

Iran SEIZES US Sub, HITS TWO Warships as Trump LOSES IT | Col Larry Wilkerson & Patrick Henningsen

Col Lawrence Wilkerson and Patrick Henningsen discuss Iran unleashing a massive missile barrage overnight in the largest military operation since the war began in retaliation to Trump's desperate strikes on Iranian tankers near Kharg Island. The war has escalated in a major way and the spiraling escalation is changing the world order forever. <https://www.youtube.com/@21stCenturyWireTV> Patrick's YouTube <https://patrickhenningsen.substack.com/> LIKE the video and Subscribe for more in-depth geopolitical analysis Leave your thoughts in the comments below! Support the Channel: Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong> SUBSCRIBE ON RUMBLE: Rumble: <https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong> Follow Me on Social Media: Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DannyHaiphong> Telegram: <https://t.me/DannyHaiphong> Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhaiphong> Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritho> #iran #iranwar #trump

#Danny

Welcome back to the show, everyone. Danny Haiphong here with Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson and Patrick Henningsen to go over the latest developments. So we begin with the breaking news that yesterday Iran has captured an Anduril Industries Dive-LD autonomous underwater vehicle, a submarine that represents Iran—\$2.5 million worth of sub technology, as well as part of the \$1 billion Project Replicator of the Pentagon seeking to roboticize and render AI further into the military. It all comes, gentlemen, as Iran struck back very hard against the United States, who began all of this with five Iranian oil tankers being hit yesterday. Then Iran launched 40-plus missiles across the region, particularly against Jordan.

It also reports, the IRGC does, that they hit two naval destroyers in the region, as well as F-35, F-16, F-15 positions. The targets were the Azraq Air Base, the Muwaffaq al-Salti Air Base, and the Prince Hassan Air Base. Here is the report about the anti-ship missiles that reportedly struck the USS Delbert D. Black and the USS Paul Jones in these attacks. I'll kick it to you first, Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson. Your reaction to this? Trump has been silent about this. There's this whole tanker war phenomenon. What do you make of Iran's increasing escalation ladder? It seems like they're climbing up, and what it means for this war, for CENTCOM, for the United States?

#Larry Wilkerson

Well, I don't think Iran's climbing up the escalation ladder except in response to the empire. From what I'm hearing, we just conducted some devastating airstrikes on Iran. Devastating, I don't know what that means. Those are Trump's words and Hegseth's words. But it seems to be that they don't strike, or strike really forcefully, damaging many things, unless we've done it. And their strike is, if you will, on the escalation ladder maybe a little bit up on that ladder because of that. But they're not leading this from the perspective of the tit for tat. They're responding to our tits with their tats, and their tats are, as I understand it from all sources, pretty devastating. But they've been that way all along. And every time they ratchet up and use something else, like to capture this submarine, for example, it opens the envelope a little bit more for Donald Trump and Pete Hegseth and America in general to be severely embarrassed as we continue to lose this war.

#Danny

Yeah, and Patrick, I wanted your response to this in lieu of the fact that CENTCOM has denied everything. They've denied that anything was hit in Jordan. All of the missiles were intercepted. They've only counted about half of them as being launched. They deny that the Andrew submarine that was captured was meaningful at all, that it was already broken. And of course, the two naval destroyers were not hit, too. What do you make of the United States' posture here and position as it faces what Iran says is going to be two, three, four times the impact of retaliation to whatever the United States does? Yeah.

#Patrick Henningsen

Sure, Danny. And I think it's the information war pretty much on every single front. So as the United States gets into a more sensitive position here, definitely on its back heels—and I say that relatively speaking compared to where it was six months ago—the United States, we can agree, is on its back heels here in West Asia, trying to defend what remaining positions it has in the region. So every single incident, every single exchange is going to be a public relations crisis, basically. So they're going to have to be very careful and circumspect as to what they admit, especially—and this is all amplified—in the run-up to the midterm elections, at least on the U.S. side.

I think similar on the Israeli side, with the elections coming up, Iran is very, very aware of both of those elections and will absolutely be looking at the next two months to improve its leverage, I would say. The other thing is, looking at the video footage from the attacks on the bases in Jordan, some people were describing some of the Iranian missiles as cluster missiles. So I can't confirm what type of missile, but if that's similar to the Oreshnik model, with deploying multiple warheads before impact, smaller warheads before impact, if that's something that can be looked at closer. I don't know. I'm not that au fait with that, as maybe some other military—Ted Postol and others—would be aware of on this. That's one thing.

As far as intercepting, capturing Palmer Luckey's latest toy from Anduril, the autonomous underwater 20-foot sub, I think it is very significant. And what's more important isn't what's

captured. What's important was how it was captured. Because people should remember that in—I think it was in 2010. It was a while ago. I think it was under Barack Obama during his first term—Iran hijacked the satellite uplink signal between the most advanced U.S. surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft, a Sentinel drone at the time. It hijacked that, captured the U.S. aircraft, and then landed it in mint condition on an Iranian tarmac and then showed it off to the world. That was under President Ahmadinejad. And they still have that drone on display next to the MQ-9 Reapers that it has destroyed. And all of these are in a kind of trophy case in Iran.

And I have seen this drone as well myself. And so, knowing that they've done that 15 years ago, it would not surprise me if they were able to intercept this underwater autonomous submarine in this case. Or if the U.S. is correct and it just broke and floated to the surface is another thing. But that's a huge transfer of technology to the Iranians. No doubt they'll be studying that very closely. So that's a major breach.

