

Anthony Aguilar: Trump's 3-Day Strike Plan Against Iran Will Trigger Regional War

Anthony Aguilar is a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army, a Special Forces Green Beret who served as a combat infantry officer for 25 years in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia, Vietnam, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan. Aguilar worked as an aid contractor for Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), and became a whistleblower over the atrocities. Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glennndiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glenndiesen> Buy Diesen merchandise: <https://diesen-shop.fourthwall.com/en-nok> 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> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

#Glenn

Welcome back. We are joined today by Anthony Aguilar, a retired lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army who spent 25 years as a combat infantry officer in the Special Forces and who also became a very important whistleblower regarding Israeli war crimes. So thank you for coming back on the program.

#Anthony Aguilar

Absolutely. Thank you, sir. I appreciate being on.

#Glenn

Well, the most recent reports we have now suggest that Trump had the Pentagon develop this three-day strike plan that is to go after Iranian missile forces, drones, command centers, energy infrastructure, and, well, essentially just an incredibly powerful strike, but keep it limited in time to three days. And the emir of Qatar is asking citizens to prepare for the worst-case scenario across the Middle East. How are you assessing this? Well, according to this design, how do you read it?

#Anthony Aguilar

Well, we, as in the United States and the region, the collective we in terms of humanity, are quickly, rapidly escalating or accelerating towards renewed escalation and renewed hostility in this conflict. Now, if viewers recall, last June we conducted Operation Midnight Hammer. The munitions that we dropped were the GBU-43. That's the MOAB, or the Massive Ordnance Air Blast. Many think that the MOAB acronym is Mother of All Bombs, which that has been applied, but the MOAB acronym is

actually the real acronym to the GBU-43, which is the Massive Ordnance Air Blast. The GBU-57, which is the Massive Ordnance Penetrator, that's the bigger one. So you have the MOAB and you have the MOP. The MOP is bigger. It's a 30,000-pound bomb.

You can just wrap your head around that. The MOAB is a 22,000-pound bomb. The MOP is a 30,000-pound bomb. So we used those in Midnight Hammer. If viewers recall, the U.S. chairman of the Joint Chiefs showed, during one of the Pentagon press briefings, the massive ordnance that, when dropped, penetrated through ground and then exploded into the tunnel. This was done at a training facility at the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico. Yesterday's footage, obviously not footage from the strikes within Iran, but demonstrating that. So that's what those munitions are. You have the MOAB GBU-43, and you have the GBU-57 MOP. So we've used those before. Is it realistic to consider that the United States would do that again? Yes, absolutely.

#Anthony Aguilar

But to do that.

#Anthony Aguilar

You would need to use B-2s and/or other strategic bombers. You're not going to drop a MOAB or an MOP out of an F-22 or out of an F-35 or out of an F-16. You got to have the larger bombers. The difference this time is that, well, now Iran expects it. Now Iran knows what's going to be used to drop it, where we're going to drop them. And heck, Donald Trump even provided a timeline. So the risk of an operation such as that has increased tenfold in terms of Iran's capability to either shoot down, strike, interdict, or defend against it. We know that within Iran, there is intelligence indicating within Iran that Iran is reinforcing these positions near Isfahan, near Natanz, or what most people have come to know as the Pickaxe Mountain facility.

There's reinforcement happening now. Regardless of reinforcement occurring or not, the reinforcements that we're seeing are on the ground to actual physical on-the-ground entry or penetration sites. Overhead, the massive ordnance, the massive airburst, or the massive ordnance penetrator is not going to destroy these facilities. It's not. We had more of them, and we dropped more of them during Midnight Hammer than we have available in totality now. So either we're going to conduct this operation and use every last one that we have left, or we're not going to use as many, and the effect is going to be even less. We did not obliterate the nuclear capability of Iran during Midnight Hammer.

So to do this again in the same fashion, whether it's limited to three days or one night or one day, it's not going to yield a result that's going to change the position of negotiation, the political position for both the United States or Iran. It's window dressing. It's a way for Donald Trump to try to demonstrate strength or, quote-unquote, doing something as we approach the U.S. midterm elections. So as of today, as of today, the 15th of October, we are 19 days away from the U.S.

midterm elections. We are 12 days away from the elections in Israel as we go into 229 days of this war, seven months and 17 days. What has changed? What leverage has the U.S. gained? What success has the U.S. had in achieving whatever the political end state may be?

