

Larry C. Johnson: Iran Missiles Smash Dimona & Tel Aviv - Just in: 3 Fighter Jets Downed

#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today is Monday, March 23rd, 2026, and our dear friend, our brother, Larry C. Johnson, is here with us.

#Larry

Yeah, the audience doesn't know I was giving you a hard time about that shirt. It was a really strong performance on your part today.

#Nima

I'm trying to be a good student of yours.

#Larry

Oh, yeah, I appreciate that. You're my adopted Brazilian-Iranian son.

#Nima

Larry, let's start with what Donald Trump announced a couple of hours ago. After giving that 48-hour ultimatum, saying we were going to attack the Iranian power grid, he came out and said the Iranians are negotiating with us behind the scenes. And here's what Donald Trump said. Then we got a response from the Iranian foreign ministry—they said that's not the case, that they haven't talked with them at all. Here's what Donald Trump said.

#Speaker 03

Iran's foreign ministry says you're not telling the truth about having productive conversations or about the war.

#Speaker 04

Well, they're going to have to get themselves better public relations people. We've had very, very strong talks. We'll see where they lead. We have major points of agreement—almost all points of agreement, I'd say. Perhaps that hasn't been conveyed. The communication, as you know, has been blown to pieces. They're unable to talk to each other. But we've had very strong talks. Mr. Witkoff and Mr. Kushner had them. They went, I would say, perfectly. And if they carry through with that, it'll end that problem, that conflict—and I think it'll end it very, very substantially. We have very much in mind our partners in the Middle East. We've had great relationships with a lot of them, as you know. A lot of them were surprisingly hit, and I was surprised to see it—and so was everyone else. But we have very much in mind, in the discussions. The discussions took place yesterday and went into the evening. They want very much to make a deal. We'd like to make a deal too.

#Nima

This is just amazing. This guy is amazing. What's your take, Larry?

#Larry

He's the ultimate—you know, there's a saying in the Navy: you can't polish shit, okay? You know, with brass, you can rub it and get it shiny. But you take shit, and it's not getting shiny; it's just getting spread around. It stinks, and it's messy. That's what Trump is doing. All Trump is doing is manipulating the stock market and the oil market. That's all. He's trying to keep the prices down. He's buying time until the Marines arrive. The 31st MEU will get there on Friday, maybe Saturday. The 11th MEU, which comes out of Camp Pendleton in California, San Diego, they'll get there early—probably somewhere around April 7th.

So they've got about a 19-day voyage. He has no intention of a peaceful settlement with Iran—not at all. And the Iranians understand that. They're not fools. The fools are the American people who are sitting there buying this nonsense from him. But, you know, the fact that they've had good conversations—Ron's made it very clear what it was. Now, one of the things I said was that Ron's going to insist the sanctions be lifted. Well, guess what? Trump has lifted sanctions. I'm not sure all of them are off, but the major sanctions that were implemented—a whole list of them—he apparently lifted those. So that's a step in the right direction.

But getting U.S. military out of the Persian Gulf? So that's the next requirement. What's happening is there's been a major—if you look at the flow of aircraft, C-17s—dozens of them have been flying. The air traffic going in is probably bringing resupplies, number one, maybe some troops. But they're not flying in to withdraw personnel—just the opposite. So, you know, Trump's a liar. Sorry to disappoint somebody out there who thought they could rely on what he says. We'll see—the stock market initially opened up about a thousand points, and let's see where it's headed. Yeah, it's still at 890. So, oh man, victory and peace at hand.

#Larry

Nope. The United States is going to continue attacking Iran, and Iran's going to keep hitting U.S. bases and the Israelis. At least Iran has a strategy they're following, and they've got a clear plan. But the Strait of Hormuz is closed—unless you're willing to pay for your cargo in yuan. The Chinese are going to come out of this quite nicely. But this means countries like Japan, South Korea, Australia, and the Philippines are going to have to make some hard decisions this week about whether they'll keep using the petrodollar or embrace the Chinese currency.

#Nima

Larry, you mentioned they're sending a lot of, you know, weapons, personnel, or fighters to the region. What's the plan on Donald Trump's part?

#Larry

Well, right now, the 82nd Airborne has been activated. I don't know where they're located—they're based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. There's been word that they were being airlifted out over the weekend. Where the destination is, I don't know, but they're going to be in theater somewhere. I don't know if they're in Incirlik in Turkey or at Muwaffaq base in Jordan, but they're moving forward. I'm not sure what they intend to use them for. And God help us, you know, if they're talking about trying to do an airdrop onto Kharg Island, because that would be a massacre for U.S. troops. But then you've got the Marine Expeditionary Unit—the 31st—which is based in Okinawa. So from Okinawa, you know, here's an odd fact: if you've got the Marines in Okinawa and then the Marines in California...