That means that potentially, whenever this type of thing happens, this is why all advanced militaries in the world don't always deploy their most advanced submarines, weaponry in the field, because of the risk of it being captured and then reverse engineered, and any intelligence that your, quote, enemy can glean from your latest hardware and software and all the other components and connectivity and everything like that, and how they interact with radar systems and detection and all that. That's all very high stakes with regards to this war. So these are really important developments, in my opinion, and I wouldn't be surprised if Washington's just dismissing it out of hand publicly and writing it off as a nothing, but I think it's significant. Anyway, we can talk.

One thing Larry said that's important was how the U.S. and Iran are responding to each other. And I think the U.S. have crossed a major line here this week. And when they're announcing that if Iran is targeting U.S. military naval ships, that the U.S.—Rubio himself said this, the Secretary of State—that the U.S. will respond by hitting oil tankers. Okay, that's unlimited warfare. That's not reciprocity. That's not like-for-like exchange. And so that's the U.S. crossing a line into a kind of rogue, you know, reckless—this is not how a superpower would normally behave. This is not how a hegemon behaves. It's how a lower-tier power behaves. But that's what we've got in Washington, apparently. I'm just going by their words and actions in this case.

#Danny

Yeah. Colonel Walker, so what do you make of the proportionality of it then? Because we're talking about the United States striking civilian targets, civilian tankers, and Iran then stating and then acting upon hitting military targets to an increasingly significant degree. So any comment on that? And what exactly do you make of, especially the footage I just put up, these Patriot interceptors are finite, and there were reports that there were a half dozen to a dozen missiles being fired for every Iranian missile. Those aren't great numbers. Your thoughts on all of this?

#Larry Wilkerson

No, there's no question that we are hurting on some very critical munitions, key munitions, and the best indicator of that is people like General Alexis Grynkeiwich, who is the SACEUR, U.S. EUCOM commander in Europe, who is not happy with it because increasingly the other theater of war, Ukraine, is presenting the prospect that the Europeans might—you know, be careful what you wish for, you might get it—might actually provoke Putin into going outside of Ukraine. He's already hit NATO targets inside of Ukraine. In fact, there are those who think one of Ratcliffe's reasons for taking the C-17 to Moscow was because Putin was exercising his very, very prudent and compassionate, if you will—certainly some public diplomacy involved with it—return of dead people.

And he's been very, very good about doing that with Ukraine, whereas Ukraine has been paltry at best. And we think that the latest batch of very precise missiles hitting NATO targets inside Ukraine killed some CIA. And so Ratcliffe was picking up the coffins to bring them back undisclosed and unheralded to the United States, dead people from CIA. I think that's probably a pretty plausible explanation of it, because the CIA director's plane is as well equipped, if not better equipped, for comms and such than the C-17. Even though it had a special suite on it, so does the CIA director's plane have a special suite on it. So that excuse for taking that airplane doesn't hold a lot of water. The other thing, I'm just looking at—I finally got it to come up.

You know, what we're looking at right now, and this is very, very key, and it just blows out of the water everything Donald Trump and Pete Hegseth and Bessent and others are either saying directly. I just listened to Trump—full of lies—the press conference. Who's lying to him, or is he just outright lying himself? That's my huge question. But the average transit of the Strait of Hormuz for the last 96 hours, and I suspect this goes even further back than that—that's all the data that's on this chart—is six ships. Six ships. The normal transit is 600 ships. This is in a 24-hour period. Six ships. Then you look down at what the factor for insurance is, and this isn't going to sound like much, but let me assure you, it's overwhelming. The factor is usually about 0.15 in terms of insurance to level of danger.

Let's put it that way. It's now eight. That means essentially ain't nobody insuring nothing going through the Gulf that they have a choice about. And then looking at another statistic, it's which way these ships are going and to whom the ships belong that are transiting, and how many ships are waiting. Right now, at this moment—well, this moment is about two hours ago GMT—250 ships are waiting still. They're not going anywhere. They're just sitting there. And who is going looks to be a lot like about 50-50, 50-50 in terms of maybe these got through because the United States wanted them to get through, and these got through because China or someone else who is on Iran's side, basically, or Iran itself wanted them to get through. And then the next thing that's indicated, and I don't know how to verify this, but they are now creating environmental disasters. Iran has stayed away from that, completely stayed away from it.

They've not tried to hit anything that, you know, intentionally would dump a lot of polluting fuel, oil, whatever, into the water. We now have hit a ship that apparently dumped a whole ton of it into the

water and is still going there. So these developments that are happening on an hourly, minutely basis in the Strait of Hormuz are playing havoc still, and therefore contributing to Iran's strategic ascendancy in this conflict. Because that's what's really going to wreck this administration, ultimately, is the damage to the global economy, including our own, because now we are having enormous problems finding enough diesel to meet the demands in this country. And it's just going to get worse. It's just going to get worse. So this chart tells it all for me in terms of the strategic significance of the Strait of Hormuz and who has that strategic significance under its boot heel.

#Danny

Great points, Colonel Wilkerson. Colonel Wilkerson, I'm going to ask if you could reload and come back in. There's a bit of static on your mic. I'll bring you back in after Patrick's comments, if that's all right. All you have to do is reload.

#Larry Wilkerson

Yeah, okay. It's probably not going to get any better on this rigging thing I have in my face. That's all right. That's all right.

#Danny

Might have to give it a shot. I'll bring it back to you when you're back, okay? So, Patrick, any reactions to this in particular? You know, is Iran right now, do you believe, approaching all of this very strategically, in the sense that they are hitting Jordan, which is Israel's last layer of defense? There's a lot of rumors that Israel will eventually come back into a direct war with Iran at some point. And there's also the fact that now Iran is starting to target—and they say they've hit—two destroyers. That's also relatively new, given the fact that these ships have in large part been sitting very far from the Iranian coast. But now Iran is launching missiles that do have the capacity to hit them. Is this part of, do you believe, Iran's strategy in terms of increasing the cost on the United States of this war? Yeah.

