

Larry Johnson: Russia Warns It Expects War with Europe

Larry Johnson is a former CIA intelligence analyst who also worked at the U.S. State Department's Office of Counterterrorism. Read Larry Johnson's Sonar21: <https://sonar21.com/> Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glenndiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glenndiesen> Support the research by Prof. Glenn Diesen: PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glenndiesen> Buy me a Coffee: buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Buy Diesen merchandise: <https://diesen-shop.fourthwall.com/en-nok> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

#Glenn

Welcome back. Joining us from Moscow is Larry Johnson, a former CIA analyst and also a former worker at the U.S. State Department for counterterrorism. So, well, we can add also prolific writer on Sonar 21. And as always, I've left a link in the description, so make sure to check it out. Hi, Larry. How have you been?

#Larry Johnson

Feeling a little out of sorts. I only brought one floral shirt with me, so, you know, I'm wearing black now, maybe in mourning. Think of me as Johnny Cash.

#Glenn

Yes. Something was missing, I felt, there.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah. Well, Moscow is amazing. I don't know if you're familiar with Moscow City Center.

#Glenn

Yeah, I used to live there in 2018, '19, and '20. Yeah, it's great. What I find interesting about it is the perceptions often in the West, because people, we still remember or think about Moscow or St. Petersburg like the 1990s, with full chaos, everything's falling apart. I don't think people realize how modern, clean, and crime-free... Yeah. But of course, you can't say anything positive either these days.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, the mall, it's part of the, you know, I don't know what they call it. I'm sure it has an official name. But, you know, six stories, six floors of different shops and restaurants, two full floors of restaurants. So that's why, you know, I'm going over there and eating. Moscow's dangerous in that regard. You've got to put on weight from all the good food.

#Glenn

Well, I did want to start asking you about how you see now what seem to be big changes happening in Russia in terms of its war objectives and also its views on the wider process of war. But again, you recently had dinner with the foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, in Moscow. And I was wondering, yeah, coming from the horse's mouth, what were your takeaways from your talks with Lavrov in terms of this conflict situation?

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, it was fascinating. You know, we got this invitation to dinner—myself, Judge Napolitano, John Mearsheimer, Alistair Crooke, and Alistair's wonderful wife, Ashley. And it was sort of, it was the, let's call it, the North American crew meeting for the Foreign Ministry. I mean, Lavrov, obviously, you know, he hosted. He was accompanied by Sergei Ryabkov, the deputy foreign minister. I had previously met Mr. Ryabkov back in December of 2023, at which point he had lamented that, he said, you know, we don't have anybody to talk to in the United States under the Biden administration. And so I asked him this time, I said, "Hey, got anybody to talk to now?"

And he goes, well, sort of. Yeah, we've got people we can communicate with, but the communications aren't that great. And they're not really flowing through normal diplomatic channels that you would anticipate, such as, you know, foreign minister to secretary of state. You know, Lavrov told us all, "Take your ties off. This is relaxed." There were several vodka toasts. But again, he's such a gracious host because he made a point. He said, "Look, I'm offering vodka, but you don't feel obligated. You don't have to drink it, whatever." And we had a very candid discussion. And, you know, you've had John Mearsheimer on your show. John's not shy about asking direct questions.

Just a—he's a wonderful guy, a wonderful traveling companion. He and I were seatmates going from Moscow to St. Petersburg on the train. But Lavrov didn't shy away from any questions, and certainly the bottom line is Russia is open to negotiations, but the negotiations are going to be conducted under the framework that Vladimir Putin laid out in the speech to the Russian Foreign Ministry back in June of 2024. And essentially, it's the recognition: the West must recognize the four new oblasts—Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia, Kherson—as well as Crimea, as permanently part of Russia. The Ukrainian government must have new elections. They have to be denazified. The root cause of this entire conflict must be addressed, which is NATO has got to get the hell out of Ukraine. NATO has got to stop expanding to the east.

#Larry Johnson

That's a non-negotiable point for Russia.