And remember, we still don't have any clarity on why we're fighting this war, right? Is it to take out their ballistic missile threat? Well, Iran's ballistic missile capability now is equal to or greater than what it was on the 28th of February. We said we sunk their Navy. Okay, well, the older Navy operating out of ports in the Persian Gulf—we haven't destroyed the Fourth Fleet of the IRGC that's operating in the Caspian Sea, so we haven't destroyed their Navy. And was that ever an objective anyway? We destroyed their Air Force. Okay, well, they still have the ability to interdict with ground-to-air, surface-to-air capability. So did they even need the Air Force, if it was even a consideration? Was it about regime change? You remember President Trump on the 28th of February? They rolled him out of bed in Mar-a-Lago.

They slapped on his white and gold MAGA hat, and he went out and talked about how now's your time to rise up against your government. Well, nothing happened from that. So was it regime change? Well, we haven't—we haven't—nothing's changed in that arena. So 229 days of war. What's changed? So now what we're hearing from the president of the United States, in my opinion, is window dressing to do something to show a position of strength within the next 19 days before the U.S. midterm elections, and likely even sooner within the next 12 days prior to the elections in Israel, because they're inherently linked. Now, the bigger question is, what is Israel going to do? I think that's where the risk is. I think Israel is planning to, and at least communicating the desire to, strike Iran soon.

#Glenn

Well, you heard that the MOAB is, well, again, I might be getting this wrong, but it's designed for essentially enormous surface-area blasts and not the deep penetration into these hardened underground facilities. So, again, it begs the question: well, what do you suggest? What is the purpose of this? Because surely the administration must begin to appreciate that all these military victories or destruction don't necessarily translate into achieving any clear political objectives. As you said, you can kill the leader, but if then the son takes over and he's no less hawkish and did more, well, how is this regime change? It's a change of leadership. But do you consider this theater, then? What would be the point, just to have a big display of force, declare victory right before the midterms? How do you interpret the actual possible way of this leading to an actual victory?

#Anthony Aguilar

You know, so on the night of April 13th, 2017, is when the United States first used, first combat use of the GBU-43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast, the MOAB. I was there for that, watched it happen in the deployment of it. And to your point, the GBU-43 MOAB is for a large surface area. It doesn't deeply penetrate. It's not a bunker buster. It's not going to go deep into the ground. It's for a large

surface area. And I'll tell you, from when we used it in Afghanistan, part of it was to test it because we hadn't used it before. Part of it was there was a very wide-area, open target, little to no collateral damage in terms of civilian infrastructure, basically a spot out in the desert.

We dropped it. And had you not seen it happen the night of, if you were to go back the next day and go out there not knowing that this was dropped, you wouldn't have known it was dropped. So what is the United States going to use it against? This particular, the GBU-43. Now, the GBU-57 MOP, which can penetrate. But when you think about, let's just look at the primary facility at Kuh-e Kolang Gaz La, or Pickaxe Mountain. That's a facility near Natanz, right? So that facility here, you have this giant mountain, Pickaxe Mountain, that is, you know, 1,600 meters in elevation of solid granite. And then underneath that, all these facilities. So the MOAB, the GBU-43, is going to do nothing.

It's going to knock the dust off the surface. It's not going to do anything to that facility. We also know that it's very likely that the GBU-57 MOP isn't going to do anything to it either, because it can't penetrate that deep. So it's theater. In a way, it's theater. But then it also lends the question of if, obviously, military planners and experts far more knowledgeable than I in ordnance know that the GBU-43 isn't going to destroy a facility like Pickaxe Mountain or the facilities at Isfahan, it's not. So then, is there potentially other targets in mind? Are we going to use one against a populated area? Are we going to use one against a populated area to have the same effect?

