

Scott Ritter: Trump RUSHES Arms to Israel, Iran Inflicts PAINFUL Response – War IMMINENT

Scott Ritter discusses alarming developments including C-17 transport aircraft surging into Ben Gurion airport as Trump and Israel's war plan for Iran hasn't just leaked, but is being carried out in real time. Iran has already inflicted a painful response that has both Washington and Tel Aviv panicking. Support Scott's work: <https://scottritter.substack.com/> PATREON.COM/DANNYHAIPHONG Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhai...> Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho> Follow me on Telegram: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> #iranwar #trump #israel

#Danny

Welcome back to the show. As you can see, I am joined by a good friend of the show, former UN weapons inspector and U.S. Marine Corps intelligence officer, geopolitical commentator, analyst, and author Scott Ritter to go over the latest developments. Well, Scott, I wanted to talk to you about this.

#Danny

There has been an incredibly contradictory last 24 hours for the United States with regard to restarting kinetic action against Iran, but we have evidence now that the United States has been sending C-17 transport aircraft to CENTCOM, many have said to Israel, as Israel and the New York Times both report that there is a three-day bombing campaign that the United States has been planning. And this contradicts the comments that Trump made yesterday that there will be no strikes before the midterm elections. Now, Iran has expanded its maritime blockade against violating vessels, not just in the Strait of Hormuz, but even outside of the Strait of Hormuz, saying that its maritime strike zone no longer is confined there.

And we have seen a lot of evidence of this over the last couple of days. Vessels near the UAE, as well as Qatar, have been struck without a U.S. response just yet. But, Scott, I wanted your take on what you believe is going on. You know, there's even footage of refueling tankers and other kinds of aircraft, military aircraft, heading into Israel and stationed there for a potential strike against Iran. But what is your opinion on the actual state of this war and why the United States and Israel are both talking out of the sides of their mouths about a renewed kinetic action before these critical elections, both in Israel and the U.S.?

#Scott Ritter

Well, first of all, Israel—we have to couch everything in terms of domestic politics, not just geopolitical reality. You know, Israel's got a very interesting election coming up where Netanyahu's future is on the line. Donald Trump has an election coming up where his future is on the line. You know, latest polling indicates that the House of Representatives will definitely go to the Democrats, although, you know, you don't know anything until Election Day. But if that's the case, Donald Trump will be impeached. It will be a nonstop impeachment party for the Democrats.

You know, one of the concerns right now is that they will lose control of the Senate, and maybe not just fractional control, but decisive control, up to the point where even, you know, even if the Democrats don't get all the votes, there might be enough disaffected Republicans that could lead to the conviction of Donald Trump. What makes Donald Trump dangerous to the Republicans is the sustainability of his campaign, of his capability to undermine them. But if Donald Trump is convicted and removed, he's no longer a political threat. And, you know, so Donald Trump's in a whole bunch of trouble. And one of the things that's driving this is the economy.

I keep telling people, you know, that James Carville's famous little yellow sticky Post-it put on the door of the war room during the Clinton campaign in 1992 is the most important thing: "It's the economy, stupid." So why did Donald Trump say what he said? Well, Donald Trump is regarding the, you know, "we're not going to strike until midterms." He's trying to lower the pressure on global energy markets. At the same time, he got Europe to release 50 million barrels, I guess, of diesel and fuel to take away some of the shock on the global diesel market. He's now trying to get oil prices to drop so he can say, "There's no threat here, people. Don't worry about it. Don't watch that silly stuff on Danny Haiphong's show."

You know, he's just trying to undermine, you know, reality here. The reality is, I've got everything under control. That's the point he's trying to make. But the fact of the matter is, he has nothing under control. There's two things going on right now that there's no way to, you know, fake your way out of this. The first, of course, is what you just talked about: Iran expanding its... its zone of operations for their counter-blockade. They will shut down traffic in the Strait of Hormuz. They will shut down traffic everywhere. There will be nothing coming out of the Strait of Hormuz. Donald Trump brags about, you know, all the barrels that are coming out. No barrels will come out, Donnie baby. And there's nothing you can do to change that.

It's strangling. But at the same time, he said, "Well, the Strait of Hormuz doesn't matter. Don't worry about the Strait of Hormuz." Scott Bessent said that too. It doesn't matter. It's irrelevant. Well, that's because they believe that the Saudis are able to ship 70 percent of their oil production capacity to Yanbu and then get it out through the Bab el-Mandeb and up through the Suez Canal. But Ansar Allah has decided to weigh in on this issue, and there's not going to be anything going out that's

Saudi Arabian-related out of the Bab el-Mandeb. Moreover, it's not just a passive blockade that's taking place. Ansar Allah is in the process of destroying Saudi Arabia, physically destroying Saudi Arabia.

Because when you take away Saudi Arabia's ability to produce oil, not just ship it, they're now attacking oil production capability, not oil storage capability—the wells themselves. This is the end of Saudi Arabia. I mean, we could be looking at a situation similar to the shock that took place in the United States and Western world in 1979, when the Shah of Iran no longer was the Shah of Iran. Everyone: how the hell did that happen? Jimmy Carter was taken by surprise. Everyone was like, "What? What? What? The Shah's gone?" You know, anybody who's been following Iran were going, "Yeah, that was inevitable." I'm here right now to project my opinion: the demise of Mohammed bin Salman is inevitable. He's finished. If he's lucky, he'll be able to catch the last gold-plated 747 out of Riyadh and make his way to whatever London hideaway that he's built for himself, or to the United States.