So, Okinawa takes a little over two weeks to reach the southern coast of Iran in the Arabian Sea. From California, the most direct route—believe it or not—is to go east. In fact, go down from California through the Panama Canal, cross the Atlantic, through the Med, down through the Suez Canal, and then through the Red Sea. That's the fastest way. But I would assume the planners realize that's incredibly dangerous, particularly given the attitude and statements by the Houthis that they're now going to close the Red Sea to maritime traffic. So they'll have to sail west, which will add a couple of days to the journey. They're not going to be on scene for at least another two weeks. So, you know, Trump claiming, "Oh yeah, we're having great talks"—he's just trying to buy time to get the troops in there, because he has no intention of having a peace agreement with Iran.

#Nima

Larry, I think Kharg Island is—well, there would have to be some other target. I don't think they're going to go to Kharg Island. They'll go somewhere else, because Kharg Island is far from the Strait

of Hormuz, and there's no point in being there. It's a flat area; they could get hit without any kind of air defense system or protection. That's the problem with Kharg Island. So, what are the alternatives for the United States?

#Larry

Well, there are no good alternatives. So you've got to define what the mission is. Okay, the mission at Kharg Island would be pretty straightforward—you'd want to interdict Iran's export of oil. Except the United States lifted the sanctions on Iranian oil for the simple reason that we need that oil on the market to try to stabilize prices, because prices are going up, not down. You know, here in my neck of the woods, it's been up about a dollar ten since February 28th. Judge Napolitano was talking about it earlier—it's up like a buck and a quarter, a dollar twenty-five up there. So Americans are getting pissed off because it's now hitting them in the pocketbook.

So if that's the mission, it would make sense to try to get control of the oil there. But then you're cutting off the flow of oil—or if you take it and say, "Okay, we're now going to ramp up production from Iran," that's not going to happen. Iran would just turn it off. They'd destroy their own oil fields before letting the United States control them. And even if Marines or the 82nd Airborne were on Kharg Island, they'd be sitting ducks. They don't have an air defense system to protect them against the drones and missiles Iran would be sending in repeatedly.

So the other possible mission is to seize—what's the name of the island? Is it Qasem? One of those islands in the Strait of Hormuz. It's near the shore—Q-U-A-S-E-M-H or something like that. Well, again, how are you going to get the Marines there? If those ships are carrying the Marines and putting them out amphibiously, they'll be within ten miles of the Iranian shore, and Iran will shoot them out of the water. I saw another analyst suggesting—though I don't know what the real intent is—that they might land the Marines down around Chabahar so they can get on land there. But for what reason? That's not going to open the Strait of Hormuz.

That'll just create a target where the Marines will be facing drone attacks and missile attacks, and they'd be occupying, you know, a pretty isolated region of Iran. You know, Chabahar will be important in the north-south corridor once that's fully up and running. But as far as a chokehold on Iran—it's anything but. So, you know, the missions on paper just make no sense, because what the United States needs is an increased flow of oil out of the Persian Gulf and complete freedom of movement for maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. Well, they're not getting that. And despite all the threats and bravado coming out of the United Arab Emirates—oh yeah, "we're going to go to war with Iran"—it's just not realistic.

#Speaker 05

With what? I mean, come on.

#Larry

They remind me of just a fat, out-of-shape pimp—you know, a guy who runs prostitutes. That's the United Arab Emirates. They've created a kind of Disneyland, where, yeah, they've got oil, they've got gas that's exported, but they've built up this mythical—well, I call it a mythical—city, like Dubai, where you've got all these wealthy people flocking. You've got all these indentured servants from the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia working there, basically bowing and scraping before all the white people. Now, some say, "Well, they make more money than they would if they stayed home, so they're willing to put up with these conditions." But it's just—you know, the trade at Jebel Ali. The one thing the United Arab Emirates has is this free trade port called Jebel Ali.

And it's either the largest in the world or the second largest. There's no trade going on there. So all the economic activity that was concentrated in that area—it's dead. Tourism, dead. Construction—well, there will be a lot of construction when they have to rebuild some of the stuff that's been blown up. But right now, construction, you know, the investments in that, the money's frozen. The financial services are frozen. Those companies are pulling out. They're saying, "Okay, we're not staying here. It's too dangerous." So between the loss of oil and petroleum products being exported by Qatar and that service industry—that's 83% of their economy. You know, how long can you lose 83% of your income and stay alive?

It's not like they've got ample savings. So the political situation with these Arab dictators—because that's what they are, whether we're talking about the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, or Saudi Arabia—Bahrain, they're in trouble. And the only thing that would save them is if the Strait of Hormuz were somehow magically opened and there was free movement of commerce. Well, that's not going to happen anymore. Iran's made it clear: "You know what? We're going to set up a toll gate. If you want to come in, great—you're going to pay a fee for access." Iran's going to recover money from the losses it's suffered as a result of this war. This is one way to obtain reparations indirectly.

