

Scott Ritter: Trump Sends 2,500 Marines into DEATH TRAP as Iran WIPES OUT

Scott Ritter is a former Major, Intelligence Officer, US Marine, and UN Weapons Inspector. Ritter breaks down Trump's Marine deployment and where it will lead as Iran seizes the initiative toward victory in the US-Israeli war against it. FOLLOW ME ON RUMBLE: <https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong> FOLLOW ME ON TELEGRAM: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> SUPPORT THE CHANNEL ON PATREON: <https://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong> Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhaiphong> Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho> Follow me on Telegram: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> #Iran #trump #israel

#Danny

The Wall Street Journal is reporting that a Marine Expeditionary Unit—usually about 2,500 Marines—will be sent to the Middle East. I guess you're the expert here, so I definitely want to ask you about this. Scott, now that the war is two weeks in, how is it going for the United States and for all the aggressor parties right now, given this escalation? And maybe you can talk about what this escalation really means.

#Scott Ritter

Well, I mean, first of all, a Marine Expeditionary Unit is basically a reinforced battalion. So you have a battalion of Marines with different attachments added on to give them greater capability—intelligence-wise, logistics-wise. They're relatively self-sustaining for a limited period of time. They have an air component, so you have helicopters and fixed-wing strike aircraft. They used to have tanks, but we don't have tanks anymore. But it's 2,500 Marines capable of conducting expeditionary operations ashore. And in theory, Marine Expeditionary Units have traditionally been deployed around the world like carrier battle groups—just floating offshore, ready to respond at a moment's notice to any emergencies that might occur.

So, you know, I don't know which MEU has been deployed, given the warning order, and I don't know where they're coming from. Are they already deployed? Are they training off the coast of Australia, or are they currently in the United States, or Okinawa, or wherever the MEU would be generated from and need to embark and travel? But their forte is assault from the sea, and they tend to operate off amphibious assault ships, where you put several hundred Marines on a single ship, and then they either go from ship to shore using LCACs or landing craft, or they go ship to shore using helicopters.

Um, when General Berger, former Commandant of the Marine Corps, became Commandant a couple of years ago, he did a review of the National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy, and he was supposed to write the Commandant's guidance. What he said was that he couldn't, in good faith, say the Marine Corps was capable of implementing the tasks as they'd been given by the National Command Authority. One of the reasons was that we're still married to a legacy amphibious assault concept that dates back to General Lejeune—the man who invented amphibious warfare—and the Second World War, where we perfected the art.

He said that modern munitions and area-denial weapons make it impractical, because if we close in on a hostile shore with amphibious assault ships and they hit one of our ships with a missile, we've lost 900 Marines—and that's it, that's the end of the game. We haven't changed that legacy. He tried to in the Pacific; he tried to come up with a new regimental structure that used smaller ships carrying up to 75 Marines, to make it harder to stop the entire assault by sinking one ship. We were looking at long-range strike weapons, and so on. It'll be interesting to see.

That system, by the way, has been declared a failure. I don't know if they disbanded those units, but basically this new structure was supposed to be confronting the Chinese in the South China Sea. And I think the Marine Corps has determined that it hasn't been a success. Um, I don't know if we still have units configured that way, because actually those units would be much more realistically employable in a strait or harbor move situation than bringing in a standard amphibious ready group. I just think this is fantasy and pie in the sky, though, because the new concept has specific limitations.

Uh, you know, it can't sustain itself forever. It has limited combat power. Um, and, you know, let's say you engage it—how do you reinforce it? Okay, so you put them in, and they get engaged. Let's say you want to take Carg Island. So we achieve the beachhead—it's just a battalion, not more than a battalion. There's only so much a battalion can do. You know, if you go three companies across, now you've secured the beachhead, but where are your follow-on assault forces? You've got to take them from the troops you have, so you've got to thin out this line and assault forward. What if the enemy puts up concerted resistance?

