

Larry Johnson: Ground Troops, False Flags & Weapons Shortages

Larry Johnson is a former intelligence analyst at the CIA who also worked at the US State Department's Office of Counterterrorism. Johnson discusses how the US was not prepared for a long war and how it is running out of critical weapons. The solution appears to be to pull in other states and use proxies for ground troops. Everything points to this war being a very poorly planned. Read Larry Johnson's Sonar21: <https://sonar21.com/> Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glennDiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glennDiesen> Support the research by Prof. Glenn Diesen: PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glennDiesen> Buy me a Coffee: buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

#Glenn

Welcome back. We're joined by Larry Johnson, a former CIA analyst, to discuss the developments in Iran and beyond. We're getting a lot of pictures coming out of Iran showing some terrible bombings. But in Israel, they have much stricter rules now about what can be reported. I was wondering, what do we know about the hits Israel is taking? Because we see Iran, we see the Gulf states, but we're not seeing much footage coming out of Israel these days.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, I think the situation in Israel is probably worse than it is in Tehran as a consequence. Now, you haven't had as many people killed, because Iran, again, is not trying to kill Israelis, but it is trying to destroy their infrastructure—both economic and military intelligence. But one of the ways they're doing this is through these ardent Zionists, Larry Ellison and his son, who bought TikTok, so they control TikTok. Several of the social media platforms that people used in the past to post videos are now very difficult for people in Israel to use. So they've tried to cultivate this image that Israel isn't suffering any damage whatsoever.

In fact, I posted last night on sonar21.com a short video showing the complete ineffectiveness of the Israeli and U.S. air defense systems deployed in Israel. You can see four ballistic missiles hitting Tel Aviv and others across the horizon. So there are reports coming out. I've heard from our mutual friends, Danny Davis and Doug McGregor — the three of us have been talking behind the scenes — and they're saying there's significant pushback in Israel. There's growing division between the police and the military, and protests. There are food shortages, the shelters aren't adequate, and people are supposed to be within a minute of a shelter in the event of an attack.

So this propaganda being pushed out by the West says Tehran is suffering and everything's great in Israel. It's just the opposite. I think what we're seeing is increased desperation on the part of the Israelis. They're trying to expand the war against Iran, and they're doing that through some false flag attacks. There was a report of an attack on an Aramco oil field in Saudi Arabia. Well, Iran got in touch with the Saudis and said, "Hey, that's not us. We didn't do that." Similar things have happened in Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Cyprus. So clearly the Israelis are trying to carry out a number of false flags, implicate Iran—particularly against a NATO member—so that Article 5 would kick in and hopefully bring all of NATO to fight Iran. That's what Israel is trying to pull off. And thank God they're failing at it so far.

#Glenn

Yeah, so Mark Rutte just gave a speech saying they weren't going to trigger NATO's Article 5 because a missile was heading toward Turkey. And I heard about the Saudi one as well. You'd think it would be credible if the Iranians were taking credit for everything they're doing, but then saying, "No, not this one, that's not us." You know, it's interesting. It also seems, I guess, almost reckless if Iran were behind the attack on Azerbaijan. And why just one missile or one drone? I don't know. I'm skeptical, at least—let's put it that way. But another key issue, as we're a few days into this war now, is the weapon shortages.

Because there's been a lot of talk about whether the U.S. actually packed up properly for such a long war, or if it basically bet on it being very short. I saw both Hegseth and Trump referring to them as having unlimited weapons. But at the same time, I saw discussions about pulling weapons—THAAD missiles and Patriots—out of South Korea and sending them down to the Middle East. And it makes you wonder. I mean, we know they don't have unlimited supplies, but it raises the question of how long the Americans can keep this fight going. Of course, they have every reason in the world to pretend they can fight forever. But what do we really know? It's not publicly available information how many weapons the Americans actually have.

