

# Crisis Hits USS Ford, Iran War BLOWS BACK on Trump | Johnson & Henningsen

Former CIA analyst Larry Johnson and geopolitical analyst Patrick Henningsen discuss the sh\*t storm catastrophe that is plaguing the USS Gerald Ford "Super Carrier" and why Trump's war push with Iran is already blowing back. It's worse than you think, and the biggest US defeat is imminent as US military dominance and empire circles the drain. Watch until the end. 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](https://chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com) Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho> #trump #iran #ussgeraldford #usnavy

## #Danny

Apparently, the USS Gerald Ford is sinking—but not in the way you might think. It's kind of sinking in its own sewage. There's a major speed bump in the Iran war that the U.S., the Trump administration, is trying to wage. You've got about 4,600 people on board who've been out there for nearly a year, and during that time there have been massive sewage problems that are only just now being reported. There were even reports that they were stuffing T-shirts into the toilets, and some rumors—maybe of a passive mutiny—among crew members who just don't want to be at sea anymore.

They were in the Caribbean, then had to travel all the way to the Middle East. I think they docked at Crete recently just to get a break and some working toilets. So there are major frustrations with that. This war pushed by the Trump administration—the Pentagon is warning it's not a good idea. Now you have thousands of sailors on this aircraft carrier who are essentially swimming in their own poop. The metaphor of saying someone's "full of shit"—well, in this case, they actually are, you know, or they're filling up with it on board the ship.

## #Larry Johnson

You know, reportedly they're standing in line for 45 minutes just to relieve themselves. Yeah, that'd make me a tad grumpy. And then we expect them to operate under combat conditions while dealing with that kind of physical discomfort. Look, this deployment—this massive deployment of combat air assets—is accompanied by what I'd call a paltry deployment of naval assets. And let's not kid ourselves: when we conducted Operation Rough Rider a year ago in March, in Yemen and the Red

Sea, we had two aircraft carriers there with five other support ships. Until the Gerald Ford was limping into the Mediterranean, you only had one aircraft carrier with three support ships—and it was staying a thousand miles offshore because it was afraid of getting blown up.

We actually learned why all of this was being done yesterday—or maybe the day before—in that interview Steve Witkoff did with Lara Trump on Fox News. He was saying, “Why aren’t these Iranians capitulating? We’ve shown up with all this military force.” It turns out there was no plan for an attack. And, you know, I missed the signal; I should’ve talked about it earlier. But you’re not going to have an attack on Iran until you start seeing the embassies getting rid of nonessential personnel and/or closing. We’ve only seen that in Lebanon right now. But Baghdad’s still intact. Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, Qatar—Doha—and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, none of those have been drawn down. So there’s not an attack imminent yet. The second thing is the lack of NOTAMs—what are called Notices to Air Missions. That’s not happening.

So this was really intended as a show of force to try to coerce the Iranians into giving up, because the United States has been believing its own lies about what the conditions are in Iran. They really believed that the government was, uh, just on—uh—very fragile ground, could be easily pushed over, knocked over. And that’s because they were relying on information generated from a public opinion poll paid for by the U.S. government with CIA backing. Okay, so we paid for a lie to ourselves, and then we believed our own lies. But the reality is otherwise. So, until—you know—we’ve moved all these air assets, but here’s the other thing I don’t get. Yeah, we’ve got 30% of the entire fleet of F-35s that are in the Air Force inventory. There are about 21 squadrons; seven of those squadrons have been deployed. They’re deployed at Muwaffaq Salti Air Base in Jordan and at Prince Sultan.

In Saudi Arabia. Do you know offhand what the distance is from Prince Sultan Air Base to Tehran? That’s about 900 miles. Do you know what the combat radius of the F-35 is? The combat radius means how far out you can fly before you have to turn around and come back. And the answer to that is 300 miles—300 miles out, 300 miles back—a 600-mile combat radius. I’m not great at math, but if I’m at Prince Sultan and I’m going to bomb Tehran, and it’s 900 miles away, and my plane can only go 300 miles in that direction, how the hell do I go the other 600 miles? It doesn’t make sense. I mean, we’re being fed such a line of bullshit about, “Oh yeah, we’re going to go in and suppress enemy air defenses.” How are we going to do that? Well, normally what you do is you take a tanker that would refuel those planes.

You’re going to tell me we’re going to put a KC-135 tanker over Iranian territory—where they now have upgraded air defense systems, courtesy of the Chinese and the Russians? Yeah, right. What sort of drugs are you on? So this is why you saw Dan Cain, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, having his subordinates leak to both the Washington Post and the Wall Street Journal, saying, “Oh no, this is highly risky. You probably shouldn’t do it. You’re going to have casualties.” All he’s doing

is covering his ass, because he knows Trump is going to order it anyway. Then he'll be able to come out and say, "I told him not to do it. He didn't listen to me. See, I was on the record. I told him not to do it." He's just saying that because he knows he can't stop Trump.

