But these go out at very high altitude, and even perhaps at ballistic missile altitude, and then dive at your ship, and they dive at Mach 4, Mach 5. And they're very deadly.

Even if they just hit you in the warhead and it doesn't work, they're going to go straight through you. And I said, okay, what is the principal defense, even at a thousand kilometers? Because some of them have that range. If they were to try this and maybe send four or five of them at a time. And I didn't get the standard answer. The answer essentially was the carrier gets notice that they're coming in. First hurdle: you've got to have notice that it's coming in. Second, the carrier comes up to flank speed, and that's classified. Most people don't even know how fast these carriers can go. I do. They can go pretty fast. Let me put it that way, for the size ship and everything, can go pretty fast.

So you come up to flank speed and you maneuver quickly. At that flank speed, which is possible—not wildly, but it's possible to move—and the missile has a hard time in its terminal stage, if you will, staying with you. But if there's four or five of them coming in and they're on slightly different trajectories, you can be hit even out at that range. So I'm asking the question, why haven't the Iranians shot one of them? And the answer, speculative of course, comes back that the Iranians don't want to give the American people a real reason to suddenly become supportive of the war when they are reading the polls themselves and they know the American people are, by a large majority, all parties, all inclinations, political or otherwise, against this war. And they don't want to change that. And that goes for the other ships even more so, the cruisers and the DDGs and things like that. Why haven't they sunk one was sort of my basic question. And there was no doubt that they could. It was just speculation on why they hadn't.

#Danny

Yeah. Larry, do you have any comments on that? Because obviously, despite all the reports and Trump's, I guess, you know, blather about how Iran is without radar, can't see anything in the strait, can't see anything anywhere in its territorial waters, they can see and they can hit very accurately. Those Chinese satellites would give them

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Deadly aim points for anything.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, and that's been one of the frequent comments by U.S. military personnel who have been on the receiving end of this, that the accuracy of these weapons has been disconcerting, I guess is the correct word. Not necessarily surprising, or initially surprising, but then when they realize that China is supporting and helping this take place. Yeah, the United States has no good military options. And there are still some around Trump who persist in denying that this is the case. But then again, the

events that happened on Sunday and Monday underscored once again that whatever damage we think we're doing to Iran, they turn around and do more to us.

And we're the ones who can least afford it because the attack—I think the attack on the Marine base in Jordan—was particularly shocking to the Pentagon. And while there haven't been any reports of casualties out of there, I'm pretty sure that there were casualties. And that, I think, maybe have been another factor that they said, okay, we're not going to do any more hits on Iran until we can harden our targets and figure out ways to protect our people. Because one of the problems they've got is, since Iran knocked out all the key radars in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, the U.S. no longer has early warning that there's inbound missiles. They may get a minute or two warning, which is usually not enough to get people to a safe haven.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

The only warning they have now is from the AWACS.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, yeah, I think that's exactly right.

#Danny

Wow. Yeah, and Colonel Wilkerson, you mentioned morale earlier. Given what Larry said, that there were likely casualties last night, but even just the reality that Iran can hit the United States whenever it wants, and does so pretty hard when it is required of them and when they feel it is required of them. This is Donald Trump's activity. This is the commander in chief who's supposed to be the, uh, leader of this war effort, now talking about the Trump Strait and how maybe the Strait of Hormuz should be renamed that. Like America itself, it would be hotter than before. I mean, I mean, this—what does that do to morale? And what does that do to, you know, you said we can't really sink any lower in terms of declining image and prestige in the world. But this war doesn't look like it has any end in sight, in the sense that the U.S. doesn't want to come to a settlement and is not showing any moves in that direction. So, your thoughts?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

You know, Danny, what doesn't make sense to me, in the last 96 hours or so, I've had some people who know what they're talking about, I think, trying to convince me that the real power in the Trump administration—and it didn't take a lot of convincing on some fields of activity—but when they told me how comprehensive this control is, I was somewhat skeptical. And the two people they were telling me this about were, first of all, the Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy, Stephen Miller, and second, a guy that I knew was a tyrant and doing some things that are dastardly and we're gonna pay for dearly, is Vought, the budget director, or the OMB guy, I guess he's titled as. And more

powerful than Susie Wiles, more powerful than Pete Hegseth, more powerful than Marco Rubio, more powerful than J.D. Vance.