#Patrick Henningsen

It kind of goes back to my earlier point. I mean, I had said this back in, I think it was March, maybe back in March, that, you know, talking about things that I had heard Iran had not deployed yet in terms of missile tech, and that would be the ability to change course and trajectory in flight for a ballistic missile that would enable it to hit moving targets. These are things that the Iranians had in mind. The Iranians had relayed to me while I was there in February that they had them, but they hadn't yet deployed them. And, you know, at that point, you can only guess whether this is just bluster or—because a lot of people are developing a lot of things and claim that there's a lot of potential out there.

But that would be a revolution in military affairs, of which there have been many that Iran has introduced even during this brief period of conflict. So it would not surprise me in the least that Iran has more things to reveal in terms of its capabilities, and some of those might be game changers. Anything that has that capability in terms of a missile is a game changer, especially considering that the United States is completely reliant on its Navy in order to provide its positioning, its staging, its ability to project power and attack and aggression against Iran. It's completely now naval-based, with some distant land-based long-range bombers coming from Europe or from other countries, bases further afield. Okay, that's a known thing.

But in terms of limiting the U.S. naval capability to attack Iran by pushing the U.S. Navy further out, these missiles, or even the threat of these missiles, act as a major deterrent against the U.S. Navy. That's a game changer, because the entire U.S. power projection model post-World War II, largely, if not all of it, is based around naval power and being able to deploy naval assets for air power, basically. So, I mean, that's the key to the U.S. empire in projecting power. So that would be quite incredible if that were the case.

But on the Israeli front, Israel has made some major threats recently against Iran, that they're going to drop a hammer and Iran has no idea what's coming. Now, you can read that in many different ways. So is this a veiled nuclear threat or tactical nuclear threat? That's a separate conversation. But if we're just talking about conventional warfare, I think Israel has been very, very happy to have had what they've done in the last couple of months, which was to basically avoid any direct hits from Iran or Iranian retaliation. And the United States has been taking the brunt of retaliation from Iran.

And the damage has been inflicted on American military bases and American assets. So, in that sense, that's been, I think, by design. Because if you notice, Israel has been able to achieve a lot of its core objectives regarding South Lebanon and Syria and Gaza and the West Bank, as an example, while the United States has been fighting Iran, and the world has framed it as the U.S. versus Iran when, in fact, it's Israel and the U.S. versus Iran. But this has been really convenient for Israel. It's allowed them to pursue objectives that are very important to the hard right in Israel, which are increasing its land, the Greater Israel Project, annexing territory in its neighboring areas for strategic reasons, and ultimately to absorb them somehow into the Israeli fold, and cleaning Gaza, as they say, cleaning Gaza. And pogroms in the West Bank have been on the uptick, although there's been a pushback this week on this.

I think just this morning or last night, Netanyahu has announced that they're going to be demolishing settler outposts in the West Bank under pressure from the United States, which could very well have been indirectly from London, because the British government announced it's going to sanction illegal settler goods from the West Bank. Immediately, Israel attacked Britain and closed their consulate in East Jerusalem, threatened to expel UK diplomats, denying them access into Israel in the future. And this created a huge political backlash in Britain, and I'm absolutely certain this has reverberated back to Washington at light speed.

So what looked like a very small symbolic move by the British government to sanction something that most people would agree would be an easy thing to sanction without doing too much harm to Israel, which is goods from illegal settlements in the West Bank, the Israeli government responded vociferously against the British. And so now we have this thing that's possibly spread to Washington and come back to Netanyahu, where he's now forced to push some of the illegal settlers back in the West Bank. And I think, to me, this is an incredible story because it shows you how the political element comes into play once an action is taken. A relatively small action can blow up into a much bigger, potentially geopolitical movement regarding this particular case.

So those are all things in play, I think, that may, especially in the run-up to the Israeli elections, in the short term anyway, influence or affect what Israel's calculus is going to be of how much it wants to engage or is able to engage on the ground in any of these different theaters. Iran, I would think Israel would want to leave alone, unless Netanyahu wanted to make some audacious statement before the elections. But it's most certainly going to be met with an Iranian retaliation unless they're gambling on a non-conventional attack. What would that be? I couldn't tell you. I mean, none of us could tell you. I think it's hard to know what would happen after that. It's kind of like a year zero moment, the use of nuclear weapons. So, yeah.

#Danny

Yeah, great points. Colonel Wilkerson, I definitely want to get back to that Israel question to you, Patrick. But before then, I just want to ask if you believe we have any reason to doubt Iranian statements regarding the two naval destroyers that were hit, or reportedly hit, according to Iran: the DDG-119, the DDG-553. What are these ships doing? And, you know, do we have any reason to doubt Iranian statements at this point, especially given, as Patrick said in the beginning of the show, there is information warfare happening throughout this war?

#Larry Wilkerson

At this point, I would say probably 50%, fully 50% or more, of the words that go back and forth from both sides are propaganda, part of the psychological warfare campaign. DDGs are just regular destroyers with guided missiles on them. That's what the G stands for. They're not very big ships. They don't carry a very large complement of people. They're highly technical ships. That's one reason they don't need so many people. And it's not that difficult, if you know what you're doing, to sink one of them. Witness what al-Qaeda did in the port of Aden, in Yemen, when it hit the USS Cole and blew a 19-foot hole in the side of it. One of these missiles, like Iran is shooting, like, for example, the Kheibar Shekan.