What if they counterattack? Are there reinforcements coming in? Do we have a second MEU coming in? So now we're talking about a brigade, not a battalion. This is insanity. The size of Karg Island—you know, it took us divisions during World War II to take those islands. So, you know, this isn't going to be Grenada, where a Marine Expeditionary Unit—or at that time, I think it was called a MAU, a Marine Amphibious Unit—was able to run around, rescue students, and kill Cubans and Grenadians. You know, this will be resisted by Iranian forces that have lived on the island. They've dug into the island.

They have their fire support identified, and they're going to make sustainment of this force impossible. Once we land, we'll be shelled the entire time. Wave after wave of drones will be coming in. How much anti-air does the Marine Corps have for that? Not much. We have some handheld

MANPADS, but we have a limited amount of ammunition. And when we burn through it all, the drones will keep coming. This is not going to happen. There will not be a Marine leader who says, "That's a mission we're willing to do." We know the military has already told Trump to pound sand—take the ships through the straits—and the Navy said, "No, we're not doing that."

And we're not going to put boots on the ground. This is a show of force because we don't have the capability to put boots on the ground. So for the president to say, "Oh, well, I may have to," this is just a show of force—but it's not enough. The Marines are good, but they're not that good. They can't do what the president wants with the forces, and it's very risky. If we go in with an amphibious assault ship and it gets hit by a missile, we could lose 900 Marines plus the embarked sailors who are part of the crew. We could have 1,200 men in the water. No president wants that. And for what?

To take an island that isn't going to open up the Strait of Hormuz anyway. Um, I just think this is basically a propaganda thing. My guess is that this war will be over before those Marines are on station. I don't know where they're coming from—if they're close, they could be on station—but my guess is that Trump is desperately looking for an off-ramp. In the meantime, he's going to be posturing, because the whole Trump thing is "peace through strength," and you have to look strong. So he's going to keep dropping bombs on empty buildings and let Pete Hegseth say psychopathic things and such. But he knows this war is lost.

I mean, there's a general consensus in Washington, D.C., that there will be no regime change and that the missiles will keep being launched. We can't stop them. And if Iran wanted to, they could shut the Strait of Hormuz and strangle the global economy. Right now, you know, if you call and coordinate, you can go through—otherwise, you get sunk. There's nothing we can do to stop it. Iran is in the driver's seat right now. They're the ones with all the initiative. We're reacting to them. The whole concept of boots on the ground is a reaction to the reality of the situation—that we're not winning. Therefore, we'd have to bring in additional resources to achieve outcomes that can't be achieved right now.

#Danny

That's the definition of losing. According to the Wall Street Journal, it's the Japan-based USS *Tripoli* that will be bringing in that Marine Expeditionary Unit. So I guess they're moving from Japan.

#Scott Ritter

I don't know how long that will be. It'll be an Okinawa-based unit. The ship, the *Tripoli*, might be home-ported in Japan, but they're probably going to take the Marine battalion that's in Okinawa. That battalion is traditionally trained in conventional applications, but because it's part of the Pacific,

they may have some experience with specialized tactics. To be honest, the way I'd do it is take my Marines to land in a port city far from the Persian Gulf, then assemble them and their resources in the United Arab Emirates, and run a shore-to-shore amphibious assault.

I wouldn't bring the *Tripoli* anywhere near the Iranian coast. I'd have my Marines do an assault from the shore—helicopter- and small-boat-based. If you go in with small boats, you can afford to lose one or two Marines in the water—hopefully we can rescue them. You come in with helicopters, and we should be able to project some power ashore, maybe even achieve a beachhead. If we did it as a raid, that's possible. We're very good at raids. So we'd go in there with the element of surprise and extreme violence. Marines are very good at violence and aggression. You just assault through, blow up some things, blow up a couple of buildings, take some prisoners, and then withdraw.