If he's not lucky, his head will be removed from his shoulders via a sword by somebody shouting, "Allahu Akbar." But it's the end of the House of Saud. He made a strategic mistake in 2014 to try and earn his military spurs with a quick military victory over Ansar Allah. It's turned into a 12-year nightmare. And now, you know, in his foolish decision to expand the conflict by, you know, during the funeral of Ali Khamenei, to, you know, strike the Sana'a airfield and impose some sort of aerial blockade, Ansar Allah has responded. And they are now in the process of physically destroying Saudi Arabia. And there's nothing that can be done to save Saudi Arabia. And, you know, this is the reality.

And so the combined fact that Saudi Arabian oil is being taken off the market and Iran is shutting down the Strait of Hormuz means that nothing that Donald Trump does in terms of, you know, saying I'm not going to strike to reduce pressure on the market, or, you know, to get the Europeans to release diesel reserves, et cetera, that's not going to help. The price of oil will gush up, and then the United States believes that they will have to implement a three-day campaign. Danny, I hunted missiles for a living. I'm just telling you right now, anybody that comes over—I just remember during Desert Storm, different war, different technology, different times, but the same thinking. Man, we had three-day campaigns all the time. I mean, we got to stop this thing now. Surge, surge, surge.

Aircraft going in, blowing up buses, blowing up everything. And Iraqi missiles just kept going because we didn't know how to destroy missiles. We don't know how to destroy missiles. We have right now a bunch of intelligence people who are relying upon not artificial intelligence, super intelligence. Super intelligence, baby. And they're relying on super intelligence to tell them where the Iranian missiles are and where their drone men are. Three days. Three magical days. Blissful days. Hallelujah. We're going to come in and just blow them off as if it was that easy. And that will fail. And then the Iranians are going to blow the crap out of whoever attacked them. I don't know if Israel's in that. I don't know if Netanyahu can survive the kind of missile barrage that's going to come his way. I'm not talking about physically survive.

There's always a hole deep enough for him to run down into. But politically... so I'm still not convinced. I mean, I see all this stuff going forward, but it's a lot of flexing taking place. But it's a question that maybe Pete Hegseth is incapable of asking. But after the three-day surge fails, then what? Then what? And there's no answer to that right now. No answer to that. You know, Scott Bessent's betting on the fact that the Iranian economy is going to collapse before the American economy does. Bad bet, Scott. Bad bet. Because, you know, getting the Europeans to release 50% of their strategic diesel reserves buys you two weeks. Then what? Get them to release the other 50%? Yeah. And then what?

Now they got no reserves. Now you have no reserves, and you have no way to generate energy supplies overnight. You know, we're living off—this is like, you know, we don't have any money in the bank anymore. We've maxed out all our credit cards, so now we're starting to pawn things. But at some point in time, you run out of stuff to pawn. You still have bills coming in, and you got no income, and boom. We have an economy right now that is energy-dependent. All that crap that we do in life, everything from driving, from what we buy, getting food, it's all energy-dependent. And when the energy runs out, the whole system shuts down. And this is the direction we're going right now.

So, you know, there's a bet right now that Iran will fall before our system collapses. But I think the Russians have something else in mind. Because the last time I checked, I think the volume of shipping traffic going through the Caspian Sea has doubled. Russia ain't sitting back and saying, "Let the Iranians starve." I think China's got a role going on here. I think there's stuff happening. You know, the United States right now is mirror-imaging onto Iran how our society would react if we had the kind of crippling economic situation that the Iranians are facing in terms of devaluation of the currency and all this stuff. But the one thing that we don't talk about is the significant gray market that exists.

There's black markets, there's the white markets, but there's the gray market. And Iran has a massive gray market. You know who you should talk to about this isn't me, but Professor Morandi, to the degree that he might be comfortable talking about this. You know, the fact is that Iran has survival skills, economic survival skills that have been honed over the past five decades. And the idea that they're just going to suddenly give up on those survival skills, flip over on their belly and die because Scott Bessent envisions this is ludicrous. I see the American economy cracking long before I see the Iranian economy collapsing. And a cracking American economy spells political disaster for Donald Trump.

#Danny

You know, Scott, I saw in The Atlantic, talking about the potential for renewed strikes by the United States against Iran. It was incredible. An anonymous Trump administration official said, "Oh, he's doing this because he needs a win before the midterms." And last time I checked, every time the U. S. has struck Iran, it has only increased the price of oil, increased, of course, the rate of inflation

thereafter. So it's just incredible that this is the kind of conversation we're having right now. As you said, that expanded campaign by Iran is showing results.

This is one of the tankers off the coast of Fujairah, at Fujairah Port, that is leaking oil as we speak. And to your point about Saudi Arabia, three airports now, including King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, are closed because Ansar Allah has been absolutely bludgeoning Saudi infrastructure over the last week, but especially in the last 48 to 72 hours. And I wanted your thoughts on this too, Scott. Even Kpler is saying that a lot of this so-called passage through the Strait of Hormuz that has been happening has actually been going on because Gulf producers are essentially paying Iran for it to happen. Your reaction, your thoughts about this?