#Larry Johnson

And the demilitarization, the reduction of the size of Ukraine's military. So Russia is under no pressure to change that. Now, in addition to, you know, Foreign Minister Lavrov, you know, reiterating that message, Sergei Ryabkov did the same. But I also spoke with retired General Evgeny Buzhinsky, retired Colonel Eduard Basurin, and then the active general, Apti Alaudinov. And they all got the same message. I was actually somewhat surprised by Eduard Basurin—sorry, I bollocked his name up—and General Alaudinov in particular. Yesterday, Pepe and I had a chance to talk to him at length.

They fully expect to go to war with Europe. That is, yeah, I mean, Russia's not going to launch any preemptive attack on Europe. But Russia's mindset is, you know, he said, "Hey, we're going to be at war with Europe." So Russia is fully preparing for that contingency. They're taking the words of Chancellor Merz and the British prime minister at face value. They said everything that they're saying and what they're proposing to do with their military budgets is designed to attack us. So we're not going to sit back and wait to be attacked.

#Glenn

But we fully expect to be at war.

#Larry Johnson

So I was like, whoa. So that's the message Europe needs to get. They need to change course. They need to cut the bellicose rhetoric. They need to open the diplomatic channels. Russia is more than willing to have discussions on the diplomatic level, but they're not going to be threatened. And they're not going to sit back while Europe decides to try to build missiles that they're going to use or even give to Ukraine to attack Russia. That is, now they've crossed a red line. I reiterated, I asked again, like General Buzhinsky, about, you know, the criticism of the West that, you know, Russia is—why is Russia going so slow?

You know, they conquered Nazi Germany in three and a half years. And, you know, here we are four and a half, going on five years. You know, what's the problem? And Buzhinsky said, look, he said this from the outset. You know, Russia first, they didn't go in with enough troops because they thought they could have enough military force to exert diplomatic pressure. And that worked until Boris Johnson and Joe Biden and Lloyd Austin sabotaged and destroyed the talks. And again, that was another point that Lavrov and both Ryabkov reiterated. They had an agreement in place that was brought to the table by Ukraine in April of 2022. Russia was ready to sign off on it.

It would have left the Donbas in control of Ukraine. It just would have provided protections for the Russian speakers and the Orthodox priests. Instead, the United States and Britain pressured Ukraine to walk away from it, and boom, it was destroyed. So they're willing to have those talks. But it is, you know, right now they don't see it as a viable option. Trump did enormous damage to himself at Anchorage. He made agreements and commitments at Anchorage that he failed to follow through on. And as a result, as Lavrov has said repeatedly in public, I mean, this isn't some new revelation, Trump is agreement-incapable.

#Glenn

I was going to say that sounds about right. But again, this Russia expecting a war with Europe and also not wanting to wait until it's attacked, this all suggests preparation to go on the offensive. Again, I'm not suggesting that they would go on a surprise attack, but I did want to ask how you see such a war might start, because... Only a few days ago, we saw this report in the media that a Russian warship shot a flare towards a Danish military helicopter. And again, the outrage from Denmark was... Well, I thought it was strange because this is one of the countries that have been advocating for escalating against Russia.

It's also participating in this new campaign in terms of intercepting Russian ships, harassing them, trying to put a semi-blockade, essentially. Well, let's call it piracy. That's what it starts to look like. It's shutting down the freedom of navigation system. And kind of the assumption is that Russia should just sit back and accept it because, you know, in our newspapers, we have explained why this is completely legitimate and legal, and Russia has nothing it should say. And, you know, the Russians would fall in line because that's what we said. But how do you see that possible escalation? Because if they see a possible war with Europe, they don't want to wait, but they also don't want to start anything. What are possible pathways here? Yeah.

#Larry Johnson

Well, this goes back to a point that our mutual friend Sergei Karaganov has made, and I think they're misunderstood in the West. I think the West understands him as advocating a nuclear strike by Russia, and that's not at all what he's saying. But his point is that there was a time when the West feared Russia, the possibility of a nuclear strike from the Soviet Union, if the West took certain actions. And so the West avoided those actions. Now what we're seeing is Europe is crossing red line after red line. The deployment of the Aegis so-called air defense systems that were placed in Poland and Romania four years ago now, they're capable of carrying nuclear-tipped weapons or missiles.