That would sink the ship very quickly. But there are air defenses, and there are air defenses arrayed around each one of these strike groups that consist of fairly formidable forces. There's no doubt in my mind that if Iran wanted to, it could sink a ship, sink it outright, sink it. The question there is, and I think they've been very circumspect in this regard, you've got 60 percent or better, and they

know this, of the American people who are opposed to this war, of whatever political persuasion they might be. You sink a U.S. warship with all hands on board, and you probably might influence that view somewhat. And they don't want to do that, and I don't blame them.

But I do think they have the—I think they even have the capability, probably around a 50% to 60% possibility, of sinking one of the aircraft carriers at the 1,000-nautical-mile distance that they're operating at right now with one of these more rapid missiles that comes in so fast and does its thing so fast that even the carrier coming up to flank speed, which is classified as so high you'd be surprised how fast these carriers can move, and maneuvering itself, which would be a last-ditch effort to avoid getting hit, might fail. And they would put 5,000 Americans in the water and kill a great many of them too, because it's not too good trying to rescue people out there in the middle of the big Indian Ocean. So I think they're staying away from that. But that's not to say that they couldn't do it if they wanted to. And we know that. That's one reason why the carriers are not getting any closer than 1,000 nautical miles.

At the same time, I think a lot of this is propaganda. Like I just said, people are saying they hit this, they hit that, and others are saying they hit this and they hit that. The one that isn't is these missiles hitting places in Kuwait, Bahrain, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and so forth. We've taken significant casualties. And J.D. Vance, for example, the vice president, coming out and saying—I couldn't believe he said it. I mean, he just cut his chances of running for president and winning by a considerable margin by making a statement like this. He essentially said that the people who had died in this conflict—it isn't a war, he said. It's not a war—their families aren't going to get anything because it's not a war. Now, understand the argument behind this.

We used this argument from time to time when the AUMF was not sufficient to cover the actions we were taking in the Bush administration. Rumsfeld used it. You want to argue the fine points of the law. It's not a war. Therefore, I don't have to pay this money out. Well, that's not something you should be saying, J.D., if you have a future in politics, because people now are turning against him for making a statement like that. It shows you how volatile the public can be when you do something stupid like this. Saying it's not a war is ridiculous. Of course it's a war. I just signed a statement for, I think, we're going to the Ninth Court, the one in Alexandria that handles federal cases. Bruce Fein and Ralph Nader and others are behind it. A lot of lawyers are behind it, suing the government essentially on whether or not this is a war. Patrick's comments about Israel are very pertinent.

#Patrick Henningsen

Netanyahu is coming again.

#Larry Wilkerson

He always comes when he's really worried about an election. He's supposed to get here, I think, later this week, and he's going to be here three or four days, I'm told. This is an attempt to beef up his opportunities to say he controls America and that whatever America does is his wish, and therefore he should be reelected. I'm not so sure it's going to work this time. And I heard Trump make a couple of comments that were pretty pertinent to Netanyahu's actions in Lebanon and elsewhere, warning him to stop. And I'm waiting for Iran to watch what he's doing in Lebanon, which is well beyond what anybody's agreed to, well beyond any parameters of any ceasefire. Of course, Israel never honors any ceasefire. And strike. Are they waiting so they can coordinate with Hezbollah?

I don't know. But I feel like Netanyahu is treading on very dangerous ground now with regard to Iran striking him back. And I'm told Israel has very little to send up into the air to intercept Iran's missiles. So this would be like a field day for Iran if it were to attack Israel fully again, especially Haifa, Tel Aviv, and other important points. The other thing that's happening in Israel right now, which is going to influence the elections, I suspect, is the damage they have done in Gaza has actually polluted tons of Israeli drinking water. And this is because they've disturbed the sewage systems, partly at least, so badly that the sewage is now impacting groundwater and water that Israelis drink and use to cook with and so forth and so on.

So there's a real uproar right now, and you're seeing it in papers like Haaretz that will actually defy Netanyahu because Miriam Adelson and Sheldon didn't buy them for Bibi. By the way, they had an editorial this morning that was pretty right in his face over what's happening right now with regard to the revelations, such as they are, that he knew all about October the 7th and failed to alert anybody in the security complex, insinuating that this was what he wanted to happen. This is going to reverberate around in this election campaign, I guarantee you. He's suing Haaretz over it. Of course, that's the first thing Bibi does. But it's not looking too good for Israel, as Patrick said. And I wouldn't be trying to provoke them.

Right now, if I were Israel, I'd be kind of hunkering down and seeing if I can't maintain my status quo and continue to kill everybody around me like they're doing anyway, including in Gaza under the so-called humanitarian foundation. And I don't think it's a good situation right now for Israel. And him coming out in Hebrew and English and saying that, you know, what he's been saying quite frequently of late, that they will be very surprised at what comes, and Smotrich and Ben-Gvir and others like him echoing that, insinuating clearly that they're going to use nuclear weapons. What are they going to use?

That's my question. What are they going to use if they use nuclear weapons? From a military point of view, Iran has the complex at Dimona and anything that might emanate from there targeted and pinpoint-targeted. So how are they going to do this? Well, they're going to do it with their submarines. They're going to do it with launching cruise missiles with small nuclear warheads off their submarines, which I know they have. I don't know exactly how they launch them, but I know

they have to surface and they have to send them off the deck because they don't have the technology for firing them underwater.

But that's worrisome. And Iran, of course, has to consider that. They know that, I'm sure, and they have to take that into consideration. But they'd be opening Israel if they did that in a last-ditch effort or whatever, so-called Samson option. They'd be giving Iran carte blanche to come back at them. And I don't mean with nuclear weapons. They may have one. I still think they probably do. But they don't have to come back with that. With the missiles they have remaining and the capabilities of those missiles, they can devastate Israel. And I'm, you know, part of me says, good.