#Scott Ritter

Well, the one thing you did mention, too, is the Yanbu pipeline. Oh, yeah, that too. That's sort of the end. The other thing that's not mentioned is that Ansar Allah isn't just hitting the pipeline, shutting it down. They're not just hitting oil storage facilities. They're starting to hit oil production facilities. They're starting to take out the wellheads themselves. And that's it for Saudi Arabia. When this happens, it's all over. And I think right now, again, people need to put this in perspective, right? MBS initiated a war in 2014 that was supposed to be a quick victory to earn his military spurs. In the process, as he bullied his way into power, he arrested a whole bunch of Saudi princes, and he bullied them, threatened them to change the court structure, etc.

There's a lot of resentment inside Saudi Arabia towards MBS, but he's been able to overcome that because of the extreme wealth, meaning people can be bought off. Also because of the perception of power, power backed by the United States and such. Well, the American security umbrella has turned out to be non-functional. Saudi military power turned out to be very ineffective. And MBS has turned out to be one of the worst leaders in the history of Saudi Arabia. And now he's got himself in a literal death spiral against Yemen. He is politically committed. There's no pulling back from this. But there's no salvation for him either.

The French can pull all the forces out of Djibouti they want, put them into Jeddah, and you're not going to be able to stop Ansar Allah missiles from impacting whatever the hell they want to impact. The French simply lack the air defense capacity to, you know, to stop Ansar Allah. Saudi Arabia is out of air defense. The United States isn't going to give them new air defense. The energy, Saudi's ability to generate energy, it's over. You know, Saudi Arabia had all these, you know, Saudi Arabia 2030. You know, it's one of the glorious visionary things. Oh, what's Saudi Arabia going to look like in 2030? A transformed society. If you remember MBS bragging about how Saudi Arabia will become the center of global civilization, exceeding Europe and America, which sort of pissed Donald Trump off.

But, you know, how great? Well, Saudi Arabia is going to become the shithole Bedouin-infested sandpit that it's always been without oil. Sorry, I'm not picking on Bedouin, but the Bedouin aren't

known for their engineering skills. They are known for their ability to traverse this desert and things of that nature. But without oil, what are they? Nothing. And they're not going to have oil pretty soon, thanks to Ansar Allah. Ansar Allah is in the business of taking this apart. Ansar Allah also is a very effective military fighting force. The Saudis are not an effective military fighting force, almost entirely proxy-driven, mercenary-driven. These fat, overweight Saudi officers can't fight.

When they go to the battlefield, they end up dying screaming as their corpulent bodies roll down some, you know, sand hill as Ansar Allah picks them off one by one. The proxies are fighting for money, not for a cause. The proxies themselves have divided loyalties between the United Arab Emirates, which doesn't get along with Saudi Arabia. And, you know, that's being exploited by Ansar Allah, which is very united. Taiz is about to fall, second largest populated city in Yemen. Yemen's going to fall. Marib, the oil-producing province, is about to fall. Aden may fall. But, you know, that's a direction that we're looking at. What about the three Saudi provinces that used to be part of Yemen that Saudi stole? They will fall.

But I'll make a prediction here that, you know, I'll probably end up having thrown in my face at some point in time. But if this war continues, if we see Mohammed bin Salman actually removed from power and we see Saudi Arabia devolve into internal fighting, we may see Ansar Allah columns driving down the streets of Riyadh as Ansar Allah takes over the Saudi capital. It's something the Saudis have feared since 1990, and it's an outcome I think we're headed towards because Saudi Arabia is losing this war decisively, and there's nothing that can be done to save them. Pakistan, everybody's like, "Oh, the Pakistani army, the Mecca Pact, the Mecca Pact. Here comes Pakistan." The last time I checked, hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis were closing in on the Pakistani capital saying, "Free Imran Khan."

You know, the Pakistani army, of course, doesn't want to free Imran Khan. So what does the Pakistani army do at this point in time? Hmm. Do we stay in Pakistan to ensure security, to keep Imran Khan in jail? Or do we take 30,000 Pakistani troops, send them off to Yemen to be killed in the deserts, thereby further pissing off the people of Pakistan, who will then turn against us? What does Pakistan do? That's a good question. I don't think they get decisively engaged in a losing conflict. What do the Turks do? Remember, the Turks have thousands of troops in Qatar. Why? Because they love Saudi Arabia? No, because Saudi Arabia threatened to invade Qatar. So the Turks went in there and said, "Over our dead bodies." The Turks don't like the Saudis.

You know, when was the last time the Turkish Air Force actually carried out a joint training operation with the Saudis? Never. They never have. And so now you're going to sit there and say that Turkey is going to project military power into Saudi Arabia at a time when they're configured to potentially fight Israel. So Turkey is going to divert a significant amount of its resources to save the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, further weakening their position as Israel continues. This Mecca Pact is a joke. You have a bunch of commanders coming around, looking at maps, pointing arrows, drawing lines on

chalkboards, but there's not going to be any meaningful movement of troops to save Saudi Arabia. The world was shocked when the Shah of Iran fell in 1979. I think the world's going to be shocked when MBS collapses in 2026.

#Danny

Well, Scott, given what you just said there, then, I find it very interesting, I guess, the landscape that we're looking at. The United States can't seem, and doesn't seem to want, to pull back from its war with Iran, even potentially restarting it kinetically. While this is happening to Saudi Arabia and the U.S., Donald Trump, even though there were early reports when Saudi Arabia started this war that maybe the Trump administration coaxed them into it, they have not come to Saudi Arabia's aid, which some have surmised and concluded—I don't believe this is 100% right, but I want your thoughts on this—that this is what the United States kind of wants. It would want these energy markets to be strangled. But then again, it's a dangerous game, Scott, strangling energy markets and allowing what are, you know, when it comes to Saudi Arabia in particular, have been important, at least to how the U.S. projects what's left of its power in West Asia. What do you make of these contradictions?