The raid is the only military operation where you actually plan to retreat, and normally we don't even consider retreat, because retreat means defeat. But in a raid, you go in, you do your mission, and then you withdraw. So we could be looking at a Marine raid on Kharg Island, and if they have this MEU that's been configured for small-boat operations, that becomes more realistic. But then again, you have to ask yourself, politically, is this worth it? Because there's a chance things could go very bad. The Iranians have been preparing for this. It's not like we're going to take them by surprise. We could be walking into a trap, and next thing you know, you have a company of Marines cut off on Kharg Island. You know, people need to start looking up Qeshm Island.

That's another place from Marine Corps history. That's where we went in to rescue the *Mayaguez* crew when they were taken over by the Khmer Rouge in April of 1975. We ended up doing a helicopter assault on Koh Tang Island. Almost all the helicopters were shot down. Marines were in the water, Marines were on shore, split into two portions that looked like they could get overrun. We had to run constant air support missions until we could finally get them out. And it was only through a miracle that we found enough helicopters that hadn't been shot down to come in and get them off the island.

Well, we left three Marines behind. A three-man M60 gun crew didn't get on the last helicopter and were left behind. Marines don't ever leave anybody behind, but we left these three Marines, and they were captured and executed by the Khmer Rouge. It was a huge, embarrassing moment for the United States Marine Corps. We could end up—Kharg Island could become the next Koh Tang Island. So people need to study their history and understand what can and can't be done. I remember when I was brought into the ad hoc planning cell put together by General Gray. One of the plans I promoted, and that had a lot of support, was a raid—a Marine raid—on the Az Zubayr logistics facility.

We're going to take a reinforced company of light armored vehicles, put them on the ground, run them up the highway, and shoot the hell out of the site—blow things up, kill everybody, and then evacuate, leave. And everybody thought it was the sexiest plan ever, except a colonel who had flown helicopters during Desert One, Colonel Seifert. He looked at it—he was very nice to me, and I

give him full credit for this—but he said, “You know, there are so many things that could go bad here. If the Marines get into a firefight, start taking casualties, and can’t be extracted or reinforced, we lose this Marine company for what?”

For a propaganda exercise. Your raid isn’t going to change the war. Your raid is designed to make people say, “Look what we can do.” And we don’t need anybody saying, “Look what we can do.” If it doesn’t change the war—if it doesn’t win the war—we shouldn’t be doing it. It doesn’t influence the war; it shouldn’t be a feel-good exercise. Hopefully, we have Colonel Seiferts today who would be saying the same thing about a Kharg Island operation. This is not a war-winning exercise. You’re not going to seize Kharg Island with a mule and hold it, um, and be able to secure shipping, because the Iranians will still control their coast, and they’ll just make life a living hell for the Marines on Kharg Island.

And, um, they will continue to sink shipping that tries to transit through the Strait of Hormuz. So this is a political exercise—a feel-good exercise, a propaganda exercise. It has no impact on the overall operation, and there’s a really good chance it could go bad and we’d lose a lot of Marines. I’m hoping there’s enough real Marine leadership that says, you know, I don’t need to win a Silver Star. I don’t need to get a Purple Heart. I don’t need a combat medal. What I need is to keep my Marines alive so that if we ever really need to use them for a war-winning effort, they’re available. But who wants to write letters home just so you can say, “Yeah, I invaded Kharg Island.”

#Danny

No one. Brilliant military strategist Pete Hegseth recently said that the Strait of Hormuz is actually open as long as Iran doesn’t shoot at any ships—they’re just free to go. Donald Trump said the day before that ships just need to be courageous and go through the Strait. Talk about—you said earlier that Iran, maybe we get to the Iranian side now—Iran has the initiative. Talk about what that looks like now, two weeks in, and what you make of these comments, these “genius” comments by Pete Hegseth about the Strait of Hormuz closure, which is sending shockwaves through oil prices and the oil markets. I mean, some things just speak for themselves.

#Scott Ritter

This is the Secretary of War, who’s trying to impress people. I mean, I listen to him talk—he’s literally, you know, there was a time when we used to be leaders. The Marine Corps trains leaders. That’s what we did. That’s what I went through. When I went through basic school and officer candidate school, and when I got into the Fleet Marine Force, we weren’t managers—we were leaders. We led. And leadership is a whole different thing. You don’t impress people with your words; you impress them with your actions. You lead by example. You become a tactical expert not because you can articulate it, but because you can do it.