#Danny

Yeah, well, I think much of humanity feels the same way with you. And Patrick, that gets me to, you know, it's so interesting. In the Jerusalem Post today, I found this little nugget where it's a so-called opinion piece, but the author is actually the former legislative director of AIPAC itself, talking about how Trump's Iran war, calling it Trump's Iran war, has left him without a clear path to victory. And this is from Douglas Bloomfield, who, yes, did serve at AIPAC. And I found that interesting in light of the fact that there's also this element here about why this war keeps on going. While Trump's oil investments, according to CNBC, have gained millions during this war, 4.4 million from the eve of the Iran war through August 31st, according to an analysis.

And just to put this up as you're talking, and as Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson mentioned, the possibility of Iran striking Israel very hard if anything should happen. Well, there's the first footage that we've seen since it was censored of the 12-day war back in June. This is of Iran hitting the Haifa oil refinery. But Patrick, your reaction to this, especially in lieu of the fact that now Israel seems to be, through AIPAC, spreading the message that this war may be lost, but that this war also has a lot of benefits to certain elements of the Trump administration, not least his own investments.

#Patrick Henningsen

We're seeing a lot of mixed messages. So even in the last 24 hours, I think leaked statements from Washington, top U.S. military planners are reconsidering the U.S. presence in West Asia, talking about drawing down. Again, I don't put a lot of currency in a lot of these things that you see. I don't draw big conclusions from them other than they're just signals, political signals. They could be intentional leaks, of course. There's always that. But clearly, there are people in Washington that are slowly realizing—they're like elephants, they move very slow—but they're slowly realizing that the U. S. no longer has a foothold in West Asia, that they can't do what they've been doing for decades.

And so geostrategically, it's kind of a new game now, a new chapter. And they still haven't, I think, reacted to that. Now, those who say that the U.S. doesn't have a strategy are wrong, are not seeing clearly what's actually happening. The U.S. does have a strategy. It's not a very good strategy, but they do have a strategy. And Donald Trump, in his ham-fisted way, blurted out the strategy when he

was defending J.D. Vance. When J.D. Vance says that there's no war, or to steal a phrase from Bill Clinton, it depends what your definition of war is, Trump was then challenged with J.D. Vance's denying the war. And, of course, Trump said, "Oh, I agree with the vice president."

This is small potatoes for us, but we're doing intermittent strikes. Now, when I heard Trump say that under pressure, and that was a way for Trump, I think, a little defensive move, but he never—the word intermittent is well above Donald Trump's vocabulary lexicon. It's not a term you would hear someone like him use ever unless it was planted in his head from a briefing from the U.S. military. And as I said during the MOU, and what I learned when I was in Tehran in July was that the Iranians viewed the MOU as a ruse, and as a ruse for the U.S. to buy time to rearm and reload and then wage intermittent strikes to degrade Iran's ability to manage and administer the Strait of Hormuz.

And then here's Donald Trump again two months later saying, "We have a strategy. It's intermittent strikes." And if you think about it, think of the timeline. The press, even the podcasting world that we sit in here, react to every single move and headline. Okay, that's not the real timeline. The real timeline extends up to, through, and beyond the midterms. And I would say, if you're going to look at a timeline, it has to be a two-year timeline, straight through the duration of the Trump administration's term. That's the timeline that I'm looking at.

And if you think about it, if you have these situations, like a fake MOU kind of ruse, the U.S. staging various provocations, creating problems in the Strait, getting Iran to respond, and then using that as an excuse to hit a bank of targets in Iran, that's probably in the thousands, right along the southern coast through the Strait of Hormuz—anything that's remotely related to maritime or anything military-related or infrastructure-related. Those are things the U.S. need an excuse to hit, but only intermittently. And each time they do that, the Trump administration can play the market on the oil and the stock market.

And if they added up 20 or 30 provocations, exchanges over a year, times \$5 billion over, that's a nice little chunk of change for Trump and his inner circle, and they can just keep playing this game while establishing the U.S. strategy, which is to take away the leverage—the only leverage that really Iran has geopolitically is the Strait of Hormuz. That is their top leverage. I would argue they have much more leverage than that in terms of their missile deterrence and their new geopolitical status in the region and globally. But just on the Strait of Hormuz, that is the U.S. priority.

It's to degrade Iran's ability to manage the Strait so that at any point they can turn around and accuse them of being unable to manage the Strait. And that keeps this game going. Whether this is a good game and this is a viable game, and whether this game is going to make it through 2027, I have no idea. I'm not saying my evaluation on that. What I am saying is that is the U.S. strategy at the moment, so at least one of the U.S. strategies. It's, to me, more of a daisy chain of tactics than an actual—it's not grand strategy, I can tell you. It's strategy. So that's what I'll say there.

The last thing I'll say is what Larry said about the environmental damage: law of unintended consequences. When this thing comes to an end at some point, the U.S. are due reparations. They're going to have to—they should and may be asked to pay for that, because you're talking about, I mean, this is hundreds of billions in reparations. You know, whole coastlines full of crude oil. I've seen it. We've all seen it. If we've been to California or Alaska post-oil spill, I've seen it in California. It's not nice. Twenty, thirty, forty years later, it's still there, caked on the rocks, and kills pretty much everything. The Gulf of Mexico is another good example.

So someone's going to be on the hook for that. You know, these things are not cost-free activities that the United States has thrown itself into here. And people like Marco Rubio will also be liable for that. Just based on that comment alone, as the Secretary of State, he's just thrown himself into a world of trouble legally for the rest of his life, I would argue, by making a statement like that. This is why we have laws of war. This is why we have international treaties, conventions that are ratified by our own governments, for this very reason, so we don't have to speculate about how this would be adjudicated. But where is the U.S. government on any of these treaties right now?