#Larry Johnson

Well, there are two—let's call them defensive weapons systems—where we actually know the status. The PAC-3 missile, which is fired from the Patriot missile battery, started production in 2015. Between 2015 and 2020, they were producing between 100 and 300 a year. So let's go with the higher total. You know, 2015, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20—that's six years. That gives you about 1,800 total, the possible maximum in that period. Then for 2021, 22, 23, and 24, production went up to about 550 a year. So again, let's take 550 times four—that's 2,200. Add that to the 1,800, and my math's not great, but that's roughly 4,000. And then in 2025, they produced 620. Now, that's the total production over those periods. And remember, Patriot missiles have been fired in Ukraine.

And normally, when they're being attacked, you fire two—at minimum, two—Patriots at the target. Ukraine was given 974 of these missiles, and I suspect they've used them all up by now. The other element is that not all the Patriots are under central command. They're not controlled by the commander responsible for the whole Middle East. You've got some Patriots in Indo-Pacom—they have to be ready to fight China—and European Command should have some as well. So when you get down to it, there's a very, very small number of Patriots left. And unlike what Russia did at the start of the special military operation, where they basically had factories they could reopen...

They had the materials to produce; they just doubled or even tripled production. They put their personnel to work 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The United States doesn't have that. So, with the Patriot missiles—in this current campaign against Iran—I anticipate the United States will no longer have any Patriots to fire by the end of next week. They could be out that quickly. The THAAD missile—what do they call it, the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense weapon—that's like the Patriot, except instead of costing between \$3 and \$6 million per missile, each of those costs around \$12 to \$13 million. And they only produce about 79 of them a year.

So the United States is not sitting on ample supplies of weapons. And then you get to the issue of things like the Tomahawk. Producing Tomahawks requires some rare earth minerals that China's holding on to. So it's not even like, even if the United States had the industrial capability, you could just flip a switch and start cranking them out. There are supply chain problems. There are structural problems—lack of factories, lack of trained workers, lack of material. So yes, this burst of activity we've seen since last Saturday, the United States is not going to be able to sustain it for another three weeks, in my judgment. They'll have to curtail, cut back.

#Glenn

But how do you see it? Given that the war isn't going well, the United States could begin to run out of ammunition. The Iranians have obviously struck some bases, which makes it difficult to refuel and replenish weapons. So if they have to sail very far away, logistics becomes a problem too. It looks as if the strategy has changed a bit. Instead of "liberating" Iranians, they now seem to be just dropping mass bombs on Tehran. And now there's not just talk—there are already movements about boots on the ground. Probably not Americans, I think, but at least proxies like the Kurds. What do you make of this?

#Larry Johnson

Well, if the Kurds are stupid enough to believe the promises of the CIA, they're going to join a long, long line of people throughout history who trusted the CIA and ended up betrayed, killed, and impoverished. Look at what happened in Vietnam—or actually in Laos—with the Hmong. They were

recruited to fight against the North Vietnamese, and then when the North Vietnamese prevailed, won the war, the Hmong found themselves on the outs. Instead of the United States rushing to save them and take care of them, we just sort of said, "Oh, too bad. You're on your own now."

This is a bizarre strategy—to, quote, try to put boots on the ground in Iran. The Iranian territory, especially along its western border with Saudi Arabia and Iraq, is rugged terrain, similar to what we've seen in Afghanistan—mountainous and difficult to operate in. So, yeah, you could put an insurgent group in there, but they'd be so isolated that they wouldn't affect the country's politics at all. And then you get to the issue of logistics—how do you keep them supplied? You know, if they're shooting any kind of ammunition and they get into a firefight...

Where do they get more ammunition to fight with? Because, you know, I don't know if you've ever carried an ammo can—they're about 22 kilos, well over 40, 45 pounds. One man can maybe carry one of those, but you're not going to be carrying two. You've got to have other things on your back. So this notion that they're going to put a ground force in to put pressure on Iran—it's going to end in disaster for that ground force. In fact, there are early reports already overnight that the Kurds did try to infiltrate, and they were immediately ambushed by Iranian forces.