These people are actually making sure what you just showed on the screen is written as it's written. These people are making sure that every action that they have, you know, sort of visibility into—and they have an incredible network of people who provide them that visibility, not always on the charts, not always cleared, not always a member officially of the Trump government—they have people who keep them informed on all of this stuff. So they are behind a lot of these activities. And I keep asking myself a fundamental question: Why aren't they smarter? Why are they doing what they're doing? And the only conclusion I can come to, an interim conclusion to be sure, is they hate this country.

#Danny

Right. Larry, I know you have about five minutes or so before your next. Any comments on what Colonel Wilkerson had to say there?

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, just watching the, you want to call it poor decision-making by the Trump administration is to be kind. I interviewed Joe Kent earlier today, and it'll air on CounterCurrents hopefully tomorrow. But I was able to, you know, I asked him a question I really hadn't heard anybody else ask, as far as, you know, like what I encountered when I was at CIA, where there were times where the analysts would brief, provide information to the president. And back then, I saw it under both Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush. And so, was it a matter that they were getting bad intelligence, or that they were just ignoring the intelligence because they were convinced that their policy is right? And, you know, Joe's basic conclusion was, you know, Trump's been ignoring the intelligence.

The intelligence has been pretty clear. Now, flawed in some areas. We don't have enough time to go into that. But the fact of the matter is that Trump has—you know, we do have one documented, on-the-record example with respect to the nuclear weapons. The intelligence community's views were very, very clear. Iran did not have nuclear weapons. Trump insisted that it did, ignoring the judgment of the intelligence community, quote, obliterated those weapons, then fired the head of DIA, who came out and said, "Well, whatever you think you obliterated, you didn't obliterate it." So what Trump has created is just a completely dysfunctional intelligence community that, it could be said, is afraid to tell the truth.

#Danny

And Larry, before I let you go, I know you have a lot of comments on this. Maybe in the last minute or so that you have, you know, the so-called Energy Secretary, Chris Wright, poured, I guess you could say, oil on the notion that the United States is going to use Venezuelan crude after this massive deal to refill the SPR. Here's what he said.

#Speaker 2

The Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Can you just take me through how that's going to work? Are we looking at swapping this crude to get it into the SPR?

#Chris Wright

Yeah, as you grow production and lower the price of oil, that enables everything to be better. But absolutely, the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve—it's unlikely that we would put Venezuelan crude into our Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

#Danny

Larry, no joke. What the hell is going on with the oil situation? Because the SPR is at an all-time low. Trump is gloating about the Venezuela deal, but it's obviously more complicated than that. So in two minutes, what do you say about it?

#Larry Johnson

What comes out of the ground in Venezuela is black tar. Okay, it doesn't flow out through a pipeline. You know, think of putting some peanut butter in a glass, put it in a straw and suck that out. Okay, this is—this. That's essentially what they're talking about. So, yeah, we're sitting on a load of peanut butter.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

But all we got is this lousy straw. And I don't care if you got the—

#Larry Johnson

Enough suction of a jet engine, you're not going to get it out. So this is the ultimate gaslighting. Even if they could somehow eventually get that out, it's going to require building up infrastructure and new pipelines.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

\$100 billion, at least.

#Larry Johnson

ExxonMobil said it was going to cost about \$100 billion. It's an investment. And they said, no, we'll take a pass on that. So, yeah, this is more gaslighting. The Trump administration, let's give them credit, they do one thing really well, which is lie their asses off.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Yeah, that's a great way. They brought a new refinery online.

#Danny

Well, Colonel Wilkerson and I will close that. We'll be in touch with you. Thanks so much for joining again.

#Larry Johnson

All right. Later. Bye. Have a good one. Bye-bye.