#Larry Wilkerson

Well, I think you know the answer to that. That's a huge question. I don't disagree with your assessment there, but that's a huge question. And the other huge question is, is the leadership, brain-dead though it is, of the Republican Party going to let this go on, say, through the end of September, first part of October, and have what is going to happen to the global economy and is going to happen to the United States too, no matter how much Trump denies it, happen on their watch? Because it's going to be dramatic. We're going to have diesel probably hitting \$10 a gallon. We're going to have wheat that we can't get our hands on. Our own wheat production in America has fallen off dramatically because of heavy rains and also other things that have happened.

It is not coming out of Russia. Putin has said, "You ain't getting a drop of my wheat." That might be one thing that Trump is talking to him about. It isn't coming out of Ukraine because it can't. And we're looking at other products that are going to be severely limited and cost a fortune, including jet fuel. I would say within two to three weeks, we're going to see doubling of prices to fly in jets. And we're going to see flights canceled. Every airline across the board is going to have to cancel flights because people aren't going to pay \$16,000 for something that cost \$3,000 before. And we're talking about really getting dramatically bad in terms of not just the global economy and the Global South in particular, but our economy in this country.

People going to the grocery store and paying a fortune for groceries that they were paying a fortune for before, but now it's really going to be a fortune. And against the backdrop of Donald Trump and his gang making more and more and more money. I agree with that too. I think that's the first principle of this administration, is to make money, and particularly of Donald Trump. That's just not

going to go over very well with the American people. We're going to see a really frustrated leadership of the Republican Party, I think, when they realize very categorically they're going to lose both houses. Payback is a mother. Payback is a mother. And I'm not talking about accountability.

We don't do accountability in this country. We've never done accountability. Obama had a terrific chance to do accountability on the torture program. What did he do? "I'm not looking back. I'm looking forward." Well, okay, no accountability. But the accountability will be the payback the Republicans get from the Democrats when they have both houses in their hands. Republicans won't have a pot to pee in, literally, in the Senate or the House. Now, Israel will be well off. Israel will still be well off because Hakeem Jeffries is an Israelite inside anyway. But there will probably be some payback there because the American people are falling off of Israel very rapidly.

#Danny

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And Patrick, the question has to be: does the current administration, GOP, these forces, do they even care about the midterms at this point? Because every action that they take, and that they're taking the lead in in this war, and also geopolitically—because geopolitically, I think there's a broader shift happening as well—do they even care? Or is the short-term profit enough right now, and they'll happily become the minority and then play the part of an outsider again? I don't know if that's the calculation, but this war is not going well, and I don't see the tides turning anytime soon. But your thoughts on this?

#Patrick Henningsen

I'll answer that, but just to add to what Larry said about the diesel crisis, the timing of this, and then trying to start a trade war with Canada and creating Canada as an enemy. Canada is integral to the United States diesel production distribution that powers our trucking fleet in America. The American economy runs on 18 wheels, by the way. And all of the regional hubs for fuel and trucking, at least in the Midwest and the northern corridors, are all based on Canadian fuel. And that's by design because it's practical and it's cost-effective, as well as the oil heating of homes in the U.S. northeastern sector. So, you know, Canada is the worst person to start a trade war with.

It's your best friend and ally. But back to the original point, it depends on what the Democrats are willing to do in opposition. If they have control of the House, have they been co-opted to such a degree that there's not going to be a wave of meaningful impeachment? There's a lot of things you could impeach this president for. The question is—and they're real things—are they going to go for real things or non-real things? That's a good question. What's official Washington going to do? When I say official Washington, I'm talking about the whole amoeba, the whole massive politics there. So I can't tell you. I don't see any meaningful opposition within the Democratic Party.

Maybe after a year or two, you might see more of it after the next round of elections, but still it's dominated by uniparty stalwarts, basically gatekeepers. So I don't know. But one thing I'll say is that

if there is a genuine threat to the Trump administration along these lines post-midterms, they'll be scrambling now to shore up whatever they can, and then ahead of maybe a dry season in terms of gifting, open gifting in Washington. But, you know, the reality is this: these things take so long to tease out that even if this process started in January, you know, legally some of these things take years, if not decades, to iron themselves out. And by then things have moved on.

I think the opportunity to go after Trump would have been if we had a real functioning press in America, in this country, that they would have already done half the job already, but they haven't. If we had a real opposition in the Democratic Party, even in a minority in the House and Senate, they would have already done half the job already, but they haven't. It's a bad sign going into the midterms. So, you know, there's a lot of noise potentially to be made and a lot of grandstanding by various people, candidates ahead of the elections, that they're going to do this, that, and the other. What will they actually do? I can't say. It's not clear to me. I don't see anybody, any standout mavericks, that are going to hold this president, this administration's feet to the fire, and everything that comes with that.

#Larry Wilkerson

And Patrick, I'll just add, Danny, Patrick, I'll just add to what Patrick just said. If you watch the hearings right now with people like Jack Reed, who's the ranking minority Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, with Hegseth, the hearing yesterday and the day before, what you hear is, "We don't necessarily disagree with this \$1.5, almost \$2 trillion you're getting. We just disagree with the fact that you're not telling us what you're doing with it." So, I mean, one of the worst fiscal situations right now is this huge amount of money we're dumping on DOD, DOE, whatever.

And they're not interested in the totals. That's fine. It's the fact they're not reporting back on where it's going and how it's going. You know, I mean, that has something to do with it for sure. But they're not uncomfortable with the totals. The totals are awesome, bloated, stupid, insane. And Jack Reed's a West Point graduate. He knows this. I've known Jack Reed for a long time. He was pretty smart at one point, but now he's co-opted by the defense contractors. Absolutely co-opted. So Patrick's right. What change?