#Scott Ritter

Well, one of the problems, Danny, is you're asking me to apply a logical thought process to the Trump administration. You know, one of the things that needs to be understood is, even though Donald Trump, early in his first administration, went to Saudi Arabia and did the infamous sword dance with the Saudis—remember when he became one of the dancing royals? And, you know, wow, and everybody went there so tight. There's a lot of tension between Donald Trump and MBS. Donald Trump doesn't like to be humiliated. Remember back in the pandemic when we had the energy crisis and Donald Trump went to Saudi Arabia to beg Saudi Arabia to alter their energy policy to the benefit of the United States, and MBS said to pound sand? Donald Trump went there, crawled on his knees, kissed the ring, and got nothing. Donald Trump didn't forget that.

People need to remember this. Donald Trump doesn't like MBS at all. And neither does the United States. Let's remember who MBS is. He's a man who literally kidnapped a Washington Post journalist, Khashoggi, butchered him on his orders, dissolved the body. He's the scum of the earth. He's the lowest form of human life. Not a good man. He's also somebody who's openly bragged about how Saudi Arabia is going to supplant the United States as a global cultural leader. So I think that there's a lot of personal animosity that exists between Donald Trump and MBS that's influencing this behind the scenes. I also think there's just a tremendous amount of ignorance on the part of the people advising Donald Trump about the realities of Saudi Arabia, the vulnerabilities of Saudi Arabia, and what's going on in the Middle East.

I think the entire posture of the United States right now vis-à-vis Iran, Saudi Arabia, et cetera, is that if Iran collapses economically, everything will be solved. Because if Iran collapses economically,

according to the calculus, then that will cause the end of Ansarallah. Because Ansarallah, according to the calculus, is not this independent actor, but somehow a proxy of Iran with an Iranian glove up the Ansarallah butt, you know, moving the puppet. That's not going to happen. Even if Iran collapsed today, Ansarallah would still be out there doing what Ansarallah does because that's what they do. Just like Hezbollah would continue to exist. It might be more difficult without Iranian funding, but Hezbollah's not going to go away instantly. But Iran isn't going to collapse.

I mean, this is one of the problems, is that the entire American posture is built upon Scott Bennett's guarantees to Donald Trump that the Iranian economy is going to collapse, bring down the Iranian government. All we have to do is repress them. Three-day war! I mean, you know, this kind of stupidity. And it's not going to happen. I think that MBS is toast. And I also think that Donald Trump is toast. I think that the energy crisis that's going to be precipitated by the stupidity of his policies is going to cause a massive spike that's irreversible in American energy costs that is going to, you know, bring to life James Carville's immortal words: "It's the economy, stupid," when it comes to American politics.

That on voting day, the Americans are going to, as they drive to the voting booths, are going to look at the price and go, "Donald Trump." And again, the shock. I mean, the shock of MBS being overthrown. I think this is going to happen. I think he's finished. And that shock, Americans are going to wake up when it is like the shock when the Shah went away. You know, what happened? The Shah's gone. What? What happened? MBS is gone. What? I don't think the world's ready for this. I think we've deluded ourselves. But there are Saudi princes right now that are looking for a sign of weakness.

If the Saudi energy market collapses, if they're unable to generate oil, if Saudi can't meet its financial obligations, if MBS can't prop himself up with whatever Makkah pact he's put together, he's history. He's toast. He's gone. And without MBS, I think there'd be so much internal unrest that, you know, we'll be looking at palace coup after palace coup after palace coup that will collapse the cohesion of the Saudi state. And wouldn't it be glorious to see Ansar Allah columns going through the streets of Riyadh? It would be historic.

#Danny

It would be incredibly historic. We would be talking about that moment in history for a long time, if not for the rest of humanity's future here. So, Scott, before we get to the Ukraine situation, my last question to you on what's happening in West Asia is: kinetic action against Iran. How? How? Because at this moment, we see one U.S. aircraft carrier, USS George Washington, far off in the Indian Ocean, somewhere about 500 to 1,000 kilometers out. Theodore Roosevelt's coming. There's all these transport aircraft going into Israel.

But there's huge logistical problems for the U.S. military to get anything off the ground, not least because they have to logistically resupply at Diego Garcia. There's a lot of problems, it seems. So

how does this happen? Iran has made virtual and hybrid its schools for children along the coast of the Strait of Hormuz, as of what I saw reports today. And there are alerts by the U.S. State Department all across the Middle East. But yeah, my question to you is, how does this happen now that we know what we know about the current situation for U.S. military posture in the region?

#Scott Ritter

How does it happen? Again, you're asking me to get into the mindset of Donald Trump and Pete Hegseth, two minds that don't function. You know, the military obeys directives. If they're directed to prepare a three-day war, they'll prepare a three-day war. They can't guarantee outcomes, and hopefully there's military commanders who are sitting there going, you know, what's the military objective here? You want us to do this? We can't accomplish that in three days. I know that back when I was in, a long time ago, you know, this is the kind of truth military commanders would tell people.