## **#Danny**

The USS Gerald Ford is supposed to be the ace in the hole for this war, and now it seems like it has a bigger hole it needs to fix—its plumbing problems. But these reports from the Wall Street Journal also say that people on the ship are tired. I've spoken to—well, I went to Vietnam with a bunch of vets whose son was in the Navy during the 2023 buildup after October 7th—and they said they were afraid of a strike back from Iran if this turned regional. What do you make of this? I mean, this seems like a pretty bad situation the U.S. is in, just as, you know, as Larry said, there are reports of Danny Haiphong trying to save his own behind.

## **#Patrick Henningsen**

Aircraft carriers are very cumbersome, and the amount of support you need for just a single battle carrier group—its submarines, naval frigates, and so forth—I mean, it's a huge operation. They can't be out at sea for more than a few weeks idle, and we're way past that at the moment. I personally think it's a very irresponsible use of the U.S. military by the Trump administration, you know, to use it—if indeed this is for a show of force and to intimidate the Iranians into capitulating. And all indications are that this is the case, especially given the recent comments by the ne'er-do-well property developer from Long Island who's masquerading as a diplomat, Steve Witkoff. It seems to be the case. So if that's the case, that's hugely irresponsible.

No U.S. president has ever done that in history—moved that level of military assets, air and naval—although it could be a bigger naval complement. But as it is, it's still significant if it's just meant to intimidate the Iranians and make them fold and accept whatever Trump's surrender terms are. There's no diplomatic complement to it, no coherent foreign policy complement to it. I haven't heard any reason for it, or any clear articulation. Trump can't even articulate a pretext for this. He's flip-flopped three times: first it was the nuclear program that supposedly didn't exist—then it did. Then it was the peaceful protesters. Then it was the missiles. Now it's back to the nuclear issue, the enriched uranium again. He's all over the place. And Trump needs to—if he's really going to follow through on his threats—he needs to throw a no-hitter, okay?

Can't have any U.S. casualties at all, can't have any U.S. ships hit. Because if Iran strikes back and the U.S. takes any losses—be it aircraft, naval, or even personnel—or if there's severe damage to Al Udeid Air Force Base in Qatar, for example, then that's a price the U.S. has incurred. Then Trump is going to have to justify why he launched an unprovoked war of choice against the Iranians. He's going to have to justify that to a lot of people—half of America at least, some in Congress, and maybe to the press. It's just not going to look good unless he throws a no-hitter on this. So how are they going to do that? Maybe they can lie about the results and so forth. I was just in Iran two

weeks ago, and what I understood from there is an important point: the Iranians are not afraid of the United States.

They are prepared. They believe this is the time when they need to draw a line, and they're not going to get into any symbolic tit-for-tat—at least that's what was conveyed to me and the other journalists who were there. They're not going to be drawn into some sort of symbolic exchange so that it's a win-win for both sides. That's not going to happen. I think that fundamentally changes the calculus of the Trump administration, because the gambit Trump likes to play doesn't involve anybody striking back at the U.S. in any significant way. And Israel will also bear the brunt of any Iranian retaliation as well. So there are a lot of risks involved.

Overall, there's a huge amount of risk for escalation by the United States, but not a lot of reward. It's very hard to see what the reward is—where's the upside, as they say in business? It's not clear. So, what's actually going on here? Is this an act of desperation on the part of the Netanyahu regime to keep the situation in Israel stable, because they're in a crisis too—an existential crisis? I mean, I can't see how this would end well. If Trump doesn't... if he doesn't, and they drag on these negotiations—which the Iranians are under no illusion could be used as a ruse to mount some kind of sneak attack by the United States and Israel—then what happens?

They're under no illusions. They're prepared for that. But what the U.S. doesn't understand is that the greatest honor in the Islamic Republic of Iran is to die for a good cause. So they have plenty of people willing to martyr themselves to fight what they see as the most grave injustice, represented by the likes of the U.S. and Israel. I'm talking about the Palestinian issue, but more aptly, the open threats against a sovereign country on no basis whatsoever—on all these fabricated pretexts—and what that means for the international community and global stability. That's what's at stake. The Iranians realize that.

They understand their place in history right now, and they also have the ability to defend themselves with drones, anti-aircraft systems, and, of course, missiles. They have missile technology they haven't unveiled yet—I can say that for certain. It was conveyed to us that the hypersonic missiles launched in June were six years old, and they haven't revealed the last two generations of hypersonic missiles. That includes the ability to change course and hit moving targets. So that's what was said, that's what was conveyed. What does that mean for the U.S., with all its naval assets parked all over the place? I don't think it's a very good idea for the United States to engage in that kind of roulette spin, if you will.