#Danny

All right, Colonel Wilkerson. So we got about a couple of minutes, five or so minutes. Your thoughts on this oil situation? It seems like every time the Iran war is going badly, Colonel Wilkerson, the Trump administration leans on the Venezuela situation. I'm wondering your thoughts and assessment on that particular dynamic.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Well, according to the oil experts, the ones with whom I've conversed, not only did ExxonMobil say that, the one major most apt to do it, partly because of familiarity and partly because they've worked in this kind of environment before and done so successfully, is Chevron. And Chevron apparently said not only no, but hell no. So they have no one of consequence who's willing to go in there. And it would take someone of consequence. It would take someone of significant consequence, like an ExxonMobil or a Royal Dutch Shell or Chevron, to go in there and do this. So that's the first bind they've got. They cannot get this oil out and to a point where it is refined to make anything out of it that's usable in the United States.

And the second point is, even if they could, or even if there were some lying around somewhere that had already been refined to a certain point, and it wasn't, as Larry said, that peanut butter in a glass and you got nothing but a straw. If it was a reasonable product, if you will, it'd come out for some reason and been refined to some point, and you've got it somewhere. We don't have the refinery capacity right now in the right place to do what we need to do, which is, one, make jet fuel—and

that's all the JP categories, four, five, eight, and so on—and two, to make diesel, particularly diesel for the truck fleet and so forth.

So all to say that if they're depending on Venezuelan oil to keep tractors running on farms and to keep trucks running on the highways, good luck, boys. The only way you're going to get that is if Russia says, "We'll give it to you," or Russia could say, "We'll take some of that gunky stuff and refine it for you." That would take longer, considerably longer, maybe six to seven months longer. So I don't see what they're talking about, and I don't see what we're going to do. First of all, we're not going to be able to fill up the SPR. Second, we're not going to meet this demand for diesel and jet fuel on time. So we're going to have flights being canceled or enormous charges for the flights that aren't canceled, which most people won't be able to afford.

We're going to cut back maybe 40 to 50% on jet traffic. And then, as it goes on into October, we might be stopping it altogether. And we're going to really impact farmers who are already hurting. Look at the wheat crop. We've had the worst wheat crop in years. This is a really bad wheat crop coinciding with this lack of diesel, fertilizer, and so forth. So we're looking at not just the Global South starving. We're looking at prices going off the chart for people here in the United States. This is not a good thing for a president who's already in the low 30s, if not high 20s, to be doing just prior to the midterms. And the Republicans are more and more becoming aware that they're in deep, deep trouble.

#Danny

Yeah, yeah, I think Polymarket—I mean, I hate these things. I hate these bet-trading enterprises. But Polymarket has the Republicans getting swept out in the midterms at a record percentage now. So, in my estimation, it may be, Colonel Wilkerson, that part of this re-escalation of the Iran war might be hinging on the midterm elections and settling for a loud position in the background as the new Democratic Party, I guess, majority comes into place, which may not actually change all that much depending on—

#Lawrence Wilkerson

The Democrats, boom. And look at what happened in Massachusetts. You get this young, vibrant former Marine, graduate of Harvard, who right after 9/11 left Harvard and went and joined the Marine Corps, Seth Moulton. He wants to run for the Senate, and an 80-year-old beats him. And this is the People's Republic of Massachusetts. We can't fix our problems. We simply don't seem to be able to fix our problems. And the idea that Hakeem Jeffries will be much better than Johnson, other than he's not a Christian nationalist—no, he's a Zionist, a closet Zionist. You know, we're damned if we do and damned if we don't.

#Danny

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well, it's certainly a crisis for the empire, as you call it, Colonel Wilkerson, and I want to thank you for your time.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

What was it the guy in Shakespeare said? I can't ever remember exactly, but it's, "When troubles come, they come not as single spies, but in battalions."

#Danny

Oh, wow. That's an incredible line, and I think very much appropriate. Well, I want to thank everyone who gave Super Chats. I'll pull you up on the screen. Colonel Wilkerson will be back with us in a week, so be sure to save that date. So thank you so much to all of you who gave Super Chats. I saw China using their advanced weapons in Africa, probably used by Africorps. Appreciate your channel. Thank you so much. Larry said American diesel is going to Israel in the war, not to U. S. farmers. Well, I would say that's... I don't know. I mean, at this point, it seems like diesel is just going to be an incredible crisis for quite a long time.

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