Now, remember, when you're dropping a mass ordnance airburst, a MOAB, a 21,600-pound bomb that has an 18,000-pound explosive in it—and, you know, the explosive nature of that, you know, it's a huge bomb. It doesn't have the same registered damage as a tactical nuclear bomb, but it sends a message. So is the United States going to use the MOAB against a populated area to have the same impact or effect, but then to say, "Oh, we didn't use a tactical nuke. We didn't use a nuke," to show that level of destruction? Because, to your point, yeah, what would utilizing the MOAB against a hardened subterranean target do? Nothing other than theater.

#Glenn

Well, if the reports are correct about this three-day campaign, it seems the purpose would be, I guess, shock and awe. That would be the benefit, if you will. Three days of intense bombing, this could overwhelm the enemy. But also keeping it to a short time period also has the benefit, I guess, of not dragging it out, a prolonged conflict, which will allow the opponent to begin to go after logistics or, well, again, you're the military man, not me. But I was just curious, you know, the attack might be short, but the ability to avoid drawing out the conflict, wouldn't this be difficult? I mean, it assumes that the Iranian retaliation would be also limited to those three days or that the consequences would not be that extensive. How do you assess this? If you would put yourself in the Iranians' shoes, how would they respond?

#Anthony Aguilar

Well, exactly. I think it's important to understand from the Iranian position. So we can make assumptions as to what we think is happening on the U.S. side based on our experience and our knowledge. So let's put ourselves in the position of the IRGC or the Iranian government in terms of what decisions they're making. So if your opponent, your enemy, has said that they're considering a three-day bombing campaign, if you're in Iran, you could look at the objective and say, okay, they're most likely going to strike here, here, and here. We know that Iran is already mobilizing for preparation for escalation and attack.

So, if you're Iran, you're looking at this, okay, if the United States and Israel potentially intend to limit this to three days, where they get to decide when it starts and they get to decide where it ends, we have a choice if we're Iran. Do we just sit back and wait for this to happen and then react accordingly? Or do we get ahead of it and strike sooner? Do we inflict consequence and damage into the decision cycle? For example, striking airfields, striking refuelers, the tankers that we know are in Qatar and sitting in bases in Jordan, which these bombers will need? Do we strike first to impact the ability for the United States to do this mission as they want to do it, in the timeline that they want to do it?

How do we inflict consequence into their decision cycle? Or how do we inflict consequences to prevent them from being able to do it at all? So I think Iran is now considering the idea of: do we strike first, knowing that this is going to happen? Or do we wait for it to happen and then respond accordingly? Should our response be greater than the attack itself to show that we are responding with strength, not just tit for tat? Or the other possibility: Iran does nothing. The strikes happen. Iran responds in kind to those strikes in terms of tit for tat. This round of escalation comes and goes. But to the greater question, a three-day attack, three-day bombing certainly doesn't end the conflict. It certainly doesn't end the war. So then what? Why would the United States be doing it then?

What's the objective? Is the objective to end the war? It's not going to end the war. Is the objective to cripple Iran and bring them to their knees to beg for a negotiation? That's likely not going to happen. It hasn't succeeded thus far in 229 days of strikes and bombing and whatnot. So really, to me, in terms of the effectiveness of it, Iran knows that this strike, coming or not, the effectiveness of it is specifically focused temporally on some type of influence into the U.S. midterm elections to demonstrate strength, to show that the president of the United States—to show the people of the United States—that he's not sitting back and doing nothing.

Now, again, what really is it going to achieve? What really is it doing? But it does open up the possibility, again, if I were sitting in the Iranian joint staff looking at this, my measure would not be at this point now, in 229 days of war, where we've gone back and forth with this, where the opponent, where the adversary, the enemy has killed the Ayatollah, has bombed civilian structures, to include schools and sports complexes and weddings, has continued to escalate and escalate and

escalate. And it seems like every opportunity that we've shown to negotiate on terms, not capitulation and surrender, but negotiate on terms, has failed. Well, what do we do? Do we just sit back and wait for it again?