If you want this mission accomplished, we need more resources. We need more time. I can't do it in the period of time that you've given me. If you're ordering me to carry out a three-day strike, I will do so, but I'm doing it with the, you know, putting on record that the likelihood of us accomplishing what you want us to accomplish is slim to none. We don't have the appropriate targets, et cetera. The problem is that we have a president who's bought into this notion of, you know, superintelligence. We used to call it artificial intelligence, but it's superintelligence.

The degree to which artificial intelligence—I'm not going to play the president's semantic games—artificial intelligence is taking over targeting people is reflected, for instance, in General Chris Donahue, the former commander of U.S. forces in Europe, in July when he spoke to a panel in Ramstein, Germany, or in Wiesbaden, Germany, about Kaliningrad. "We can take out Kaliningrad in a very short period of time," he said. "We are able to come in and overwhelm their air defense and their area denial capabilities. We can do this." But what people didn't focus on is what he said. He's using the MAVEN artificial intelligence-generated targeting system. MAVEN's going to make this happen. MAVEN's magic. MAVEN's crap. MAVEN was used in Iran.

We've seen that just didn't turn out very well, did it? We blew up a lot of empty buildings. We blew up a school, you know, full of children. We blew up hospitals. We blew up everything but Iran's ballistic missile manufacturing capability and drone manufacturing capability and ballistic and drone operating capability. So, you know, what are they going to do now? We've got a three-day conflict that's obviously going to be driven by AI, because if there were human targeters, like let's say me back when I used to do this for a living, you know, I would examine, you know, the target decks and come up with things, and, you know, it would say, "We don't know. We don't know how they're doing this."

But now, superintelligence—because as soon as I say, "I don't know," they go, "Don't worry, Scott. We got a supercomputer right now that will take it from here. You just give us what you think you

know, and it will extrapolate, and it will imagine with superintelligence what's going on, where the missiles are and everything." And then points appear on a map, and then suddenly targeting solutions are derived for long-range weapons, which we have a very limited number of. Three-day campaign, not a 30-day campaign. And we're going to go in and we're going to fire things in. They're going to accomplish absolutely nothing. And then the war will end, and Iran will continue to pummel us with ballistic missiles. And we have no answer for them.

We don't have the capacity to defend ourselves. We will exhaust what's left of our PAC-3 inventory in a desperate attempt to keep missiles from impacting, you know, Israel and United States targets during this three-day war under the false belief that somehow, at the end of the three-day war, Iran's going to go, "Wow, that was impressive. We're going to surrender now." That's not going to happen either. We're just exposing the fact that we're the weakest country in the world. You know, we have all this tremendous military capability, but if you can't apply it in a manner that produces the result you want, what good's the capacity? Right now, we can't influence Iran. Iran has built a system that's uninfluenceable by conventional American military power.

#Danny

Hmm. Well, Scott, we can now spend the rest of the time on Ukraine. I know that you actually spoke of Kaliningrad just here. I believe that you had visited there this past trip. Is that correct? And, of course, it came on the heels of Russia saying—well, I believe it was multiple European embassies—there were reports of threats to choke off Kaliningrad. And then Russia had a very strong response to that, stating every weapon at its disposal would be used to protect it. Now, so I wanted to point out also a very interesting contradiction here. I love catching these contradictions in the Western mainstream media about how they talk about the Ukraine conflict now.

So the New York Times talked about this strike on Ukraine yesterday, talked about how it killed 30 people and how Russia is closing in on Ukraine's fortress belt. And then today in Al Jazeera, they say that Ukraine is pushing back Russia in Donetsk as Operation Vivaldi unfolds, citing that in this fortress belt, so key to Ukrainian logistics, Russia is getting pushed back. So the story is not straight here. So maybe you can help us straighten out the truth of the matter and talk about your trip to Kaliningrad, which is fast becoming, it seems like, another flashpoint for an increasingly desperate NATO in its so-called effort to strategically defeat Russia. Your thoughts.

#Scott Ritter

Well, Operation Vivaldi is this, uh, this, uh, Ukrainian counterattack. It's been unfolding now for several weeks in the area of Lyman. Um, according to pro-Ukrainian, you know, social media outlets that are known for producing maps of a high degree of fantasy, you know, they've pushed the Russians back completely. But when you get to the more realistic reporting from Russia, people like Marat Khairullin, who has a very good Substack page, what you see is that the Ukrainians launched a very concerted counterattack that made limited penetrations on one aspect of the Russian

penetration into Lyman, and then the Russians basically isolated and killed all the Ukrainians, and the counterattack is over.

That's just the reality of it. There is no strategic defeat of Russia. They aren't pushing back. Russia's advancing on all fronts. So there are some areas, you know, like anything, if you... You know, in the lead-up to the, you know, Kursk Battle of 1943, you know, as the Germans prepared for their attack, you know, you have to do some line consolidation, et cetera. So if I'm a commander and I'm told that I'm losing my reserves and that I have to hold... If I have a unit out here on Hill 831, but it's an unsupported hill, if they attack, I can't support it. I'm going to pull that unit back here, consolidate my lines, get a better, tighter defense position.