#Danny

Well, before I get to, you know, as we enter the last 10 or so minutes here, I know you have a time commitment, Colonel Wilkerson. So I wanted your last comments maybe on what you believe right now, as the shape of this war continues to change almost daily, and where the general direction with the geopolitical implications happening more broadly are. In particular, you know, we are seeing the United States, despite all these weapon shortages, continue to fire away. And I'm just curious on what the implications of this are more broadly in the larger geopolitical sphere.

#Larry Wilkerson

Well, let's come up a level or two and say the geopolitical, geostrategic implications right now of Trump's posture towards the war in Ukraine is that NATO is dead. The EU will soon follow suit. And Europe will be back in the catastrophe that Colin Powell, for example, in 1989 predicted when all the people with their feet in the war were gone, and Europe reverted to its previous self. We're going to have a disaster, I think, in Europe. And in Southwest Asia, you're going to see the U.S. gone almost completely, if not completely, gone from ground presence. We will keep some maritime assets.

We used to call it offshore balancing. It won't even be that now because we don't have enough maritime assets to balance. But we'll keep them in the neighborhood, just as we'll keep them around Taiwan, which is a farce because any time the Chinese wanted to take those assets out, they could forthwith. So we are becoming a paper tiger in many respects. And these two conflicts, the one in Europe and the one in Southwest Asia by choice, the one in Europe by proxy over a long time by choice too, are ruining us. They're putting the coup de grâce to the American empire.

#Danny

Well, if you do have to step out before Patrick is finished, thank you so much for your time. Patrick, same question to you.

#Patrick Henningsen

To add to what Larry's saying there, this bloated military spending effort, move, campaign by this administration, led by a former Fox News weekend host that everybody is now realizing was probably the worst cabinet selection in the history of the United States of America, by far the most underqualified high-level cabinet selection in the history of a country the size of the United States. And that's extraordinary if you think about it. So they're now beginning to have buyer's remorse about selecting this religious fanatic, Pete Hegseth, adorned with many a tattoo and with a very shaky and problematic personal resume, to say the least, that this might have been an absolute disaster for the U.S. And so these are—that, if you combine the spending, the incompetence, the fact that the U.S. has abandoned diplomatic tracks pretty much—I don't count Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff as a diplomatic track, by the way.

It's really just kind of almost like a Netflix series, like Being There. But—and with Iran, with Gaza, and not resolving honestly the situation in the Pacific, which Larry was describing—basically, it's more war. So more spending, more war, coinciding with a \$40 trillion national debt announcement in the last month. These are all signals to the markets that the fundamentals have failed. The U.S. government, this administration particularly, and the tariff wars—everything I've just said—drives inflation, kills confidence and trust in the U.S. government, plus the sanctions, the attacks, Scott Bessent's economic autarky announcement, driving everybody out of the dollar. He literally said it.

You're not going to be allowed in the U.S. dollar system. These are all signals to the market that are driving up bond yields, long-term bond yields. So the U.S. government, the Trump administration,

have broken the market. They've broken the fundamentals of the market so comprehensively that any short-term move by Scott Bessent to engineer an outcome, which is not what the Treasury is supposed to be doing, or the Treasury Secretary, but he's trying and failing—this is not going to change. They're not going to get a result. Everything is just going to snap back to where it was because these are trends that have now basically overtaken what used to be received wisdom in the financial world.

That certainly the market would bounce back. Gold would go down, and et cetera. So you're beginning to see all the fatal flaws in this administration, and they're really ushering in a downward spiral of U.S. economic power and prowess. And I think that's going to extend to U.S. political influence globally as well, spiraling downwards. And all of these things are bad signals to the markets, bad for the U.S. dollar. And mark my words, last thing I'll say is this: this gang of criminals, these grifters, will all be shorting every aspect of this market as the dollar crashes. They're going to short everything.

That's all they can do. And so, whatever they have to replace the U.S. dollar—stablecoins, whatever this sort of Ponzi system is that's waiting in the wings—which may or may not be adopted immediately. But before that transition, these guys in Wall Street and all their cronies in the City of London and everywhere else are going to short the market. They're going to short everything. Then they're going to scoop it all up for pennies on the dollar. Massive wealth redistribution upwards, exactly like what we saw with the COVID crisis. The extension of the wealth gap by orders of magnitude. You're seeing the same thing now. Massive reconsolidation of assets and ownership. And these are people right now positioning themselves and their money to grab everything at pennies on the dollar.

And that includes, Danny, any remaining state assets will also be on the chopping block, I'm telling you. And in America, those are huge, by the way. American public assets and property and various things that are under the control and ownership of the federal government are massive, and just even a few pieces of these are worth hundreds of billions, if not trillions of dollars in the long term. So this is what this crowd right now, we have—this is what they're thinking about now. This is all they're thinking about now. They're not managing the affairs of the country on behalf of the people. They're managing on behalf of the super kind of hyper-elite, I would say, capital class that are managing and moving global capital, of which Scott Bessent is a henchman for. Former George Soros banker. Ruthless. Why was he selected as Treasury Secretary?

#Danny

At a young age. At a very young age, when he was coming of age with the Soros ring, he proved his ruthlessness at a very young age.

#Patrick Henningsen

And he's the man for the job, as is Donald Trump, Danny. Donald Trump is Mr. Receivership. He's Mr. Bankruptcy. He bankrupted the country in his first term by putting \$8.5 trillion on the Fed's balance sheet for COVID, to pay businesses to shut, to pay people to stay home. That was a huge experiment, and it failed. It was a disaster because it started an inflationary cycle that we're still in now, that this current situation is exacerbating. But the money supply now has reached COVID levels in terms of the amount of money pumped into the system. So, is there another pandemic going on right now?