#Nima

Terry, one of the things I talked about yesterday and even today with some informed people is the network of Iranian power and gas. They have a very complicated, and in some ways advanced, system of gas and electricity. That's why it's almost impossible to destroy if you go after it. This is the difficulty Donald Trump is going to face if he goes in that direction. But on the other hand, when it comes to the Arab states in the Persian Gulf or Israel, they're totally vulnerable.

#Larry

Yeah, yeah. No, I mean, up to this point, Iran has avoided taking out those power centers. Again, I think it's more intent on weakening the military strength of those countries, as well as their ability to support military operations. But, you know, Iran made it clear: hey, if you hit us on our power—if

you go after, for example, Bushehr again, or Isfahan—then the gloves would come off further. I mean, the gloves are already sort of off. They're just systematically hitting targets in Israel and throughout the Persian Gulf. And, you know, supposedly we've destroyed—I mean, if you listen to Scott Besant—oh yeah, we've destroyed Iran's missile capability. Well, they haven't done a very good job of it, because they keep firing away at least three different waves per day, three to four waves per day. And that's been going on now for, what are we, 24 days into this?

#Nima

Yeah. I'm curious, Larry, what Scott Besant said about how they're trying to manage the three to four waves.

#Speaker 06

Helping to fund a country that it's currently at war with, Mr. Secretary.

#Speaker 05

Again, Kristen, why don't we have good facts here? That Iranian oil was always going to be sold to the Chinese, and it was going to be sold at a discount. So which is better, Kristen? Which is better—if oil prices spiked to \$150 and they were getting 70% of that, or oil prices stayed below \$100? It's better to have them where they are now. And to be clear, we had always planned for this contingency. About 140 million barrels are out on the water. In essence, we're jujitsu-ing the Iranians—we're using their own oil against them. We have a much better line of sight, to be clear, at Treasury, when this oil goes out. If it goes to Indonesia, Japan, or Korea, we have a much better line of sight and are able to block the accounts the oil goes into. When it goes into China, it completely gets recycled. So, to be clear, that \$14 billion number is grossly overstated.

#Larry

It's so confusing. Oh my God. We got Mr. Miyagi—wax on, wax off. I'm a jujitsu master, I throw you now. God almighty. I mean, Besant's a joke. You know, he lies. Maybe that's why Trump hired him—because he's a good liar. Well, actually, he's not even a good liar. They can come up with any rationalization or justification they want. So basically, his argument is this: we're making China pay more for oil, which China can afford, and we're putting all that money in the pocket of Iran, who we're trying to defeat. Oh, brilliant. Wax on, wax off, you know. God, this is the Karate Kid for stupid people. That's what this is.

#Nima

Larry, there's an article in Bloomberg saying that this kind of "yes, sir, yes, sir" attitude in the Trump administration has made it incompetent. That's why the administration isn't working the way it

should. This is turning out to be one of the most serious, most devastating mistakes on the part of the president of the United States. From the reports we've seen, it seems the head of Mossad was leading the show—providing information that Iran would be over in a few days, and saying, "Let's attack and go with that plan." And somehow Donald Trump and the whole administration were convinced. Larry, the war against Iran is a huge miscalculation on the part of the intelligence community. Who's responsible for that?

#Larry

Responsible? You mean you think there's some kind of accountability, that people come back and say, "Hey, you said this, so you're getting punished"? Nah, there's no accountability. I've read a number of things—there are a variety of theories out there circulating about how this is part of some elaborate plan.

#Speaker 04

Planned by the United States, you know, 5D, 10D chess.

#Larry

You know, they're thinking so many moves ahead, like they're going to isolate China. All I can do is tell you what I'm hearing from friends in the military who are involved in different parts of this operation. And there definitely isn't, you know, a lot of detailed planning or thinking that's gone into it. Much of it now is just scrambling—trying to figure out how to put out the fire they started. They've set the house on fire, and now they're saying, "Hey, maybe we should get some water or a fire extinguisher." It's taken on a life of its own. I don't believe this was part of Trump's plan—to say, "Okay, let's get the Strait of Hormuz closed, let's break the countries of Asia that are our allies."

Because the ones who are getting hurt most by the shutoff of oil, the shutoff of liquefied natural gas, and the shutoff of fertilizer are countries that were normally considered strong allies of the United States—Japan, South Korea, the Philippines. They're the ones really taking it in the shorts now. But, you know, it's also hurting Cambodia, Bangladesh, Vietnam. The Asian countries think of this as a plague. The plague has infected them first, and the infection is going to spread around the world. It hasn't hit Europe yet full force. It hasn't hit the United States full force yet. Now they're looking at it and saying, "Oh, yeah, but this is probably a brilliant move. That's why Trump got control of Venezuela—so he'd have access to all that oil."