Or if we know this is happening, we know where the U.S. parks its jets. We know where the U.S. has parked its refuelers. We know the critical infrastructure within Israel. We know where the U.S. ships are. Do we strike first? So I think that if I were at this point, at 229 days in this conflict, if I were sitting in the Iranian joint staff, I would be looking at ways to—how do we inflict cause and consequence and demonstrate our power—knowing that the United States is going to attempt to do this. So, but what Iran is actually thinking or doing, I don't know. But those are the options: to strike first, retaliate tit for tat, or do nothing until something happens.

Respond in kind, depending on whatever effect that would have. And then it brings us back to right where we are now, in kind of a stalemate of just what's even happening. I mean, we're on the 229th day of this war. What's really happening? I mean, we know that in the Strait of Hormuz, vessels are being struck, but all of the political conditions still remain in terms of the Strait of Hormuz, in terms of nuclear capability, lack thereof, the ambition or the lack thereof within Iran for a nuclear weapon, the sanctions, the frozen assets, who's helping who. So here we are going on 229 days, and nothing has changed in terms of why we would even be fighting a war.

#Glenn

Well, you make a great point, though, with, you know, the U.S. is preparing the strike. They already set a time frame. It requires moving a lot of military resources into the region. And I'm assuming Iran is watching all of this. I'm assuming that China and Russia are watching all of this. And they are, you know, cooperating in closer and closer relations with Iran every day. So the question isn't only about this vertical escalation, but also the horizontal, as the conflict can widen. Now, put China and Russia aside, I don't see them being pulled in directly, but how do you see the war widening in the region, though? Because, I mean, if we would start at Turkey and Pakistan, they're part of this Mecca Pact. And again, I think Turkey might keep a distance. But Pakistan, are they already defending Saudi territory? I know then we go out of Iran, but what's happening between the Saudis and Yemen, you can't really divorce that from this conflict either.

#Anthony Aguilar

Yeah, absolutely. I think to kind of answer the first question, or the first part of the question, with the escalation, Russia and China are obviously watching. If the United States is going to use a massive ordnance air blast, GBU-43 or the GBU-57, there are going to be very clear indicators that that's going to happen, because to drop the MOAB—the president has specifically talked about the MOAB. Now, when the president said the MOAB, was he really referring to the MOP? Because a lot of folks in America, including the president, even many in the military, consider the MOAB, or the mother of all bombs, and the MOP as the same thing.

They don't know the difference. So in order to deploy the GBU-43 Massive Ordnance Air Blast, it has to be deployed from a C-130, specifically from a C-130 Talon. The B-2 Spirit, the B-52 Stratofortress, the B-21 Raider is not yet equipped to be able to deploy the MOAB. So it would have to be out of a C-130. So in order to do that, you're going to have the equipped C-130 Talon that can do it. It's a very specific C-130.

#Anthony Aguilar

But then you're also going to have to have the aircraft escort, because the C-130 is not a combat aircraft.

#Anthony Aguilar

So you're going to have to have an armada escort to be able to do that. Now, if we're going to consider dropping the Massive Ordnance Penetrator, the GBU-57, well, then the only things in the U. S. inventory that can do that—the primary is the B-2. Now, the B-21 Raider and the B-52 Stratofortress can do it, but they can only drop one. The B-2 Spirit can drop two each. So, clear indicators and warnings to the intelligence community, to those that are watching, to seeing aircraft moving, what aircraft are moving, what capabilities are moving, of what the United States may actually do. You know, if we say one thing, you know, we're going to drop the MOAB, but you don't have the requisite aircraft in theater to do it.

Well, okay, well, it's not going to happen. If we say we're going to drop the MOP, okay, well then if you're going to deploy the MOP, it has to be out of these aircraft. Those aircraft have to come from this certain area because that's where they are. So we're going to start watching there for indicators and warnings. So both China and Russia are assisting Iran with intelligence and surveillance and imagery. So there's going to be indicators and warnings. You don't sneak in using a MOAB or an MOP without there being indicators to its use. So that's the aspect of that. Now, with the aspect in the regional war.

Yes, this is something that is very concerning to me when we look at what's happening right now in Yemen, vis-à-vis the alliances supporting Saudi Arabia in that conflict, and the Saudi-backed PLC on the ground in Yemen in the fight against Ansar Allah. We have Pakistan. We have the United States and Saudi Arabia providing advisors, providing ISR, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance services. So when you look at that, and we know as of today, right now, Ansar Allah has the ability and has the capability to strike Riyadh, to strike Aramco facilities on the Persian Gulf, to strike facilities in the West, to strike the pipelines.