Marines know a leader because a leader stands before them, and Marines say, "I'll follow you to hell." A manager comes forward and Marines are like, "Yeah, get the hell out of here. I'm not dealing with you." Marines create leaders. I'm not saying this is the best thing in the world for all of society—I'm just saying that for combat application, there's no replacement for true leadership, especially at the small-unit level. I was trained in that school, and I think I did a pretty good job. But the one thing you didn't do as a leader was bullshit the troops. You didn't have to sell them on anything; you just had to tell them, "This is your mission. Let's get it done."

What happened after the Gulf War, though, is we went into a peacetime military—transitioned back into a peacetime military—and we needed to have a peace dividend. The Cold War was over. We were looking at the consolidation of forces. And instead of leading, we were told to manage. I remember when this happened because the Marine Corps bought into something called TQM, Total Quality Management. All the young captains who won the Gulf War got put into an auditorium and told, "You are now managers." And we went, "No, we're not. We're leaders." I mean, we revolted. We literally revolted. We said, "No, we refuse to play this game." And a lot of people ended up leaving the Marine Corps because of it—because we do leadership.

We don't manage. Managing is what the Air Force does. The Army wants to manage things, but we're not going to do that. When the Marine Corps transitions, and you become a manager, you turn into a salesman. See, leadership isn't about selling anything. I either inspire you or I don't. I either know what I'm doing or I don't. When I stand in front of a team of inspectors and say, "Today we're going to the gates of hell—to the presidential palace—we'll get out of the vehicles, machine guns will be aimed at our faces, RPGs aimed at our cars, and they'll be threatening to blow your arms off," what I need you to do is just relax, because I'm in charge. Look at me. If I panic, you panic.

But if I stay calm, you stay calm. I have a plan. This is my plan. I'm going to implement the plan. And the inspectors all went, "Okay." We went into the worst situations imaginable—things went to hell in a handbasket—and I'd get out of the vehicle and stay calm. That's leading by example. My calmness led them to be calm. We stayed focused on our mission, and we accomplished it. That's leadership. But if I had to get up there while I'm doing this and sell them—"What we're doing here is applying psychological, manipulative tactics to get the enemy to over-respond and stimulate the hypothalamus of the..."—you'd be sitting there going, "What?" That's Pete Hegseth right now.

He's just throwing words out there. He's a guy who doesn't know how to lead. He's a guy who manages and tries to impress people with his language. He's a salesman up there, selling something—and what he's selling is 100% garbage, pure garbage. And it shows, because a leader is also honest. Look at the letter Dwight Eisenhower wrote, the one he prepared to give if D-Day went bad. Look at that letter. He didn't sit there and try to deflect and say, you know, this, that, and the other. He said, "It's on me. I made the decision, and the failure is all mine." And, you know, we're going to learn, we're going to come back, regroup, and we're going to move on and do the next thing.

But you know, this has been a failure—my failure. Pete Hegseth doesn't have the courage to stand up there and say, "Yeah, we got it wrong." You know, we made certain assumptions, and I acted on those assumptions, and we were wrong. So now what we're going to do is hit the pause button and reevaluate. We're going to be meeting with the president to discuss options, and I'll get back to you as soon as we have them. But no, the war isn't going the way we wanted it to go. We're not achieving the results we thought we needed to achieve at this time, and we're going to have to make adjustments. That's honesty.

And I think people would appreciate honesty instead of saying, "Well, we didn't expect the Iranians to be able to keep firing their missiles, but we're in control. Ninety-five percent degradation, bombs on target, we're killing, we're the most lethal force." That's bullshit. People see right through it. So you've got this kind of man whose brain is now in the business of just selling crap, and what you get is that statement: "The Strait of Hormuz isn't closed. It's open. It's open because we say it's open. It's open. It's only closed if the Iranians shoot at you." Well, no shit, Sherlock. I mean, that's the definition of closing the Strait of Hormuz—when the Iranians decide to close it by shooting at you. So it's not open. You haven't succeeded.