## **#Larry Johnson**

I can see the president calling up the Secretary of the Navy and saying, "Why did you send the Gerald Ford to the Mediterranean?" And he says, "Well, sir, you told me to send an aircraft carrier." "No—craft, not crap—craft."

## **#Danny**

How much of this—from what, you know—when I think about what Patrick just said, it makes me think about a moving target that could very well be a naval aircraft carrier, right? I know you remember 2025; you talk about it all the time. And I'm wondering if you could speak on the crisis facing the U.S. Navy and U.S. military on this Iran front. You might remember back in February 2025, you had aircraft carriers like the USS \*Roosevelt\* just colliding into a merchant ship—no reason, no understanding why. They said they had no idea what happened. Then, during the Yemen bombings, you had evasive maneuvers being taken by an aircraft carrier, which led to, I believe, not one but two Super Hornet F-18s going into the ocean. So what explains this crisis? Because it seems like a functional crisis—an inability to actually perform. We're locked in the 20th century and have refused to understand that we're in the 21st century.

## **#Larry Johnson**

So let's look at a couple of the technological changes. First, I want to point out that the Chinese have reportedly given and deployed in Iran a radar described as a 3D radar capable of detecting stealth aircraft. From where it's placed, it can see out about 420 miles. So let's say you put it 100 miles from the coast—then it's looking 320 miles out past Iran's western border. It would see all those F-35s coming well in advance and be able to target them. The same thing applies if it's placed on the southern coast; it would detect a ship approaching within 300 miles. Now, interestingly, the United States is reportedly keeping the Lincoln carrier strike group about 1,000 miles offshore—because of fear of the hypersonic missiles.

What we're witnessing now is the end of a weapon system. The aircraft carrier was a great weapon system back in World War II, because at that time we didn't have a way to refuel aircraft in midair. The only way to get these planes from one point to another was to either have them island-hop or put them on board a ship and fly them off the ship. But now, with the advent of hypersonic missiles—which the Chinese have, the Iranians have, the Russians have, and the United States does not—they've been unable to develop that technology. It's not just that it travels above Mach 6, but that it's also maneuverable. The U.S. has failed to accomplish that. What that's done is make these aircraft carriers completely irrelevant. They're big, fat targets—nothing more.

And let's just look tactically at how they'd be used—how were they going to be used? Well, if the Gerald Ford is in the Mediterranean, it can't be used to attack targets in Iran, sorry. All it can do is try to provide air defense against inbound missiles and drones. But the Abraham Lincoln has a contingent of Tomahawk cruise missiles scattered among the destroyers in its screening fleet. Okay, sorry to turn this into math class, but, you know—hi, Danny Haiphong, math for the modern age. If you're 1,000 miles offshore and you've got Tomahawk cruise missiles whose maximum range is 1,000 miles, how much damage can you do in Iran? Little, if any. So that means you've got to bring those ships in closer to shore.

And then once they're closer to shore, you can extend the range. But at maximum, they can really go about, you know, 950 miles inland. And that doesn't even get you to Tehran from the southern coast. So not all of the prime targets—both nuclear and ballistic missile—are on the coastal areas. They're in the interior, really beyond the reach of all these weapon systems we've sent. So does this look like a planned operation to you? No, no, no. This reminds me of that scene from the movie *\*The Professional\** with Jean Reno and Gary Oldman. Gary Oldman's a corrupt cop, and his guys get all shot up by Jean Reno, who's the professional hitman. And he comes out and says, "Call the station. Who do we want to bring?"

## **#Patrick Henningsen**

"Everybody!" he yells.

## **#Larry Johnson**

Bring them all. That's Trump's strategy—bring every air asset we have. How are we going to use it? Oh, we'll figure that out once we get there. Like I said, please explain to me how you employ an F-35 to attack a target that's 900 miles inland—or let's say it's 400 miles inside Iran—when your closest air base is 900 miles away. Give me an explanation. Brief me on how that operation is going to be run. It can't be done.

## **#Danny**

Patrick, if it can't be done, then it seems like the U.S. will have to rely on its assets in the region, which are also quite tenuous and at big risk, I imagine. What's your reaction to what Larry said here?

## **#Patrick Henningsen**

Well, aside from what Larry said in terms of that side of things, the other aspect is the available airspace. Now, Saudi Arabia and Jordan have even said they won't allow their airspace to be used for an attack on Iran. I'm not sure I believe that, but anyway, they've said it. And Iraq is also an X factor here. The United States is leaning heavily on Iraq right now, meddling in their political system, trying to prevent the return of Nouri al-Maliki to the prime ministership—he's a former leader in Iraq—back into politics. The reason is that the issue of Iraqi airspace is very important.