And frankly, this was expected. Why do you think Russia sold—or gave—those 28 attack helicopters to Iran three weeks ago? Because I think their intelligence was such that they knew this was part of the plan. We've seen the West trying to paint a story of Iran as being shredded, its defenses shrinking, that it can't withstand the might of a U.S. onslaught. Yet, in the last three days, four F-15 Eagles have been shot down. The last one, yesterday, was shot down over Iran. There was what they call a combat search and rescue mission.

U.S. helicopters flew in and rescued the two pilots, but the plane was taken down. We're seeing a remarkable number of false flag reports coming from, you know, the attempt to attack the Saudi oil facilities. They tried to blame that on Iran. Iran got a hold of the Saudis and said, "Hey, that's not us." Then there was the attack in Cyprus, the one that allegedly took place in Turkey, and another in Azerbaijan. What Israel's strategy seems to be right now is to pull in NATO and expand this war so it's NATO against Iran, not just the U.S. and Israel. But I think Iran's been pretty effective in knocking down these false flags.

So the United States anticipated that by killing Iran's Ayatollah Khamenei and the key leadership—the Minister of Defense, the head of the IRGC—that this would cause a collapse of the Iranian regime. Now, what comes after that? Even as Marco Rubio said the other day, "I don't know." So this thing hasn't really been planned at all. There's been some planning, but in terms of figuring out what kind of outcome the United States wants, all they want is for there to be no more mullahs running Iran, and for whoever is running Iran to be obedient to us, do what we tell them to do, and give us complete, unfettered access to their oil and gas. I think that's what this is all about.

#Glenn

So, the Venezuelan solution. But once that doesn't play through, it looks as if they're going for the Syrian solution here, which is, yes, sparking a civil war. This could be—but this isn't just horribly destabilizing in Iran. And one has to ask, to what extent does one want a civil war to break out in a country of 90 million people? But I guess Rubio doesn't have a plan for that either. This, of course, creates shockwaves outside Iran as well. I mean, the Turks can't be happy. How's the rest of the region looking at the potential of Kurdish troops being used to attack Iran?

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, no, the Turks have been in touch with the Iranians. And actually, that's sort of the good news out of this—Turkey and Iran are coordinating. Now, the Western analysts, the people advising Trump and the Israelis, genuinely believed that by launching these attacks they would rip the social fabric in Iran and create more opposition to the government. The exact opposite has happened. You know, I know you've had discussions with Professor Morandi, and Morandi represents sort of a breakpoint between generations in Iran. Professor Morandi went into the Iranian army when he was about 17 years old, in 1980 or '81. The Iran-Iraq war started in September 1980, and Professor Morandi, who entered service then, was wounded twice.

But that event, that war, for people who were 17 years old and older, became an important part of their psyche. It influenced how they viewed the United States, how they viewed the West, and the people who came after. Let's say the folks who were, you know, 10 years old in 1989 when the war ended—well, you know, that's 37 years ago. So those people are now 47 years old. They haven't had any other event in their lives that galvanized them, let's call it, as patriots for their nation until last June—the surprise attack then, but now even worse, what happened on February 28th. As a result, you've got this new generation who are in their late teens, their 20s, and their 30s.

They are now, if you will, enraged at the duplicity and perfidy of the West for attacking Iran in such a cowardly fashion, especially when negotiations were underway. And then, to top it off, to kill—not just kill, but to murder—at least 165 little girls aged six to twelve. This has united Iran in a way it wasn't united, say, a year ago. We saw that same phenomenon in the United States in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks in 2001. And that's what these so-called geniuses in Israel and the United States who planned this operation didn't take into account. So right now, they've made it more difficult to overthrow the Iranian regime. It's got more support, not less.

#Glenn

Well, besides other countries being pulled in, we also see the war expanding in terms of geography that involves the United States. A U.S. submarine sank an Iranian warship, I think, not that far off the coast of Iran, near India.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, it was closer to Sri Lanka, but they'd been invited to take part in a naval exercise. So Iran had gone as part of that. I mean, the ship wasn't armed for combat—it was basically on a diplomatic training mission—and the United States ambushed it.