He can't tell the truth, though. He's so impressed—this notion that we're winning because we say we're winning, but we haven't achieved any of the metrics of victory. We sank the Iranian Navy? Then why can't you open up the Strait of Hormuz? Because the whole idea of sinking the Iranian Navy, according to Donald Trump—he says it over and over again—"We sank all their ships." I don't know why we can't go through the Strait of Hormuz. Because it was never about the ships, Donnie baby. Never about the ships. When you look at the Arif Brigade, there are four battalions of them. Their job is to keep you from crossing through the Strait of Hormuz. What have you done to them? I don't want to hear about you sinking a boat that had nothing to do with anything.

I want to know what you've done with the Arif Brigade. Where's the 1st Battalion? Where are their modern cruise missiles? Where's the 2nd Battalion? Where's the 3rd Battalion? We know where the 4th Battalion is—they're on Karg Island, and they're going to kill you if you try to put Marines across the beach. They've been living on Karg Island for a long time, and they've dug a lot of holes and fortifications. You thought it was bad going into Iwo Jima, Mount Suribachi. You thought it was tough going into Tarawa. Try going to Karg Island and have your Marines assault across terrain the enemy controls. They'll be shooting at you from the front, the back, the rear, underground—rising up, Hezbollah all over.

What Hezbollah is doing to Israel in southern Lebanon, the Iranians will do to the Marines on Karg Island. The Marines will fight bravely, and we may even prevail tactically because we're pretty damn good. But we'll lose a lot of Marines—for what? So that Pete Hegseth can say, "We have projected power ashore. American boots are on the ground, and I'm telling you that ground is now free. Those

boots are touching free Iranian soil." I mean, that's the kind of crap he would say. For what? So no, we're not in charge of anything. The Iranians are directing this war every step of the way. The Iranians got us to strip five THAAD batteries from South Korea. The Iranians did that.

They got us to strip Patriot batteries from the Pacific. The Iranians did that. The Iranians have got us considering putting boots on the ground. None of these things were on the table when we started this war. We're only doing it because the Iranians are in charge. The Iranians are dictating the pace of operations, and we're reacting. Now, I get to John Boyd's OODA loop. You know, the OODA loop was for the fighter pilot. You have two planes come in, and John Boyd was using the OODA loop—observe, orient, decide, and act. So he's looking—he observes, sees you, looks at your airplane, knows what kind of plane you have. He says, "I want to bleed off some speed."

So he's going to pull into a climb now. He has superior speed. You're going to pull in, but you can't match it—you're slower. Now he's going to keel over, you're going to make a turn, and he's going to come in behind you. He's going to shoot you down because you've been reacting to him the entire time. He anticipated your reactions and took control of the situation. The Iranians are executing a perfect OODA loop on the United States. They've observed what we're doing, they've oriented on us, they're making decisions, and they're acting. And they're running this decision-making cycle faster than we are.

They are inside our decision-making cycle, which is the key to victory. So we're reacting to them. We're doing things, but they're in control. They're controlling the pace of operations, they're controlling targeting, they're controlling everything we're doing. And... we're losing. There's no aspect of this war where we're winning—none whatsoever—unless you want to say we win by blowing up empty buildings. And that's what we're doing. We're blowing up empty schools with children. We're very good at blowing up schools with children, but we're not hitting military facilities of note. The Iranians have been preparing for this.

They're underground. They're dispersed. And it's also misleading. We've been using a lot of standoff weapons; we're not penetrating into Iranian airspace. When we decide to penetrate Iranian airspace, we'll come face to face with Iranian air defense—and that's a whole different level of fighting. I see the mouth-breathers in the MAGA world, you know, get very excited about the A-10. The A-10's a nice aircraft, but, you know, for the last several generations, the A-10 has fought in Afghanistan and Iraq against insurgents. The last time the A-10 went up against a modern military was in the Gulf War.