The open discussion by Merz about building up missiles that would be used to attack deep inside Russia. Again, this is—I guess it's—Europe has mistaken Russian patience with Russian weakness, and that they can get away with these kinds of threats. We saw recently as well Foreign Minister Sikorsky—or maybe he's the former foreign minister, I can't keep track of whether he's in or out—

but he was talking about how they were going to destroy Russian oil refineries much quicker and much more extensively than Ukraine did. And so, you know, the Russians are hearing this. And, you know, there is, I guess, it would—the way that this would unfold is the Europeans will take an action that for the Russians will have been the final straw.

You know, they'll launch a missile. They may attack a refinery. They may attack the ships. And at that point, Russia will retaliate, and retaliate in force. And then all of a sudden, Europe's going to be recoiling in horror and pretend that they are the victim here. I can't emphasize strongly enough about General Ahti Alaudinov. It's just a matter of fact that, hey, we're going to be at war with Europe. He wasn't making a threat. And anybody that knows Ahti, he is not a bombastic guy at all. He is just the facts, and just an extraordinary leader as well. He's the kind—I got great respect for military guys that don't take credit for what others do.

And we were in a discussion about the role of the Akhmat forces back in Mariupol in May of 2022. And General Alaudinov interjected. He says, "Let me make clear," he says, "I wasn't part of that. I was up in Luhansk, so I don't want to take credit for what these other guys were doing, the great stuff they did." You know, because I've known enough American generals like David Petraeus who took credit for shit that other people did. "Oh yeah, I did that." So it was just, again, it's a welcome contrast. But I emphasize that when General Alaudinov says, "Yeah, you know, we're going to be at war with Europe," he wasn't just speculating. I think it's his honest assessment of where this is headed.

#Glenn

It's an interesting thing how all of this complicated and contradictory, well, in the West, this, well, let's call it propaganda or narrative control, lies, whatever you will, that they're now contradicting each other to such a large extent. Again, the key theme of the narrative is that, well, the West is not part of the war. We're not participating in a war against Russia. This is simply a Ukraine-Russia war, and we're just helping Ukraine. At the same time, we have to prepare for war. And, you know, we should also expect war with Russia. So I guess, as you see now, it's beginning to tilt more and more to recognition of the second, that yes, we are at war with Russia. I would say we've been fighting a proxy war with Russia at least since 2014. That was the purpose of seizing control over Ukraine.

But there's still, again, as the Russians suggest, there's still an opening for a political settlement here. But they don't want to accept or allow these strikes against Russia to force concessions from them. So if you deal with a political settlement, what is the consensus, I guess, for the root causes now? Because it's become quite complicated. It's not just international. It's also what has happened in Ukraine. Because the demands put forth in 2014 or even 2022, Ukraine itself has changed fundamentally. And you hear the Russian rhetoric against Ukraine changing constantly. And now they're talking about, well, essentially Ukraine has lost its, well, if not legitimacy, at least its right to rule over historical Russian lands and ethnic Russians. And, you know, this was not the language in 2022. So how do you see now the root causes being defined?

#Larry Johnson

Well, the root cause is still fundamentally NATO expansion and the interference of the West in the internal political affairs of Ukraine. In a way, you can't go back and put that genie in the bottle, but you're going to have to redress, or address, the interference. And so that means new elections without these outside NGOs coming in and, you know, funneling money from CIA and MI6 to different organizations. You know, what took place in 2014 was an organized intelligence effort. And you could argue that it succeeded in separating Ukraine from Russia and laying the foundation. Well, immediately they began attacking the Russian speakers in the eastern half of Ukraine.

When you go back and look at that entire—how those events have unfolded from the Maidan in February 2014 up until, through the Battle of Debaltsevo, I guess about a year later—that what we saw was members of the Ukrainian army defect to the militias in the Donbass, and that they fought the Ukrainian army to a standstill. Even though the preceding 20 years had been a NATO project of training, equipping the Ukrainian forces for their eventual confrontation with Russia. This was the plan all along. And that's where Russia comes back and talks about root causes here. This outside Western interference has got to stop.