They shot down a Eurofighter Typhoon jet from Saudi Arabia over Saada yesterday. So when we look at how this is potentially growing, here's the war that's already happening in Iran, mainly within the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. We now know what's happening here in Yemen, obviously. This has expanded to the region, including Saudi Arabia, including the Gulf Coast nations.

We now know that Turkey and Pakistan are directly, indirectly involved now because of the Mecca Alliance with Saudi Arabia. But as of right now, no one, to include Saudi Arabia, is willing to get their hands dirty, get bloody, or put boots on the ground to actually fight the fight in Yemen.

Saudi Arabia, the United States, Pakistan, Turkey are all trying to do it on the cheap, trying to do it from the... from the peanut gallery. We'll ride this, but we're not going to really commit. And that may change. It could be we're not going to commit until... or we're just not going to commit at all. But looking at this right now, Ansar Allah has stated that they will not strike U.S. assets in the region unless the United States becomes directly involved in operations in Yemen. Donald Trump has indicated over the last couple of days, based on phone calls with MBS, that the United States may consider joining in on the strikes, joining Saudi Arabia on the strikes in Yemen against Ansar Allah. That would cross that threshold to where now Ansar Allah is that, okay, well, you've crossed that threshold.

We're now going to target U.S. assets, whether that's bases, whether that's naval assets. We know from months ago that Ansar Allah successfully struck a U.S. tanker on the Mediterranean side of the Suez Canal with a long-range ballistic missile. So they have that capability. But more concerning to the fight that's happening now in Iran is that ever since Iran deployed the Qasem Basir medium-range anti-ship ballistic missile against the USS George Washington carrier strike group, more specifically potentially causing damage and potentially striking the USS Comstock, which is a vessel in the carrier strike group that the United States has pulled further back in their distant blockade. So now, if you look in terms of, you know, here's the Persian Gulf, here's the Strait of Hormuz, here's the Gulf of Oman.

The United States has pulled that distant blockade further back. We now know because the Fifth Fleet headquarters in Bahrain has been destroyed. Fifth Fleet has now displaced and moved to Diego Garcia, which is 2,000 kilometers south into the Indian Ocean. And we now know that our traditional supply lines in the region for the U.S. Fifth Fleet and for U.S. Central Command are not coming from bases and logistics hubs in the region anymore, because they've all been destroyed. So that long-lead logistics tail is now coming out of Singapore or South Korea, having to traverse all the way through the Indian Ocean to Diego Garcia, where Fifth Fleet headquarters now is, into the area of operations, specifically being the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman.

Well, if the United States then goes into joining this fight against strikes in Yemen, drawing Ansar Allah into this to where they could be willing to strike U.S. assets, well, now that you have the U.S. Navy pulling further out away from the Persian Gulf, from the Gulf of Oman, into the Arabian Sea, that now puts U.S. naval assets in range of the ballistic missile threat coming from Ansar Allah in Yemen. So essentially, between what we know Iran has and what we know Ansar Allah has in terms of ballistic missile threat capability, anti-ship ballistic missile threat, the United States is being drawn into a kill box, an engagement area in the Arabian Sea.

So this could all be part of, you know, let's not discount the strategy and the campaign, and let's not discount the intelligence of Iran in looking at this and saying, okay, here are the aspects we cannot control. Here's what we can control. Here's what we can do. Here's what we cannot do. What's happening right now? Okay, we see the United States and the naval assets being brought into this area. If this escalates to where Ansar Allah is now involved, well, it could be to where Iran and Ansar Allah are drawing the United States Fifth Fleet and U.S. Central Command assets into an engagement area in the Arabian Sea. It's exactly what I would do. So we can't consider that Iran is not looking at the bigger picture here.