And I'd invite people to take a look at the battle damage suffered by the A-10—and remember that A-10s were being shot down on the last day of the war. We were losing pilots on the last day of the war because modern battlefields aren't friendly to low, slow-flying aircraft like the A-10. Out west, when the A-10 was used for Scud hunting, we didn't allow it to go below—I forget what the cap was. I was going to say 10,000; it might've been 30,000 feet. But we had to keep the A-10 very high to avoid getting shot down by air defense. So even though it's this thing where it goes "brrrt" and

looks sexy and all that, the A-10 was way up here because it couldn't get down here, or else it'd get shot down.

So, again, the people talking about the A-10 don't have any experience with the A-10. They don't know anything about modern warfare. But the fact that we're even talking about putting the A-10 into this situation is a reaction to Iranian actions. We're not sitting there saying, "Let's insert the A-10 to shake things up; the Iranians aren't expecting it." The Marines are like, "No, you haven't suppressed us, so we know you're going to come in with joint special operations forces, A-10s, helicopters—and we're ready." They've posted their boys out there saying, "Please, come, come. We want to party with you." They're in charge. They're inside our OODA loop. They're winning this war.

#Danny

Even the propaganda machine is having a lot of difficulty interpreting events. There was a fire, for example, on the USS Ford. I think the USS Lincoln was approached by an Iranian vessel, and they even admitted—CENTCOM did—to trying to shoot the vessel and then having to fire missiles at it because they couldn't get their gun working on board. But then there's the issue—I want to know if you have any comments on the refueling tanker. I believe there were two. One crashed, and six Americans died from that. And another, I think, was able to land over Iraq. Talk about what the explanation for this was. It wasn't friendly fire, and it wasn't hostile fire. And the Iraqi resistance took credit for the refueling tanker, the KC-135. Talk about what you've noticed in how U.S. CENTCOM, in particular, is talking about this war now, given that it seems like every incident is explained as some kind of error rather than—like you said earlier—maybe it'd be better to be honest and say, "Maybe we're actually taking some hits here."

#Scott Ritter

Well, again, I know you don't want to give the enemy false credit, or you don't want to hype up the enemy, but I will say this: aerial refueling is a complex operation. We're flying a lot of airplanes into the Iranian theater, and the skies over western Iraq are packed with refuelers. We had this problem in Desert Storm, where we were sending strike packages into Iraq and they'd go off and do their thing. Maybe they'd get some SAM missiles fired at them, have to hit their afterburner, and end up sucking up more fuel. So they're bingo fuel, which means they can't make it home, and now the tankers have to adjust to this.

The tankers are in rotation out here, waiting for the planes to come up and take fuel. But instead, now the tanker has to make an adjustment, come in, and take a new position to get the fuel in. And sometimes AWACS isn't up to the job. AWACS is the controller—someone managing the battlespace, the airspace. And AWACS may have taken their eye off the ball, may have gotten complacent, or planes just did it without going through AWACS because of an emergency. We don't know what was going on. But what I can say is that we had so many near collisions of refuelers during Desert Storm. It's a real problem when you get that kind of tight airspace. Keeping aircraft from flying into

one another is a big challenge. I have no reason to believe this was anything other than two tankers in a very complicated airspace with a whole bunch of airplanes flying through.

They got into each other's airspace and collided. That's what I believe happened. Uh, if there was a surface threat, first of all, we're not going to put a tanker over an area with surface-to-air missiles. That just isn't going to happen. We've cleared that ground. If you remember, there was an incident a little while ago where American forces landed in Anbar Province and were setting up a base of operations. An Iraqi unit responded, investigated, there was a firefight, and we killed a bunch of the Iraqis because we're not going to allow the insurgency to come in and set up underneath our refueling platform. So we have troops on the ground in Iraq who are actively patrolling, and they aren't going to let anybody shoot down these tankers.