I find it remarkable that you look at how Putin maintained a dialogue with Washington through the decade, the first ten years of 2000, and then into the presidency of Barack Obama, even though from 1999 to 2010, the CIA was actively involved with funneling money to the Chechens, to these Islamic fundamentalists that were carrying out this war in Chechnya. And, you know, Russia never made that a red line. You know, they fought that war and they defeated it, but they never followed it sort of naturally to its conclusion of saying, "We can't have relations with the United States as long as they're attacking us, allowing us to be attacked this way." So that root cause: getting rid of NATO, dismantling, if you will, the European military machine, which right now is pointed directly at Russia.

#Glenn

That is a bit of a shame, actually, what has happened to the EU, because I thought EU membership for Ukraine could be like a consolation prize, something that might result in pumping some money into the economic development or something, just something so they would get not empty-handed out of this, like a non-military version of NATO after this war. But that seems to become increasingly problematic as the EU becomes this, well, essentially a war project. So this is a great shame. I am not sure if it's worth asking, but I saw Trump making this comment now where he blames Zelensky or Ukraine for the high diesel prices. The reason why I'm not sure if I should ask is because I'm not sure how much thought we should put into it, given that I'm not sure how much thought Trump put into this. Again, does it signify anything bigger in terms of tensions between the US and Ukraine, or is it just Trump looking to blame someone else for the disaster?

#Larry Johnson

It's the latter. Look, I've been writing about this now since July, or middle of June, and that's thanks to a remarkable energy analyst who really—he's been working this sector in a way that the people who do trading in oil, they don't understand it. And the man's name is Carl Miller. So I credit Carl with having educated me. The diesel shortage was baked into the system starting February 28th, when the United States and Israel attacked Iran. The Strait of Hormuz was closed. The oil that was normally coming out of the Persian Gulf stopped flowing. Now, it was still in tankers. There were tankers that had been filled up prior to February 28th.

They were in the Strait of Hormuz. They sailed out, and it took those tankers anywhere from 30 to 45 days to get to their final destination and offload. So during that, so from basically March to the middle of April, there was no actual shortage because the flow was still coming on the tankers. After April 15th, the countries—the United States in particular—we saw Energy Secretary Chris Wright announce they're going to start drawing down off of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, and countries around the world started tapping into the reserves. So this was another way that they mitigated this: the shortage of the sour crude.

The key in this is what's called high-sulfur oil, sour crude, because it goes into the refineries that are specifically built to handle that kind of oil. And they call it the middle distillates. And it's out of that that diesel and aviation fuel are produced. The United States produces plenty of sweet crude, like West Texas Intermediate, but only 30% of the U.S. refineries are built to handle the sweet crude. 70% are built to handle the sour crude, which is why the United States is a net importer of that sour crude. The U.S. was importing 8% to 10% of the crude oil out of the Persian Gulf until the February 28th shutdown. After the drawdown of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve by, let's say, the second week of August, the shortage is here.

It is now—the shortage is—it is global. It's not just in one country. And the Saudis were able to, you know, keep a little—you know, they were like 4 million barrels a day were still coming out through Yanbu on the Red Sea coast. Well, that's done now. The Houthis said, well, somebody took out the pipeline, the East-West pipeline. The anticipation is that's not going to get restarted for a couple of months at least. I know that some analysts say it's not coming back, period. So this is further exacerbating the shortage. And so you've now got a shortage of diesel fuel. You've got a shortage of aviation fuel because that's what's produced out of that sour crude.

And there is no solution on the horizon, on the immediate horizon, that can change that. And that's what people fail to grasp and understand. Now, Russia as well—it wasn't the Ukraine attacks on the Russian refineries that caused this, not at all. But Russia, even Russia, has limited ability to—it does not have the ability to make up the difference of what has been cut off out of the Persian Gulf. That was 20% of the global supply of sour crude right there. And it's not coming back anytime soon. So we are now faced with a structural deficit. And that's playing its way out now on the American political side. You know, here's Trump. He's got six weeks left before the midterms.