How could it be that we've repeated that financial cycle today in 2026? It's because we've got another thing called the war cycle, and other bits of spending to pay for the interest on U.S. national debt, which is now over a trillion dollars a year in interest payments. That's the number three—that's the number—I would say number four line item in the federal budget: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, military with the new budget, and then interest payments on the national debt. That's the number four line item, budget item, interest payments on the debt. How is that benefiting the American people? That trillion dollars? Does it benefit us in any way, shape, or form other than keep the lights on in the White House and Congress? It's debatable.

#Danny

Yeah, and it's so interesting, Patrick. We have about a minute or two left for your final comments. It's so interesting. We went from Trump 2015-2016 being the—I even heard some people calling him, across all the political spectrum, far left to even the far right, almost like the man of industrial capital. He was the one who was going to fight for industrial capital, therefore the industrial working class. Now, in 2026, we're talking about Donald Trump being essentially the man of big money, of big Wall Street, of fiat. I mean, the entire Iran war and the push to gobble up everything on behalf of these financial interests is just out there for everybody to see.

In particular, the oil market manipulation, the investments that Trump himself and people close to him make, are raking in massive amounts of cash based on, you know, just simply manipulating, gambling, betting, all of this. It's right out there to see. And so it's a very interesting, I guess, decade of history to have been made here. But the consequences are quite dire. He's literally calling people losers if they don't want their water systems and, you know, economies ruined by AI data centers. He's calling the war small potatoes if people don't want to die in a war against Iran that is not winnable. But this is where we are right now. Your final comments as we head out here.

#Patrick Henningsen

Well, that tweet that he put out, like you just mentioned there, about shaming people in America for not wanting data centers shut down, claiming that they're killing the goose that lays the golden egg of the stock market—it tells you everything you need to know. That's the president intervening

directly from a platform that he owns, Truth Social—ridiculous name for a website owned by him—but basically trying to influence an outcome in the stock market, because the scam of it is that a third of the S&P 500, of the NASDAQ 100—a third, a third of the value—are seven AI companies.

And these data centers are attached to those companies. Not that these are profit-making ventures. No, these are all funded by banks, loans, hedge funds, corporate bonds. They're issuing corporate bonds, these companies, like going out of style. Another bubble. This is a subprime type of corporate bubble that's now inflated on the side of this AI monstrosity, okay? Corporate bonds, hedge funds, some foreign capital as well has come in to pump this up. These companies like OpenAI and these people that Trump is saying are their national champions, they haven't got a pot to piss in. They haven't got any money.

But how is it that they don't have any money, but their CEO is now a billionaire, or worth whatever, 20, 100 billion, and people like Elon Musk are worth a trillion, and these companies will never turn a profit? This market will collapse, and then maybe there'll be one or two standing after consolidation, and they'll turn a profit. But that process might take five or ten years to play out. So this is another reason, Danny, this hyperscaling of the AI industry to fuel a stock market that's a fake economy, basically, that's propping up the U.S. dollar, this is driving up borrowing costs. This is driving up bond yields.

Because investors are like, well, there's tons of bonds on the market, and why should we buy yours? Give us a higher interest payment. And that's what the creditors of the United States are demanding because they're reacting to the market. And the market has gone like this for the U.S. If Moody's had to rate the U.S. for creditworthiness right now, it should be as low as any other third-world tin-pot dictatorship in terms of creditworthiness. If you had to credit-rate the U.S. government and their junk bonds. So, I mean, the AI bubble is driving a lot of these problems.

And, you know, if everything like people's IRAs, 401(k)s, and all these index funds are based on the stock market, and this corrupt government allowed Elon Musk to come in and suck up all the government data through this fake DOGE scam, okay, and somehow rewrite legislation that places SpaceX, without having to go through any of the normal fiduciary hurdles, to be classed as a mandatory purchase for retirement and index funds—in other words, creating an artificial demand for SpaceX stock, making it the reserve currency of the stock market, one of many specially selected corporations given that status previously that had to earn that status—was given to Musk, makes him a trillionaire, and what you have is a huge bubble.

This is way bigger than the dot-com bubble, way bigger, tenfold bigger than the dot-com bubble. This bubble, when it pops, will take the entire stock market, the U.S. fixed income, U.S. economy, and the global economy down with it. Bigger than the housing subprime crash. Bigger. Bigger. So, yeah, that's a level of institutional corruption that's been allowed to happen under the Trump

administration in 18 months, a year and a half. Incredible. It is really extraordinary, actually. I hope that we're still here, or society is still here, to be able to write and analyze it and discuss why it happened in five years' time.

#Danny

Yeah, we still got a couple years left of this administration and all that it is going to bring us. Patrick, great being with you. We'll head out now. I want to make sure everybody knows that both 21st Century Wire YouTube and your Substack are in the video description below. People should subscribe and share, and be sure to watch 21st Century Wire. They are both great sources of information on these matters. Thank you so much, Sparky, for your super chats. Lindsey Graham introduced Pete Hegseth to the media around 2020. Prior to that, Pete was Lindsey's rent boy. That's an H. Child Bessa hates China because China spoiled his short of Hong Kong's currency during Hong Kong's transition back to China.

Yeah, I would say that's very apt. Thanks to everyone who watched today. Thanks to Sparky for those super chats. Thanks to all the people who moderated. I saw Ware in there. Thanks so much to everybody. I'll be back tomorrow. What day is tomorrow? I think I'm here late with Ben Norton. Maybe there'll be a news update in the morning. Be sure to check out the notifications for that. All right, everybody, hit the like button before you go. That helps boost the show. Some more people here, Patrick, and of course Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, who we thank for his time. Do that. Hit the like button. See you.