#Glenn

Yeah, so Hegseth very triumphantly even posted videos of it on Twitter, and he argued that this was the first time a ship had been sunk by a submarine since World War II—again, very triumphantly. Not correct, though. The British sank an Argentinian cruiser during the Falklands War. But if you put that aside, what I thought was interesting was the reference to World War II, because then one often thinks of the German Nazis. But actually, when the Nazis sank ships with their submarines, they rescued the survivors afterward—being, you know, the decent, honorable thing to do. And again, the Nazis did; the U.S. did not.

They left it to the Sri Lankans to save them. It's quite shocking. I mean, it reminds me a bit of the attacks and even the double taps on that boat off the coast of Venezuela. There's something that's died here—like the civility—and there's a certain pride behind it. Because, what is it, Hegseth keeps making these comments all the time, that, well, we're not going to be politically correct when we fight. You know, just very basic rule of law, rules of war, are being ignored because it's somehow seen as politically correct or “woke” to... I mean, the effort of civilizing the process of killing each other—it's not easy—but it's all being thrown away. It's quite shocking.

#Larry Johnson

Well, this is why, you know, he's setting himself up for a Nuremberg trial. Let's assume that if somehow the United States had a complete collapse and Iran actually took over, they'd be on trial as war criminals—which is what Trump and Hegseth are. They are war criminals, and that's what they're engaged in. But, you know, I was smiling as we talked about this. You know who Volvo and Lexus are, correct?

#Glenn

Yeah, I saw their video too. In all this horror, I actually enjoyed the comedy.

#Larry Johnson

So, Vovan—you know, I know both of them. I got to spend some time with them when I was last in Russia. They're great guys. They're both lawyers in their thirties. And Vovan dresses up; he claims to be an advisor to Friedrich Merz. He says, “Yes, my name is Adolf H.” And he was talking to the Shah of Iran—the aspiring Shah of Iran, the son of the former Shah. And, God, what an incredibly stupid

man Pahlavi is, because he was getting pranked and had no clue. And he's dealing with—well, as soon as I saw the photo with the black hair and the black mustache, the postage-stamp mustache—I knew right away what it was.

#Glenn

But no, he didn't. So, you know, this is—one of Merz's advisors actually dressed up like Hitler and called himself Adolf. But beyond the humor of it, I thought it was fascinating because of what they were promising. Oh yeah, the Germans decided, "We're going to join the war. Our Taurus missiles will now be launched on Tehran." And you'd wonder, you know, there's this new aspiring leader of Iran—how does he feel about Germany sending missiles to attack Iran? He's like, "Oh, this is wonderful news. We were hoping more people would join this crusade." I mean, yeah.

#Larry Johnson

Well, you know, what's fascinating is how quickly Tehran retaliated this time compared to last June. They got hit on June 13th, and it took them about 10 to 12 hours before they could actually launch a missile back at Israel. The other major difference between what happened eight months ago and what's happening now is that it wasn't until the very last day of that missile exchange, on June 24th, that Iran finally launched a missile at a U.S. military installation. That was at Al Udeid Air Force Base in Qatar, and apparently that was sort of a quid pro quo that had been negotiated.

I'm not sure who the intermediary was, but the United States and Iran agreed: OK, you hit us, we'll hit you this one last time. And then you, Iran, get to continue selling oil to China. So, you know, that deal went through. This time, they didn't wait ten hours. Within an hour of that ambush and the killing of Khamenei, Iran was already firing back. They started going after U.S. bases in particular—not just firing randomly. They destroyed at least two, and I've seen reports saying as many as five, of these billion-dollar radar systems. One, we know for certain—the one at Al Udeid—was destroyed, and another, in Bahrain at the Fifth Fleet Naval Station, was also destroyed.

They have what's called a multi-layered air defense system. Think of it like a pyramid, and at the bottom—the foundation—are those radars. What those radars do is, when there's a missile launch, they identify where it was launched from, the direction it's headed, and then that information is communicated to the other elements—whether it's a Patriot missile battery or whatever. Those were taken out early on, so now both the United States and Israel are effectively blinded. They're not necessarily going to know when a missile is being launched or where it's headed.