The Republicans are going to get crushed. I just got another note from one of my readers who's keeping track. I've got several around the United States, and they keep reporting, "Hey, diesel's gone up 25 cents since yesterday. The price of gas has gone up 30 cents since Monday." So consumers, they could care less whether this was caused by Ukraine attacking Russian refineries or the United States attacking Iran. All they know is they're paying a lot more money, double in many cases, and sometimes almost 80 percent more than they were six months ago for diesel or gasoline. And that is going to kill the Republicans come the election, first Tuesday in November.

#Glenn

I'm glad you mentioned the Houthi advances, because as we see, they've expanded, taken a lot of territory. That changes the dynamic within Yemen, of course, as well, because the Houthis already control the territory where the majority of the people live. They control the capital. They're now taking quite strategic territory along the Red Sea. What is the significance of this? Because it changes the dynamic within Yemen, but also, how does that present, I guess, a challenge or problem for Saudi Arabia as well, or change the wider dynamic now between Iran and the United States?

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, so this breakthrough came just a week ago, Thursday. And in fact, I was in St. Petersburg with John Mearsheimer and Alistair Crooke and Aisling, and we had an academic seminar hosted by Valery Fadeev, senior advisor to President Putin. And they had academics from St. Petersburg University, as well as the Higher School of Economics, and, you know, I think people that you know, like Dmitry Suslov, he was there, and Igor Shtolman. And there's also one of the Russian experts on the Middle East, on the Houthis. And it was like I was monitoring Telegram, and I saw that they said the Houthis had taken Dhubab. And this was around noon. So I went over to this Russian academic, and I said, "Hey, did you hear the Houthis have taken Dhubab?" He goes, "No, that's not possible." And I said, "Go and look." He looked it up, and this is exactly what he said. He goes, "Holy shit."

#Glenn

He was sort of surprised.

#Larry Johnson

Now, what I've learned since then is—and again, this fellow Carl Miller, who's been a great resource—Carl predicted this in July. He was telling me, "Keep an eye on Yemen. The Houthis are going to be doing something that is quite unexpected. It's going to change the situation in the

Persian Gulf." He didn't go down specifics, saying they're going to take this territory and such. But he called it. And this had been under, I guess, preparation for some time, that the Saudis created the pretext that gave the Houthis the ability to launch this operation.

And so Ansar Allah, in taking, you know, like 4,000 square kilometers of territory, and now having full control of Bab al-Mandab, both on the shore as well as the islands out in the middle, their military forces are moving steadily to the east towards Aden. You know, they're threatening Marib, may have already taken it. And, you know, I saw the Israelis were circulating a claim that this was all the result of Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps involvement. And they never give the Houthis credit for the fact that they've been fighting the Saudis for centuries. And the last dust-up was, I guess, 1934, 1935. And as a result of that, the Brits gave the three provinces of Yemen to the Saudis.

And the Yemenis, or the Ansar Allah, are intent on recovering that. So, you know, this predated the arrival of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Houthis had never been dependent upon some outside power for pursuing their own political agenda. So this is, you know, the Saudis—I guess it's been a rude awakening for them because I guess they thought that when they signed that Mecca Defense Pact with Turkey and Pakistan, that they'd be guaranteed that Turkey and Pakistan would come to their aid militarily. And, you know, I've been describing the Turks and the Pakistanis as—they're like an American health insurance company, because when they say, "Oh," to Saudi Arabia, "Oh, you forgot to read the fine print."

We don't do pre-existing conditions. And this war with Yemen is a pre-existing condition, so we're not going to get involved. The United States reportedly turned down the Saudis. And there's another report—it's disputed by some of the Ansar Allah folks—claiming that the United States cut a deal with Ansar Allah: "You don't attack any ships, and we won't attack you." I've been pointing out on several different podcasts that what's the United States going to do? I mean, the U.S. has already been there and tried to use bombing as a way to destroy the Houthis, weaken the Houthis, stop the Houthis, and it's failed, which is why Donald Trump declared victory in May of 2025 and said, "Oh, the Houthis have capitulated. We're leaving."