And so, sir, there are certain areas where, as the Russians attack here and envelop here, they're going to do some tightening. If you read the Ministry of Defense releases, the code for that is "take more advantageous positioning." That means that, you know, from a tactical perspective, you know, if you're in a position where, you know, Ukrainians have decided to counterattack, you're going to pull back and take more tactically advantageous positions so you can absorb the Ukrainian attack and kill them, which is what Russia is doing, slaughtering them by the thousands. There is no successful Ukrainian counteroffensive. This is just a figment of the internet's imagination and the imagination of many Ukrainians.

It's wishful thinking to help stir up the notion in the West that Ukraine can somehow win this war. Ukraine cannot win this war. Now we come to the bus strike. I'm still doing some analysis on this, but Ukrainians claim that this was a FAB-500 bomb. FAB is a Russian bomb designation. 500 is 500 kilograms. That means 1,000 pounds. And it's a guided bomb. So the Russians will release it from a long way off, and then it guides its way in to a target. It's a satellite-guided weapon. Ukrainians are pretty good at jamming these things, and not every FAB-500 or FAB-1000 or FAB-3000 hits its target. It'll get jammed off, and then it goes stupid and hits whatever it hits.

But so no one's talked about the possibility of the Ukrainian—because I'm just telling you right now that the Russians don't drop FAB-500s on buses. First of all, the bus is a moving target. The FAB-500 is meant to hit a fixed point, like a Ukrainian FPV or UAV command center. Those are some of the favorite targets for FAB-500s. So as the Russians find a command center, they release the bombs, and you see these pictures: boom, boom, boom, three hit, and everybody inside is dead, and that's the end of that situation, that UAV command center. But you don't drop these on a bus. A bus is a moving target, and the bomb does not alter to hit the target. So that's one thing. So no, Ukraine, I'm calling bullshit on your narrative.

Two, a FAB-500, a 1,000-pound bomb, hits a bus. There is no bus left. It literally—there's no bus left. This bus was there. Now, it was hit, and it ejected bodies, but there was a framework of a bus there. That was not a FAB-500. That was not a Russian bomb. That was something else, like maybe a Ukrainian air defense missile that went awry and hit Ukraine. So I think we're looking at another case where the Ukrainians killed their own people and are trying to blame it on Russia. But that's not

how Russia operates. No matter how many times the Ukrainians invent this fiction, the bottom line is, the vast majority of the times you see the Ukrainians say, "Oh, this apartment building was hit by the Russians."

It wasn't the Russians that hit it. Or if it was, in the case of a drone, it's because the Ukrainians jammed it and the drone went off target and hit a building. That's just called warfare, buddy. The Russians did not deliberately target that building. So there's sort of a fiction going on now. But, you know, anytime you have a bus blown up in the street with 30 bodies ejected around it, it makes good photography. And then the first thing the Ukrainians do is say, "Russia did it, Russia did it, Russia did it." Russia didn't do it. None of the Ukrainian stories add up. I'd like to be the forensic investigator to go in and pick up the—because you now have a bus. You have bodies. You know, we can pull fragments. We can find out exactly what hit it.

But you're not going to get that forensic report from the Ukrainians. They're just going to tell you that a FAB-500 hit. A FAB-500 hit, there'd be a giant hole in the ground. There would be no bus left, and there'd be no people left because everything that would have been in that area would have been evaporated. So, you know, that's the reality there too. You know, the Ukrainians are losing this war decisively. There's no doubt about that. They're losing on the battlefield there. No matter how many times you have people like David Petraeus and Ben Hodges and others, you know, I think one of the numbers I heard recently is that 45,000 or 47,000 casualties this month or last month. That's what the Russians lost.

They cannot sustain this. But that's not how war works, guys. You don't get to make up numbers. Russia is able to sustain the casualty rate. It's a high casualty rate, but it's not bad. You know, they're losing a couple hundred guys a week. That's a lot of guys, but it's not what we're—you know, it's high-intensity conflict. The Ukrainians are losing. It's always interesting because what the West does is they mirror-image onto Russia Ukrainian casualty figures. You remember the 30,000 a month. The Russians are losing 30,000 a month. And the Russians, "No, no, we're not." And I'm telling you right now, I have some fairly good connections who are very honest. They've always been very honest with me about the reality of the battlefield.

These aren't propagandists. These aren't people who are, you know, "Oh, we're everything." When things go bad, they're like, "It's tough right now." When things are good, they're like, "Don't get too overconfident," because it's hard and all that stuff. So, you know, I have a very good idea of what the Russian casualties are, a very good idea. But at the time that they're saying 30,000, suddenly what happens is von der Leyen comes out and says they're losing 30,000. The Ukrainians are losing 30,000. Yes, now you're beginning to get—oh no, Budanov said 30,000. She said 27,000. But now they're saying 47,000. Why? Because it's the Ukrainian casualty rate that is spiking right now. They're getting slaughtered across the battlefield.

It's not even close. They can't get their forces to the front lines. As they come in, as you saw, the FABs are hitting them. The Russians are detecting it with the drones. The FABs come in, they

offload, they assemble—boom, they're gone. Boom, they're gone. And these aren't little bombs. These are big bombs, bombs that make buses literally evaporate. Remember that next time you look at the photograph. That was not hit by a 1,000-pound bomb. It just wasn't. It was hit by something much smaller, like an air defense missile that went off target. But, you know, this is the fact. The Ukrainians are being slaughtered on the battlefield.