So they can't anticipate it like they did during the 12-day war. But note this: even with that information during the 12-day war, Iran was still very effective in hitting targets all over Israel. And we've learned that the Iron Dome is probably effective against subsonic rockets, maybe a drone. But beyond that, it has zero capability to interfere with or intercept a ballistic missile traveling at Mach 6 or higher. The same goes for the Patriot. You know, Ted Postol has been on a couple of different

podcasts showing how these Patriot missiles fire, they miss, and the missiles just keep raining down on Israel.

So I anticipate that as this attrition continues in Israel, the country is going to get more and more desperate because it can't stand the pain. It's too small. Most people don't realize that Iran is almost three times the size of Ukraine. And look at how much firepower Russia has brought to bear on Ukraine over the last four years—and even that hasn't forced the collapse of the Zelensky regime, which is supported from the outside. It's just a reminder that defeating a military force the size of Russia's, with its depth and short logistics lines, is extremely difficult.

I mean, they're next door. And here's the United States trying to take out a country three times the size of Ukraine, with a stronger military, stronger beliefs about their nationality and patriotism—much stronger than anything in Ukraine. It's just an incredible miscalculation. Because the United States is going to lose this. And, you know, I think the biggest way it'll lose won't be so much through a military defeat—though that's going to play a role—but through an economic defeat. Because Iran's control of the Strait of Hormuz is going to choke the world's economy. Now, some were thinking, "Oh boy, this is going to really hurt China."

They forget that, at least for Saudi Arabia, I don't think it's going to lose much in terms of oil exports. The price will go up, but it has a pipeline that runs from the east shore all the way across Saudi Arabia to the Red Sea. So they can pump it across there, load it up, and send it on its way. It's just going to add shipping costs, so it'll make the oil a little more expensive. The two Gulf states—three, actually—that are in real trouble are Bahrain, where the naval base is located. It's the only one in the Gulf with an 80% Shia Muslim population, so the possibility of an insurrection there is quite high.

Qatar, which is the largest producer of liquefied natural gas in the world, has completely shut down its facility. The reports I've read say that even if they restarted it tomorrow, it would take a month before they'd be back in service doing what they were doing. So that income has, number one, fallen off the table. And then, where do the countries that were formerly buying that liquefied natural gas get alternative supplies? Because the way the natural gas industry works is, you pay today for what you're going to receive six months down the road. So you get a contract.

So literally, what they were producing today was for someone who had placed the order six months ago. Anybody new showing up, you know, they're going to have a six-month to a year wait. So, you know, that's a problem. And it's the same with the United Arab Emirates. They've become sort of—let's call it a false-front tourist destination, right? You get a lot of expats, a lot of Americans living there. Well, the ships supplying them with beef and all the luxury items are sitting outside the Strait of Hormuz. They're not moving. So this is going to be very, very tough on Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, less so on the Saudis.

#Glenn

Well, I also saw that the Qataris had to shut down their aluminum smelter as well. And this one, according to the media, takes a year to restart, so it'll have a profound impact. I was wondering how you see the wider transformation of the region because of this, because a lot of these Gulf states rest on a large expat population—many of them people from abroad, not nationals living there. A lot of them leave easily once things become unstable or less prosperous. They're also very dependent on energy, which is being shut down. They're closely tied to U.S. security, and some of that trust is diminishing, especially as their frontline positions are now making them vulnerable instead of more secure.

And I think overall, many of them are also growing worried. You know, many people make it seem almost like common sense that, well, of course, we should reduce Iran's ballistic missiles—they shouldn't have this capability. But what's the alternative? If you have a large power like Iran that doesn't have a proper conventional deterrent, then it's going to seek a nuclear deterrent. I mean, that's the logic. You don't want a country to be completely vulnerable, with no weapons to defend itself, and then be attacked to get rid of the few weapons it does have. Now you have a vulnerable Iran—a big power, like you said, almost three times the size of Ukraine and with 90 million people.