So, you know, I think what we're faced with now is something that could potentially really change the face of the Persian Gulf. It could even threaten the continued rule of the Saudis. I think it's potentially that serious. Because the Saudis now are short of cash. They've now got to start selling Treasury bonds, which, you know, Scott Bessent is pretty adamant against that. But the Saudis don't have cash flow coming in. They've lost the flow of that oil that was going out to Yanbu, and they're really not sending anything out through the Persian Gulf, despite the specious claims by the Trump administration.

#Glenn

So what might be the breaking point for the Saudis, though? Because, as you said, they're in a very difficult spot at the moment. On one hand, they're facing security challenges. Well, as we see, a lot of their energy facilities are being blown up. They can't actually defend their territory. Their transportation corridors have been cut off at both ends, both the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. We also see political problems. That is, as Trump, as you said, used your insurance policy analogy, saying that, well, this isn't our problem. Well, that was the Turks and the Pakistanis. But Trump apparently also made this point that we're not going to help you out with Yemen. Yeah. What do you see Saudi possibly doing on the military front, economically, or are they just too interconnected to make a difference there?

#Larry Johnson

Well, what the Saudis need to do is cut a deal with Ansar Allah, lift the blockade, admit their error, and find a way to disengage Saudi Arabia. Because the Saudis do not have the military power to defeat Ansar Allah. Ansar Allah can potentially call up an army of 800,000 fighters. Right now, they've got in reserve, between current active duty and reservists, at least 350,000 they can call up. The Saudi total force is like 150,000. So, I mean, militarily, the Saudis don't match up. And then we saw yesterday that Ansar Allah shot down an F-15. We still don't know the fate of the two pilots. Did they die? Were they captured? Did one get away? Was one captured? You know, we just don't know. But there were two pilots on that F-15 Eagle.

They got shot down, and it was a heat-seeking missile. So clearly, the Houthis, who have proved adept in the past at shooting down MQ-9 Reapers, this was an even tougher target, and they took it out. So that forces military planners on the Saudi and American side to reconsider, okay, we can't just fly at will across the skies of Yemen without risking our pilots getting killed. So the Houthis really, they're in control of the situation right now, and the Saudis don't have any good options. We haven't got a readout of the meeting that took place up in Germany, I believe it was on Monday. It may be over the weekend, but they assembled the Gulf Arabs along with Israel and the United States, apparently trying to plan what to do about the Houthis.

And it's not clear that they came to any kind of consensus whatsoever. Yeah, you got to question why the hell are they meeting in Germany? I mean, Germany's—you know, Stuttgart is the headquarters for European Command, EUCOM, and Africa Command, AFRICOM. CENTCOM, which has the command over everything in West Asia, that's MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. I guess they didn't want to fly them all to Tampa, so I guess Germany was the next closest option. What's curious as well is Turkey didn't agree to host the meeting. Turkey could have hosted it, and they opted not to.

#Glenn

I can kind of understand the panic across Western capitals because this war, which has now spread far beyond Iran, as you pointed out, the Yemen-Saudi war has a dimension of its own, independent to a large extent from Iran as well. But there's no—it's not just an issue about not ending this war on favorable terms, but it also seems there's no good options in which the United States actually remains in Western Asia. Yeah. There doesn't seem to be any outcome here where anything that resembles the old status quo is in place. Indeed, if the U.S. is pushed out of the Middle East, then that impacts its political economy. It impacts the way the whole world is structured.

You would see then the Middle East essentially becoming part of this greater Eurasian space. So I can understand the panic. On the other hand, if there's nothing you can do, I was just wondering, what can the West do at this point? I mean, how do you see the different options? Because I'm not trying to belittle the challenge in front of them, but it seems like, you know, if they took a step back and took a wider look at the various options, you know, dramatic change, it doesn't have to be all bad, but obviously there's going to be a lot of problems. Well, primarily, the United States has started this war with Iran. Now it's out of control. What are the different options now for the Americans and Europeans, for that matter? Well, there are no good options for staying.