So that's a considerable threat for the U.S. as this war continues to escalate and as it continues to expand in the region, to where now we're at the precipice of this conflict in Yemen because of its association and drawing in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and Turkey and the United States, that this war that was discreetly a conflict between Iran, between U.S. and Iran and Israel, and the other war between Saudi Arabia, its allies in Yemen, is now merging, is now coming together and drawing in the other regional nations, but also drawing in already existing conflicts. For example, the conflict in Yemen is not only about Saudi Arabia backing the PLC and the Saudi-backed forces on the ground in Yemen.

The UAE also back the Southern Transitional Council, the STC, which right now are not directly involved in the fighting, but also they oppose the PLC. So this has the potential to grow, especially if Ansar Allah continues to take terrain in the west and move east. That could then draw in a response from the UAE-backed STC, which is opposed to the Saudi-backed PLC. So we could see this expand even further, to not only the fight within Yemen, but to Saudi and other nations in the region as well. It's kind of like when a nuclear reaction goes out of control: you can't stop it. You know, regardless of if you lift the rods out or try to stop it, it's already happening. There's very little we can do now to stop this, and that's quite frightening.

#Glenn

Well, I'm assuming that the American military planners are looking at the possibility of attacking Yemen and concluding pretty much what you're saying, that this threatens to merge these wars, which have already emerged, I guess. But the alternative for the United States, though, would be to rely on its frontline states, that is, for Saudi Arabia to fight this independently. But the Saudi military, it doesn't seem—I mean, they have capabilities, not unlimited, but their ability to use it is often criticized. How do you assess, I guess, the strength and weaknesses of the Saudi forces, also the Saudi forces or Saudi-backed forces fighting in Yemen at the moment? Yeah.

#Anthony Aguilar

So I have trained with, tactically, unit training, subject matter exchange unit training with Saudi forces. But I've also been schooled with Saudi officers at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff

College at Fort Leavenworth here in the United States. Saudi officers attend that course. So when I attended that course in 2013, there was a Saudi officer in my class, in my seminar.

And it's a year-long program, so I got to know them quite well. By no means does it make me an expert in Saudi military operations, but throughout the period of that year, you know, you conduct advanced operations planning and campaign planning with your seminar. So, you know, I got a glimpse into a lot of how, at least at the general staff level, the Saudi army, Saudi military works, or at least how they think. So, looking at that, Saudi possesses a very capable elite counterterrorism force. It's very small. It's typically focused on... Their CT forces, kind of like what we would call in the United States our Delta Force, you know, their CT forces, counterterrorism forces, are very capable, very well-equipped, very well-trained. However, their general forces, in terms of air forces, ground forces, what they lack is integration. They're very siloed in their planning and their execution operations, in terms of ground forces do this, air defenses do this, air forces do this, Navy forces do this. They're very siloed. Whereas if you look at the United States or even how Iran is operating,

#Anthony Aguilar

Or how Russia operates, or how Ukraine operates, for the most part.

#Anthony Aguilar

There's obviously gaps in that as well. But this integrated joint campaign, to where the ground forces aren't operating discreetly from the integration of your air campaign or your air capability, they work together. So what we're seeing is one of the greatest flaws in the Saudi support to the ground forces in Yemen, which are not Saudi forces but Saudi-backed PLC, is much like the lack of integration, or the siloedness of operations, in the Saudi military. We're seeing the reflection of that on the ground between the PLC fight on the ground and the Saudi supporting air campaign, to where they're two different operations.

They're not integrated. They're not linked to where an air campaign is supporting ground maneuver, or vice versa. You can maneuver on the ground to create conditions to where air components can then strike to further the ground campaign. For example, let's say that you're an infantry company on the ground and you have a task to move in to destroy a surface-to-air missile system, right? Doing that then allows, enables the air forces to further penetrate to hit the front line of the enemy to where ground forces can then maneuver further. It's an integrated campaign.

The ground forces aren't taking something out just for the sake of doing it on the ground. They're enabling something in the air that then further enables maneuver on the ground. That's a very basic concept of air-to-ground integration in this sense. That's not happening. That's not happening with Saudi forces and Saudi-backed forces on the ground. It hasn't happened from the beginning. It isn't

happening now. And what I would say is that the greatest indicator of further risk to Saudi Arabia losing vis-à-vis the PLC on the ground in Yemen is that now, going into weeks of this conflict, Saudi Arabia hasn't adapted.