It's a reason to fear for its existence, and it's being denied conventional deterrence. I mean, it almost seems foolish at this point not to develop nuclear weapons—and that's something I don't think anybody wants. So what happens in the neighborhood now that America's allies are taking all this punishment? The Turks can't be happy with what's going on. All of this is happening against the backdrop of the American ambassador to Israel, Huckabee, saying, well, if Israel wants to take half the Middle East, then, you know, God gave it to them. None of this makes sense—it's almost like they're scripting their own defeat. This is a horrible, horrible strategy, if there even is one.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, well, yeah. It would be generous to call it a strategy, because strategy assumes you've thought something through—and they haven't. This has not been thought through. I think the most immediate consequence of this attack is that it's driving the United States out of the Gulf. We've had at least ten military bases—airfields or ground troop deployments—and all of those have been hit. I don't want to say destroyed, but rendered inoperative. In other words, U.S. soldiers can't just show up there for work every day. It's a combat environment, a high-threat zone, and they've actually had to close down and transfer personnel.

When this is over, I don't necessarily see, you know, Qatar throwing open the doors—"Okay, guys, come on back in, let's get out there to Al Udeid and make things happen." That's not going to happen. The attacks on U.S. embassies, and specifically CIA stations, are Iran sending a message. They're going to force the United States out of the Gulf. So when this is over, the U.S. is going to

have at least a diminished presence at best, and at worst could be completely shut out. I don't think they'll end up completely shut out, but it's not going to be like it was—the golden age when the United States basically had these countries as its prostitute.

And, you know, they trusted in the protection of the United States. Now they're finding—particularly the Saudis—they're a little miffed. They feel that the United States is taking greater efforts to protect Israel than to protect the Saudis. So I think that's going to be a major change. But also, investment dollars—who's going to want to invest in Qatar or the United Arab Emirates now? Or Kuwait, for that matter. Or Bahrain. What looked like a great place to invest and seemed secure, because the assumption was, "Well, the United States will protect us," no longer holds. The United States can't protect them. You know, not only has it been proven that the Iron Dome doesn't work, the Patriot really doesn't work either.

It's not effective, particularly against ballistic missiles. And THAAD—the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missile—you know, not only is it terribly expensive, but it's not effective. So all of a sudden there's going to be a change in the perception of the United States, on top of its duplicity. You know, who can trust the United States on anything? Whatever they say. They promised they were going to negotiate in good faith with Iran, and they didn't. They used it as a pretext to attack Iran. So, you know, next time somebody says, "Hey, the United States wants a ceasefire," that's why Iran said no. There's nothing to talk about with you. Iran's going to talk with its missiles.

#Glenn

Yeah, I can kind of empathize or understand where the Gulf states are coming from, because when the United States was the only great power—the only hegemon—it was unrivaled, the only game in town. Then, of course, it made complete sense to bet your security on the United States. We saw the same dynamic in Europe: countries that joined NATO would be safe, while those that stayed outside could possibly become targets. So, you know, you want to be on the inside, not on the outside. And I can see why the Gulf states bet everything on the only horse in the race. But that was the comfortable, unrivaled hegemon of America. The problem in the international system is when a hegemon is in decline and other rival powers come up, because then the instinct of the hegemon will be to weaken those other centers of power.

And suddenly those frontline states can be used. You see this in economics too, by the way. There's a willingness to essentially cannibalize the industries of Taiwan, South Korea, and all of Europe. And suddenly, you know, all the nostalgia about the past—using that as a reason to keep cooperating—it doesn't make much sense. I think, yeah, the problem for the Gulf states is, where do they go from here? Are they going to make peace with Iran? You know, the Americans aren't going to allow that either. So what exactly do they do? But do you have any—do you know much about the internal divisions in these Gulf states? Because surely many of them must be worried about these new plans or the rhetoric coming out of Israel as well.