But more importantly than this, because that's just one aspect of it, the Russians are now taking the fight to Ukraine strategically. And for the first time, Russia's launching a war-winning strategic air campaign that's designed to physically destroy Ukraine. The mayor of Kiev, the former boxer Klitschko, is saying, "We're going to have to evacuate Kiev." Yes, you are. Want to know why? Because Kiev's got a lot of high-rise apartments. Now, I'm not a sewage expert, not a water expert, but my understanding is that without electricity, you can't pump the water up into the high floors.

And what happens is, when the water is no longer pumped up in the high floors, the sewage systems fail in the high floors. And all that brown, gushy, smelly crap comes gushing down. And the whole building is suddenly inundated with liquid shit. And then it goes into the streets. And Kiev is about to become a little shit-covered city. They can't change that. They have some generator capacity, but in a city of a couple million people, 1,200 generators doesn't cut it. The Russians are taking out all of the energy production capability around Kiev. All of the major energy-producing plants are gone. This is it. We're looking at the death of a city. They're also looking to blow the bridges.

Now, they're not in for the dramatic total collapse of it yet, but... but they are blowing it so that you can't support heavy traffic across it, which means that the weapons that are brought in from Poland don't make it across the river to the troops on the front lines. And they're going to be cut off, isolated, starved, collapsed. The Russian advance will continue even more. Meanwhile, the economy of Ukraine is collapsing. Their economic sector can't get their product to market. Russians are sinking the ships. Europe's not going to take it. So there it is. There's no steel being made in Ukraine today. None. The head of Firepoint came out, you know, the company that produces drones and missiles.

And, oh, we just launched our first seven missiles against Russia. They were all shot down. The war has changed. It's over. The new dynamic. Wait, check the balance. You lost all your factories last night. So the moment you decided that you wanted to fire your new little missile against Russia, what did Russia do? Took out the entire production capacity of that missile, to include the suppliers, the lower supply chains. No missiles will be produced in Ukraine because Russia is in charge of what's going on. This is going to be a fatal winter for Ukraine, I believe. I don't think they can recover from it. There's been no planning for it. Europe has no solution for it. Kiev will be depopulated, and that's the end of Zelensky.

And so I think this is the direction we're heading right now. In Russia, are things tough? Yeah, they're tough. They're so tough that, gosh, the five-star hotels, they're at 80% capacity in the

restaurants as opposed to 82%. I mean, the line for gas was unbelievable. I mean, when the car I was in pulled into the gas station, wait, we went straight to the pump. I'm sorry, we must've found that one gas station that had no—no, no, there are no lines for gas in Moscow or in St. Petersburg or in Kaliningrad, where I was. Now, Kaliningrad's an interesting spot. This is because the war in Ukraine is lost and the West knows this. The West has to come up with another pressure point against Russia.

And Kaliningrad, as we speak in Vilnius right now, a man named Edward Lucas—I would advise all people to look him up. I'm not normally here to promote, you know, morons, but he is a moron. Now, he's a British guy. He has zero military experience, but he's somehow the greatest security mind the world's ever seen, especially about the Baltics. But he's in there working up a three-day war planning group, Kaliningrad 2050. And the amazing thing about that 2050 date is that he's saying that by 2050, Russia will be kicked out of Kaliningrad, that Kaliningrad will be returned to Germany, that Russia will no longer be there. Now, he's saying that they're not going to do this militarily, although Kaliningrad is the Achilles heel of Russia.

They have no ability to defend. But no, NATO is just a peace-loving group that will never attack. But they're looking for other ways to bring Kaliningrad down, like economically. What happens if there's no fuel in Kaliningrad? How do you do that? With a blockade? That's an act of war. Putin has come out and said—it's just a little anecdote—you know, I was asked by the Russian government if I would go to Kaliningrad, and I was invited by the governor. And I said, sure, why not? The governor invites you. That would be a hell of an interview. And then I put in my list of things, I said, okay, but I don't want to just go in there by the nose. I said, I want to meet the head of the Baltic Fleet. I want to meet the head of the Marines.

I want to meet the 11th Army Corps. I want to talk about the defense of Kaliningrad. I want to talk about, you know, is there any reality to the Western claims that Kaliningrad is being used as a launching pad for an attack? And the amazing thing is they approved my entire itinerary. I was like, my God, this is going to be awesome. Two days before I was supposed to go into Kaliningrad, the presidential administration came down and said, no, ain't none of that happening. You can go to Kaliningrad, but you're not going to get all these meetings. And at the time I was frustrated, but then I found out why, because while I was in Kaliningrad, Vladimir Putin came out with his statement that if Kaliningrad is attacked or threatened, that Russia will use the totality of its military capability, including nuclear weapons, to defend it.

And clearly what the president's administration didn't want is to have Scott Ritter in Kaliningrad interviewing the governor, asking questions, and generating headlines that could somehow not compete with, but could be not consistent with the messaging coming out of the Kremlin. So it was a somewhat frustrating exercise. I did get a great interview. It's going to be published either late this week—we're getting to late this week—or early next week, with a very respected former military man who's a geopolitical analyst about Kaliningrad. I got to see it. I can tell you, you know, again, based upon what I saw, Kaliningrad's not an enclave or an exclave preparing for any offensive

military action against Poland or Lithuania. The Russians are fully capable of defending themselves, what people tend to forget, including Edward Lucas.