They haven't, they haven't, they haven't modified or changed, or changed how they're fighting this war to address the reality on the ground. And I think many look at this and they say, even in the United States, even in the Western world, we say, "Oh, how is it that these flip-flop-wearing, Toyota truck-driving, RPG-carrying terrorists, they won't last? Yeah, they've achieved some victory in areas that support them, but they won't last." And the truth is, is that Ansar Allah is not a flip-flop-wearing, Toyota truck-driving, RPG-shooting terrorist army. They are integrated with a campaign. They have air defenses. They have ballistic missiles. They have advanced drone technology.

They have an integrated campaign on the ground between their drone capability and their ground capability. And they are doing things in a way that indicates to me—now, I don't know, I haven't seen their plans—but looking at what's happening, it is clear to me that Ansar Allah has a campaign in the offensive: taking Mocha, now surrounding Taiz, now taking the highlands, now putting Aden at risk. We know that just today they struck critical targets within Aden. And this is while they're also striking Riyadh and shooting aircraft out of the sky while defending their front line. So this indicates to me that this isn't some flip-flop-wearing, RPG, Toyota truck-driving band of terrorists who are just looking to win at every cost.

They have a campaign to consolidate gains in the front line, to understand the ground war, how to integrate the ground war that's happening here in this part of Yemen into understanding how to also impose costs to Saudi Arabia in Riyadh and ports in the southwest and the east-west pipeline. It's indicative to me that Ansarullah has a campaign. It's indicative to me that Saudi Arabia does not. And that is probably the greatest flaw within the Saudi military culture, is that they keep things very siloed into their respective specialties, and they don't integrate across the warfighting functions. And that's costing them dearly in their ability to support the ground war. But then there's also the fact that it seems to me that Saudi Arabia is not really willing to commit.

#Glenn

Well, obviously, yeah, I think the Houthis, or Ansar Allah, are quite capable. I think they have proven that. The fact that they can strike moving ships from such a far distance away with advanced missiles, I mean, this should be all a good indicator that we shouldn't be too dismissive of the other side, which I think has become a key problem in the unipolar moment: assuming that all adversaries are inferior. But how do you see the strategy, though, for the Houthis? Because, again, while that war is merging closer and closer with the Iranian war, they're often dismissed as being simply proxies. But, of course, they have their own autonomy, they have their own interests, often overlapping with the Iranians. But nonetheless, what is the strategy, the objectives? Because at the

moment, are they going to chase out—are they going to take control of all of Yemen? Are they going to move into Saudi Arabia, take back territories they consider theirs? I mean, how do you see the wider strategy?

#Anthony Aguilar

Yes, to consider Ansar Allah or the Houthi movement in Yemen as a proxy of Iran would be a critically dismissive error. And I know that there are many that consider it that way. I do not consider Ansar Allah to be a proxy of Iran, but a regional ally. Do they have equipment and certain capabilities that have been provided by Iran? Sure they do. But they also have a lot of capability that has been acquired or developed on their own. So I would call them less of a proxy and more of a regional ally. And they don't always listen to or follow what Iran says to do. So they're certainly not a proxy. Now, we know that on the ground in Yemen, Ansar Allah has a political objective for Saudi to leave.

And basically, these Saudi-backed elements on the ground either bending the knee and kissing the ring and saying, "Okay, we'll disassociate ourselves from the Saudi backing. We'll now come under the leadership, under the reign of Ansar Allah." Okay. But also, we just—I think it was about, it may have been yesterday, it may have been the day before yesterday—but Ansar Allah's spokesman, a general, talked about how this ends, talked about what conditions need to be met. And Ansar Allah is not looking for a temporary ceasefire. They're looking for an end to this once and for all, on their conditions, on the conditions that they've achieved.

So, they're not going to lay down their arms in a temporary ceasefire if they have not achieved victory. They're in it to win it, for lack of better terms. So when you look at what they've gained now in western Yemen, from Sa'dah all the way down now to around Taiz—here's Aden—Ansar Allah does not have to hold or take all of Yemen physically. The critical infrastructure, most of the major port facilities along the coast, the major airports, the major urban areas, the major centers of finance, the major areas of the economy are all in this area here, which they primarily already control.