#Larry Johnson

Well, yeah, none of these are popularly elected governments. No. These are autocracies—essentially, you know, autocrats, tribal autocrats. And they operate with, you know, what I call a sort of modern slave labor system. They import people from the Philippines and from Asia, and they do all the menial tasks. They live in horrific, horrific conditions, and that's across the region. That's why there's some real alarm right now about the reaction of the average man and woman on the street in Bahrain—they were cheering when those Iranian missiles were pouring down and hitting the U.S. naval base there in Bahrain. So, you know, the prospect that you could get the rise of a political movement in any of these Gulf states—Qatar, the United Arab Emirates—that would challenge the current rich rulers there is pretty slim, because they don't have a base of support.

It's not like they're some beloved father figure. And in Saudi Arabia, it gets even more complicated—you've got the different princes all competing. They're not all loyal to Mohammed bin Salman. So, yeah, the instability in the Persian Gulf, I think it'll remain a high probability even after this war ends. Because I believe the key to ending the war will be Iran reopening the Strait of Hormuz to traffic. But it'll only do that if there's an agreement in place—something like lifting the economic sanctions and the United States agreeing not to put any more military bases in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, or elsewhere. I think Iran's actually going to be in a position to dictate some terms. Right now, if you say that in the United States, they laugh at you.

#Glenn

Oh no, Iran's in trouble.

#Larry Johnson

But I wrote a piece last night looking at the history of using air power for regime change. We don't have a single example since World War II of air power bringing about regime change. And that includes, you know, Vietnam—we had Operation Rolling Thunder, the attack in Serbia. And then the big one: look at Israel in Gaza over the last two and a half years now. It's been largely an air war there—an air war even with troops on the ground—and they still can't beat Hamas. The failure of the United States in Operation Rough Rider last March, the failure of the United States to oust Saddam with just air power back in 2003—you know, so... never, ever have we accomplished it.

And now we're expecting to accomplish it against Iran? I mean, look at that list—we've got Iraq, attacked twice; Gaza; Vietnam, or North Vietnam at the time; Serbia. The only country on that list that's even comparable to Iran, militarily and economically, would be Vietnam, right? So the reality is, we're sitting here saying that Israel, which hasn't been able to defeat Hamas after two and a half years of complete military dominance in every aspect, is now going to defeat Iran? And similarly, the

United States, which spent seven weeks trying to stop mobile missile launchers by the Houthis and failed after seven weeks—these two combined are going to take down Iran? It's—well, it's ludicrous. But, you know, that's the level of delusion that's infesting Washington and Tel Aviv right now.

#Glenn

Yeah. Well, the memory of—I mean, we don't have to go back to Vietnam—but the memory of Iraq should still be fresh in the United States. Iran has almost four times the territory of Iraq and, I think, about twice the population. So it's a massive country, and they're—yeah, they're properly developed. Again, given that they had to pull away from Yemen, it's kind of fascinating that they decided, "Well, let's go for Iran then." It's a very different adversary. But I have to say, though, in Yemen at least there was some wisdom on Trump's side. That is, he went in thinking he was going to do it much better than Obama because he's so much smarter. It didn't work.

But then what do you do when you fail? Do you escalate or de-escalate? You know, he didn't double down. He said, "Well, mission accomplished. Yeah, hey, let's go home." But even Greenland—you know, he was going to go, then the Europeans put up a bit of resistance and at least temporarily walked it back a bit. But in Iran, it appears that's not an option, that there will only be escalation from here on. Or do you—do you see any, I guess, off-ramp for Trump here? Or if not, just a last question: where do you think this war is going? Because we're at the end of day six now. Where do you see this going in a week or two from now?

#Larry Johnson

Well, I think by the end of next week, the U.S. supply of Patriot and THAAD missiles will be exhausted. Then there'll be a fight within the Department of Defense between the commanders of Indo-PACOM and CENTCOM. CENTCOM will be demanding all the remaining air defense supplies from Indo-PACOM. Indo-PACOM has three Patriot missile battalions—each battalion has four to six batteries, and each battery carries a stockpile of between 72 and 96 missiles. So you're going to have an internal fight within the U.S. defense establishment over who gets what.