#Larry Johnson

You know, and we've had contradictory messages coming out. First, you got Donald Trump saying, "Oh man, we got plenty of weapons, and we're in really good shape. Oh, you know, they've hardly touched our bases." And then you had the newly nominated Secretary of the Navy, Hung Cao, come out and admit, "Boy, the Iranians cleaned our clock in Bahrain. We're not even sure we can go back and inhabit it. It's going to require a lot of money to rebuild, to try to reestablish U.S. presence in Bahrain and in Qatar at Al Udeid Air Force Base." Then you had the inspector general of the Department of War slash Department of Defense come out with their report about the U.S. advanced weaponry that, as I was writing about, good Lord, back in April, they're now confirming, yep, the United States is running out of PAC-3s and THAADs and Tomahawks and JASSMs.

There's a whole class of weapons that the United States no longer can readily produce because there are supply chain disruptions that China controls, and there are just limitations on the physical plants, what they can produce. So the United States doesn't have a cheap, clear military option for reestablishing its presence in the Gulf and being able to protect those countries. The sort of deal with the devil that Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, even the UAE made with the West was, okay, you'd provide us air defense, you keep those nasty Iranians off our back.

Well, now what has happened, and we just learned this, I recommend everybody, if they haven't watched Inside China Business, the YouTube channel with Kevin Walmsley. Kevin's an American, he's lived in China, but he put out a report yesterday detailing what Iran did to destroy this Amazon infrastructure. There was this entire infrastructure being built up to support AI operations in the Middle East. And it was about a \$30 billion investment that Iran has destroyed, and they destroyed it

using about a million dollars' worth of weapons. And now, if they want to continue to try to build this system, they're going to have to invest 90 to 120 billion dollars.

#Larry Johnson

It's a real significant amount of money. And previously, you know, the U.S. was using, let's call it—

#Larry Johnson

A kind of diplomacy to try to isolate and prevent the Chinese from getting any toehold in the area. And now that's backfiring. And a lot of these countries are reconsidering. You know, they're looking at China as a more viable economic option. So the U.S. doesn't really—it doesn't have good military options. Its diplomatic presence has been damaged. Its diplomatic credibility has been damaged. And it's no longer this economic powerhouse that everybody must genuflect to. It is true that the U.S. controls a lot of money that the Saudis, Qataris, Kuwaitis, and Bahrainis have put into the U.S. financial system.

And, you know, under an extreme circumstance, the U.S. could seize all that. But barring that, these countries are now faced with economic circumstances where they're going to have to start divesting themselves of U.S. Treasury bonds, which is now going to create a whole new set of financial issues for Scott Bessent to worry about. He's already got the yields on bonds—5-, 10-, 20-, 30-year bonds—they're going through the roof, which is creating much more pressure on the U.S. financially. And then it's compounded with the diesel shortage that we started off talking about.

#Glenn

It seems like the reforms, which are often advocated by people like Tucker Carlson, the way of essentially reimagining America's role in the world—that is, abandoning more than three decades, or three and a half decades, of being a global hegemon. This is the role, right, to something different—that is, to pull a bit back, you know, restore, reform, and revive the republic while cutting back the empire. This kind of idea, they will eventually come forward and win here, it seems. I mean, the people who resisted, they keep doubling down, but this, as you said, there's not many options anymore. And the more these alternatives fail, the more I think they're forced towards this option.

And again, I don't think it's up to the United States necessarily anymore. As you said, when all the Gulf states realize—they will do a simple cost-benefit analysis of maintaining the status quo—I think they might reach the conclusion it's time to adjust to new realities. And then the world will look very different. Yeah. Anyways, you have a busy day ahead of you in Moscow, so I won't take more of your time. Thank you, as always, for coming on the program.

#Larry Johnson

Well, I'm glad we were able to connect, and I didn't keep you up to some ungodly hour this time like I normally do when we do it from Florida.

#Glenn

Good to be in the same time zone, yeah.

#Larry Johnson

All right, Glenn. Hey, thanks so much.