You can't. The tankers—well, you know—we lose the war if we can't refuel the aircraft. If our tankers are busy responding to surface-to-air missile attacks, we're done. So we have troops on the ground in western Iraq. I don't think we're supposed to know about that, but there was a media report, so I'm going to comment on it. Their job is to actively patrol and keep anyone from firing surface-to-air missiles at the refuelers. So I'm confident there wasn't a missile attack against our aircraft. What I'm confident in is that we have a very complicated airspace that includes Israeli aircraft—and that's a problem, too. I mean, who's refueling whom?

Do we have separate refueling areas for the Israelis, or are they jumping in? And again, just having experienced this during the Gulf War—you know, you've got the tanker up there and you get a schedule. So AWACS will say, "Okay, a flight of three F-35s coming in, call sign Juliet 1-2-3. They're going to refuel in this order." So they get stacked up: Juliet 1 comes in, takes on fuel, breaks off, 3 comes in. All of a sudden, you hear, "This is Charlie 6-4, an F-22, bingo fuel, low on fuel, emergency refuel." And they're like, "Okay, Charlie, you need to vector over." "No, I can't make it. Bring the tanker to me." And now the tanker is breaking off.

The F-35 is down there and has to break off while the tanker moves in. But they didn't coordinate with another tanker that's making a big move with a couple more airplanes behind it. So now planes are moving toward each other. AWACS is supposed to deconflict, but two planes ended up in the same airspace. That's always a bad thing. People need to look into how we do refueling operations, especially in an environment like this, where we're running hundreds of combat sorties into Iran on a daily basis. The skies over western Iraq are packed with aircraft. You make a mistake, you pay the price. And tragically, six Americans lost their lives because one KC-135 ran into another KC-135. That's my take.

#Danny

Yeah. Well, yeah—and lost their lives for a war that's not going so well.

#Scott Ritter

It's not their fault. They're doing their job. They've been given a mission of refueling aircraft—that's their mission. I don't blame these people at all. I blame the president, Hegseth, Rubio, and all the guys with stars on their shoulders. The guys with stars on their shoulders especially—they should have stopped this war. When you have Tulsi Gabbard, everybody's like, "Where's Tulsi? Where's Tulsi?" Well, Tulsi was actually doing her job, ladies and gentlemen. Tulsi actually put together a national intelligence community assessment delivered to the president before the decision to go to war was made, where she basically said, "We will lose this war. We will not achieve regime change, and we will not get the military victory you're looking for. Don't do this."

That's her job. The president chose not to listen to her. But for all the people saying, "Where's Tulsi? She's a traitor. She's not doing her job"—she did her damn job. She did her damn job. Where are the generals who are supposed to tell the president, "Hey, sir, the intelligence doesn't support this. We can't do this. I'd like that order in writing, and I want it copied to the United States Congress, because after you give me that order in writing, I'm going to resign—and then I'm going to Congress to say this is an unlawful order." You know, your career's over. My career doesn't matter. I serve the American people. So the second you ask me to break the law, to carry out or conduct a war crime, I'm not going to do that.

And I'm not going to, you know, sell my soul to keep going. We just don't have military people of that caliber anymore. There was one—the director of the Joint Staff. He was fired because he told the president, "We can't do this." We have a secretary of war who's a clear psychopathic war criminal. I'm finishing up an article right now that makes this case in black and white. He should be removed from office, and then the attorney general should prosecute him for violations of the War Crimes Act of 1996—the law that says you can't operate in violation of the Geneva Conventions. And he has. And several of the general officers who are in the kill chain have done the same thing. The girls' school serves as proof positive of this.

But these are the people who are supposed to say no to stupid ideas. And when you have the director of national intelligence get the consensus view of the U.S. intelligence community—that this war can't be won, that none of the goals or objectives can be achieved, that we're going to lose—you know, this is where military officers worth their weight in gold stand up and say, "No, Mr. President, no, we're not going to do this. It's unlawful. There's no reason to do this." And yet they don't do that. We don't have people willing to make those calls. And that's why it's important to prosecute Pete Hegseth, because people have to understand that there are consequences for failing to do your duty, failing to obey the Constitution, and failing to obey the law.