And especially if they continue to push the front through Taiz to Aden, and they consolidate all of this in the west, really what happens? What source of control, what source of power is then left to the Saudi-backed government in Yemen, the PLC? What really remains for them to exercise power? Not much. But we've also heard from General Saree about—he even mentioned the three provinces. So here's Yemen. Here's Saudi Arabia. Those three provinces that border Yemen that are essentially, as Ansar Allah sees it, this is Yemen, the greater Yemen, are the Asir, Jazan, and Najran provinces, these three provinces.

So I think within the political objective of Ansar Allah is to certainly regain those territories, much like we saw in World War II, in the outset of World War II, where Germany was looking to reoccupy or retake ancestral Germanic lands, right, from the French in the Alsace-Lorraine region. Like, hey,

these are Germans. These are German-speaking Germans, right? They should belong to us. That was an objective early on. Same thing here, where Ansar Allah is looking at, those are our people. Those are Yemeni. They belong to us. They belong with us. So I think we're seeing now Ansar Allah making their political objectives more and more clear.

Look at what we hold. Look at what we have achieved. Look at what we have succeeded with on the ground militarily towards a political end state, which is Saudi Arabia, leave. Leave this to us. This is our country. If you were backed by the Saudis, we'll give you the opportunity to reject that, bend the knee, kiss the ring, join us. If not, we'll continue fighting you and we'll continue to succeed on the ground. That's right now kind of the edict that's been put out, because the cabinet and the prime minister were nearly killed in Aden with Houthi strikes, Ansar Allah's strikes, over the last 12 hours.

In fact, Yemen had to make an announcement that, hey, the cabinet and the prime minister are okay. They didn't die. They're still alive. So we're now seeing this checkmate position which Ansar Allah is in within Yemen, to where now they're making these appeals, or making their position greatly known in terms of political, hey, here's our conditions: join us or die. Saudi Arabia, get out. And, oh, by the way, we want our territory. We want what we consider the greater Yemen in these three territories. So I think that's what Ansar Allah is clearly moving towards politically. And it seems to me that their ground war—the ground campaign—is directly supporting that end state.

#Glenn

Yeah, the Trump administration really opened a can of worms with the attack on Iran. I'm just wondering if they go into this three-day strike, it's going to be difficult to predict the other conflicts that might, you know, spread into Bahrain, Kuwait.

#Anthony Aguilar

Absolutely.

#Glenn

It's, yeah, well, there will be too much speculation, but no.

#Anthony Aguilar

Look at the impact this is having daily on the economy in these areas. In Saudi Arabia, the tourist economy, that's tanking because their airports are closed and nobody wants to go to an area where bombs are flying around. The oil industry, their ability to transport and produce. But also recently, you know, the November 27th to 29th is the F1 race in Bahrain. It's huge. Or excuse me, in Qatar. It's huge money. It's huge for tourism, international tourism, international recognition. It's a big

deal. Now they're considering that they may have to cancel it because of the ongoing conflict and what's happening now. They've even, you know, the government of Qatar has even said, hey, we're now looking at exploratory options to cancel or do this at another time.

So that's, you know, considering the fact that we're at war and people are dying, you know, an F1 race, you know what? But that is a major industry, the tourism industry, for countries in this region that this conflict is having an impact on that won't immediately bounce back at the end of the war. So, oh, war's over now. Hey, everybody, come. There's going to be a lapse in that bounce-back, if ever. So that's another thing to consider. We're seeing real considerations on the ground now where the countries that have, you know, their own industries and their objectives and endeavors are now having to cancel or not do those things.

#Glenn

Well, Lieutenant Colonel, thank you very much for taking the time and sharing your analysis. Yeah, let's hope some cooler heads, or wiser ones, at least try to put an end to some of these escalations. But thanks again.

#Anthony Aguilar

Thank you, Glenn. I appreciate it, and have a wonderful day. And thank you for keeping a pulse on everything that's happening and keeping us all informed. I appreciate it.

#Anthony Aguilar

We all appreciate it. Thank you.