You know, are we going to prioritize China as a threat, or are we going to bleed ourselves out with Iran? I don't see the United States being militarily able to bring Iran to its knees. If anything, these attacks—particularly the murder of Ayatollah Khamenei—have had the exact opposite effect. It's galvanized the people in a way they haven't been inspired since the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s. So they're more committed, more determined than ever, and you're seeing it on social media. It's not just in Tehran; it's across Iran. You know, I bet Iran has at least a hundred cities—well, maybe fifty—that are bigger than Tel Aviv. In fact, I'm going to look this up.

But it has a lot more cities with populations greater than Haifa and Tel Aviv, and that gives Iran an advantage. They don't have to hit a lot of targets. I mean, you target Haifa, target Tel Aviv, and you target the military bases—basically five or six distinct kinds of targets. And they don't have to cover

a massive landmass to do this, whereas Israel and the United States do. There are too many. You know, okay, we bombed Tehran—Tehran's a city of 12 million people. All of Israel is just 7 million. So, roughly, Tehran is almost twice the size, population-wise, of Israel. So Israel presents a much easier target to hit and to devastate.

It's far easier to destroy Israel because it's a small, confined area, compared to trying to break Iran. And let's again use the example of the kind of firepower Russia has poured on Ukraine over the last four years. Russia has inflicted massive damage, but that still hasn't caused the government in Ukraine to collapse—at least not yet. Maybe someday it will, or maybe it will collapse once the military, you know, the ground operations, expand. So yeah, I think this war—Trump is now in a war of attrition. His only way out is to declare victory and leave. And I don't think he's going to do that.

And it will... Look, this is going to end his presidency. I predict that by November, the anger at Trump for getting us into another needless foreign war, despite his promises to the contrary, will put control of not just the House of Representatives but the Senate in the hands of the Democrats, putting them in a position to impeach Trump. And frankly, I think you'll find a lot of Republicans willing to jump on board that train. Because what Trump has done now—he didn't even try to build support or make any kind of coherent case for why we, quote, "need to attack Iran." He just did it. And the resentment and anger among his supporters is real.

#Glenn

But I also don't know where the US is going to go from here, because if they can't defeat Iran, what can they do? They can escalate the brutality, bomb populated areas, try to compel Iran to accept a ceasefire, or pull in other states—maybe Azerbaijan—or form proxies, like under the Kurds. Hopefully no one's thinking about nuclear weapons, but... yeah, I wish I could see an off-ramp somewhere. Otherwise, we could have a massive... this could get very ugly very quickly. Uglier, one should say. Anyway, any final thoughts before we wrap up?

#Larry Johnson

I don't know. Did you see the comments from Elizabeth Warren, the senator from Massachusetts? She came out of a CIA briefing on the war in Iran yesterday and said, "It's worse than you can imagine. It's much worse—what's going on, the incompetence, and the capabilities of Iran." You know, this really has the potential to blow back on Trump and the politics of it. It's going to haunt him. And the reputational damage to America is profound, because previously, those who thought, "Oh, well, America is so powerful—who can stand against her?"

And now, when Iran is standing at the end of this and the United States is begging Iran for a deal to get out, to stop this, they're going to step back and say, "Wait a second." It's like that moment in the original *Wizard of Oz*, when Dorothy gets to the palace of the great and powerful Oz, and then the dog pulls back the curtain and there's this little old guy behind it, working the machine. That's

going to be that moment—the Wizard of Oz moment—for the United States, where it turns out not to be the great and powerful wizard, but instead a little old man behind a curtain.

#Glenn

Well, I think that's also been part of Israel's strategy. People are always taken aback by their brutality when they go to war. But this also makes some strategic sense. That is, if you want people to think Israel is all-powerful—if you go toe-to-toe, you know, it will destroy any adversary, no limits—then countries see it as essentially a no-go strategy. But no, I think a lot of the ideas, images, and reputations will shatter, and they also have quite a significance beyond just the material side. But yes, as I said, thank you for taking the time. That went fast. Oh yeah, yeah—time flies. So, no, we're not at the end of the world.

#Larry Johnson

We're not having a good time. But anyway, thanks for all you do, Glenn. You do great work—keep it up.

#Glenn

Thanks, Larry.

#Larry Johnson

Okay, bye-bye.