And that technically includes Iraqi Kurdistan, which was used as a launching pad for attacks against Iran previously, in earlier strikes by Israel and the U.S. This is why it's important—because if the United States goes down this route and Iran responds, this won't be just a standoff between those two countries, or even three if you include Israel. It's going to be a regional war. It would probably involve Israel and the U.S. having to use Azerbaijan. I'm not sure where Turkey stands on this issue either. So, you know, some of these avenues are potential vectors of attack.

It's not clear that they're as strong as they were in the past, and there are political ramifications as well. So you're talking about five, six, seven, eight, possibly more countries if this thing cascades and escalates over time. And right there you have a huge conundrum for the United States. Are they prepared to be involved in that kind of conflict? Are they just going to cut and run, or stand off with cruise missile attacks from submarines or Tomahawk missiles or whatever? I mean, is that the plan for the United States? Because that could be successful to a limited degree.

It's not going to achieve regime change. Regime change is impossible. I'm going to say impossible. It's not that it's unlikely, it's not that it would be difficult—it's impossible. Why? Because the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the support for the government and the supreme leader, represent the overwhelming majority of the country. So any attack on the country is going to galvanize it. I know that myself because I was at the National Day march, and it had the biggest turnout anyone could remember, because Iran was under threat. The Iranians respond with solidarity and unity when they're threatened.

That's just a fact. So if the United States decides to escalate, it's not that they're going to achieve regime change or weaken the regime. They're going to strengthen the resolve and solidarity of the Iranian people and strengthen the, quote, regime. That's the outcome that's going to happen. There is zero chance of regime change—zero chance. What they're going to do is create much stronger resilience. And, you know, they're very proud of their government. They're very proud of what they've achieved, even in the face of sanctions, even in the face of all the attacks by Israel and the U.S., and the assassinations of their generals and nuclear scientists.

They're not going to throw it away because of a few threats or even some attacks on infrastructure or, you know, the assassination of their highest political leadership. They're not going to throw away the revolution. It's a republic. It's a revolutionary government. It's in the name: the Islamic Republic of Iran. Every single position is democratically elected throughout the entire system, from national down to local. And even the supreme leader is selected by a special council. But put that off to the side for a moment.

I really don't think anybody in Washington understands—or has even read the CliffsNotes on—Iran, because I listen to them all the time and I've not heard anything from anybody in Washington that even remotely resembles reality in Iran, in terms of what makes their political economy tick. I've yet to hear it. So this is a high level of ignorance, and they're all marinated in their own propaganda. They don't realize Iran is ready to sacrifice to preserve its sovereignty, while the U.S. isn't even willing to sacrifice one soldier because of the political costs that would incur for the Trump administration—or one battleship, or one aircraft carrier—against Iran.

So we'll see what Trump does, but it doesn't look like there's a coherent strategy from him. He's really relying on the capitulation of the Iranians. And I agree with Larry's opening statement—the more data points that come in, the more it seems like this is the strategy. It's hard to deny that now. So where do we go from here? Is it going to be lashing out in some act of desperation to save face,

some kind of vanity project to save the face of Lindsey—to save the pasty, oily, sweaty brow of Lindsey Graham? Is that where we're going to end up with this situation? I don't know.

## **#Larry Johnson**

How old are you, if you don't mind me asking?

## **#Patrick Henningsen**

Who, me?

## **#Larry Johnson**

Danny, I know how that works. Okay, so you were only ten years old when 9/11 happened, and you may or may not remember the kind of political divide that existed in the United States before that attack. I'm not going to get into who actually did it—let's just set that aside. The effect in the United States was to break down those divisions. For a brief moment, the country was united, until George W. Bush figured out a way to piss it all away. The same thing happened in Iran last June. Remember Professor Morandi, who you've talked to before?

He fought in that war the last time Iran was attacked and faced an outside threat they had to fight—that was from 1980 to '89, with Saddam Hussein backed by the United States. That war experience galvanized that generation of Iranians. Well, until last June, if you were 50 years old, you really had no memory of that period. You know, it's like listening to your grandfather tell war stories. Then on June 13th, all of a sudden, there was a surprise attack out of the blue—the murder of men, women, and children by Israel with the help of the United States, and then the U.S. helping carry out further attacks. That had the same effect in Iran.

That's exactly what Patrick was talking about. And all of a sudden, they came together in a way they never had before. You know, I got reinforcement—it's anecdotal evidence, but I think it's solid anecdotal evidence—from Nima, Nima Al-Khashid. Nima just went back after a 12-year absence; he hadn't been back to Iran in 12 years. He spent about a month and a half there, and he was blown away, in a positive way, by the unity—how they came together. Exactly what Patrick said. So Patrick's not some tool of the Ayatollah; he's not being paid to pander. He's giving good, honest reporting. This is hallmark.