You know, many of the Russian military formations in Kaliningrad have rotated through the special military operation, where they have gained extensive experience in high-intensity conflict, to include the most modern applications of drone warfare. So the Russians aren't going to be attacking anybody out of Kaliningrad. But remember that military exercise where the U.S. Army heavy brigade went up against a handful of Ukrainian drone operators, and they stopped them in their tracks? Well, you know who's better than the Ukrainian drone operators? Russian drone operators. And if anybody thinks—one of the things I, you know, it's interesting when you go visit a place, it's amazing. You can look at a map all you want, but you look at ground truth.

You know, a significant percentage of Kaliningrad is actually below sea level. And there's an extensive system of dikes and canals and everything that, you know, get the water level down so you can grow crops. But it also means that you ain't taking a tank off the highway onto a field and advancing. All right, you take a tank off the highway onto a field, it's going to bog down. That's the end of the tank. It's now stationary. Drone hits it. So now you're going to be—if you study the Battle of, um, of, of, uh, you know, Market Garden, Operation Market Garden in the Netherlands, where the British were advancing, you know, the U.S. 101st, 82nd took two bridges, and then the British First Airborne took, you know, Arnhem to hold the bridge too far, it turned out to be. But as the British are advancing—

They're advancing down narrow lanes because you can't get off, because the Netherlands, like Kaliningrad, is below sea level. And if the tanks got off, they got bogged down. So as they're advancing across these narrow lanes, you know, the Germans are able to start picking off tanks one or two. And it slowed the advance down tremendously. Any NATO projection into Kaliningrad would get bogged down, wouldn't even make it to the border because on the way to the border, they have to pass through similar terrain. Drones would just take them out. Logistically unsustainable, suicidal. And so there literally is no physical threat to Kaliningrad. The Russians are fully capable of defending themselves.

They will annihilate anything that comes close. Christopher Donahue speaks about the Maven superintelligence artificial intelligence platform. They don't know what they're striking. It won't have anything to do with reality. They'll blow up a bunch. You know, I was in Kaliningrad. There's a whole bunch of, you know, German architecture dating back to the previous centuries that have been preserved by the Russians. The sad thing is, if artificial intelligence takes over the targeting, all of these carefully preserved architectural masterpieces will be destroyed because that's what the United States is in the business of doing: destroying cultural heritage.

We're not going to destroy anything of military value. The Russian military is more than prepared for this war. They've been doing high-intensity conflict longer than we have, meaning we've never have in recent times. They know what they're doing. It would be left to sort of this hybrid war that's

taking place. As I said, the 2050, Kaliningrad 2050, Edward Lucas in Vilnius, Lithuania today, is fantasizing about kicking Russia out of Kaliningrad and turning it back to the Germans. That ain't never going to happen. If they ever try to do anything about that, I think Vladimir Putin's given the solution, which is Europe ceases to exist.

#Danny

Well, Scott, this is a great program. We're going to end it here. If you have any final words, I have scottritter.com in the video description, so I want to make sure everyone supports you, especially given that you've been—and check out this article, too, which I enjoyed a lot, about your experience with football in Moscow.

#Scott Ritter

But I published one before that, too, that encapsulated the lessons that I learned both from my June trip, but also this trip, about Arctic security and Baltic security. I mean, this is big-picture stuff. This is a strategic-level article. And I would ask people to read it and then remind them that it wouldn't have happened without, you know, actual independent journalism going into Russia, doing this investigation. And that was funded by them. So I'm eternally grateful for the people who helped, you know, make this recent trip. This recent trip was extraordinarily important.

I gained insights into Russia, the reality of Arctic security and Baltic security, that are captured in this article, and I will continue to use these insights as these two areas become increasingly heated. We have the West again—while I was there in September, the Europeans convened an Arctic security forum in Finland, where they are literally manufacturing a Russian threat to NATO through, you know, because Russia dared open up the Northeast Passage with Russian icebreakers, allowing Chinese ships to come from eastern Chinese ports to European ports in 20 days, cutting in half the Suez Canal route.

This becomes—it makes Russia, you know, hyper-competitive, meaning that the West can't compete with this economic domination, and Europe finds this to be... And so now Europe says, "Well, we have to beef up our Arctic muscles." So I went to Nizhnevartovsk and met with a man who prepares for these kind of scenarios. He trains Russian special operations forces in Arctic warfare, et cetera. And we talked about Arctic security and the reality. And it's, again, putting your feet on the taiga. It brings about a whole new reality to what Arctic security is. And the same thing with Kaliningrad. There's additional trips coming up. If people believe in the value of this work, please donate. That's the only way these trips are financed.

I'm going back in November, and I've got some really big—some really cool stuff potentially in the works. But this is a problem. The West can't handle defeat in Ukraine. Defeat in Ukraine is coming. It's inevitable. And how the West responds will determine the survival of the world or not. If they overreact, as they are threatening to do in Kaliningrad, we'll all be dead. And if they try to intervene

in the Arctic, they will fail as well. There's other places, though, where Russia's at or Russia's involved in where the West may seek to intervene. And I'm going to try and get my finger on the pulse of that as well, to make sure that everybody is as well informed as possible. But thanks for having me on. I really appreciate it.

#Danny

Of course. Everyone hit the like button before you go. Thanks to all the moderators in the chat. Thanks to everyone who viewed today. Please do go to the video description and check out [skywriter.com](https://www.skywriter.com). All the places with this channel are there as well. And I'll be back tomorrow. I'll let you know what's going on soon. All right, we're out of here. Everybody hit that like button before you go, and I'll see you all again this weekend. Bye-bye.