The oil's in the goddamn ground. He can't get it out. It's not like the infrastructure in Venezuela for pumping the oil is working—it's broken. They can get a little out, but not the volume they need to replace what's been lost from the Persian Gulf. And every day that goes by, there's no viable solution on the horizon. Yet the traders on Wall Street, the people running the Western oil markets, have deluded themselves. They've lied to themselves. They're listening to Trump. They think, "Oh, this is

going to turn around. Things are looking up. There are great talks.” There are no talks. Iran’s not going to negotiate. Iran wants a victory now—and they’re partly there. So for right now, the sanctions stay lifted.

But we’re going to see if that includes the United States starting to attack these oil tankers—which I don’t think they will. Because if they do, they’ll only make the oil shortage worse, the one that’s already affecting the world, and they’ll put more money in Russia’s pockets. So Russia’s doing fine out of this. And the Western analysts grossly exaggerate China’s dependence on oil and liquefied natural gas coming out of the Persian Gulf. The interruption of that has only a minor effect on the Chinese economy, not a major one. The real effect on China will come as the global economy slows down—we’re in a recession now. Nobody will say that. They’ll say, “Oh, this could cause a recession.” No, we’re in a recession. You just don’t have the figures in front of you yet to see how bad it really is.

The question is, how far will we fall economically—globally—to the point where it becomes a genuine depression? I’d have to go back and look up the exact economic definition of a depression. But you’re going to see a significant contraction in global economic activity regardless. Then there’s the impact with fertilizer. The existing fertilizer that’s out there—the price of that is soaring. And you might say, “Well, so what?” Well, if you need that fertilizer to plant corn, and corn right now is, say, a hundred dollars a bushel—I’m just pulling a number out of the air—if your cost of producing that corn has now doubled, at least with respect to fertilizer, and not just fertilizer, then the price of fertilizer has doubled.

The price of diesel here in the United States is up at least two dollars a gallon since February 28th. So all of a sudden you’ve got increased fuel costs, increased fertilizer costs, and then you’re going to have to sell that corn for a higher price. And the good news is people will be hungry, so they’ll need to pay the higher price. But it may not turn out to be economically viable for farmers. So, I mean, this has cascading effects that we haven’t even fully worked our way through yet. And even if it stopped today—and it’s not going to stop today, it’s not going to stop in a week—I seriously believe this will go on a minimum of two to three months, maybe longer, until the economic pain is such that the United States is forced to say, “Okay, enough, we’ll stop.”

What do we need to do to get the economy back up and running? And you know what? By then, it may be too late for places like Dubai, Doha, and Qatar. Those cities have been dependent on the flow of outside capital as well as the flow of goods in and out. If they’re not getting those goods, food is going to become a major issue. I don’t know what kind of food reserves they have, but I guarantee you whatever meat and poultry they have are being imported from other countries. They’re not getting that now. So, you know, Doha, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar are going to be running out of food—maybe in another month as this continues. So Iran’s negotiating leverage in this is not only strong, it’s going to increase.

#Nima

Larry, Pete Hex shared a video of an officer saying we're prepared to crush the enemy. We're all ready, morale is high, and everything's set to go. But it turns out the video was old—it was shared by the guy who was speaking in it, and he's retired now.

#Larry

Yeah, he left the Marine Corps five years ago.

#Nima

It's amazing. On the other hand, Larry, we've seen HuffPost report that U.S. troops are increasingly uneasy about Donald Trump's Iran strategy as the conflict enters its core. Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait.

#Larry

What was that word you used? Strategy? It's called Trump's strategy now? Good Lord, my man, what are you talking about? There ain't no strategy. Okay, sorry.

#Nima

Yeah, the article mentions that they don't want to die for Israel. That's the main point. The interviews were with active-duty personnel along with reservists. They're all pointing out that the stress is rising, morale is low, and they have doubts about the mission. What is the objective? Because they don't have a clear understanding of what Donald Trump is doing. This is the reality that Pete Hacksett doesn't want anybody to know. And who's going to represent these people these days? I don't see the head of the Pentagon going in that direction.

#Larry

You know, as the war in Vietnam grew unpopular, even among the troops who were there, they had this phenomenon called "fragging," where soldiers would kill their own leaders—the ones who were gung-ho about putting them in harm's way. We may have actually seen a variant of that with the Gerald R. Ford aircraft carrier, you know, when supposedly the laundry room caught on fire and it took them 30 hours to put it out. Our friend Andrei Martyanov did a great video reminding people of what took place on the aircraft carrier Forrestal, I think in 1967. Reportedly, John McCain was a pilot who accidentally fired a missile that hit the deck and set the Forrestal on fire.

There were explosions and everything, but the crew put that out in 19 hours. And Andrei was just saying, you know, there's something about this story that just doesn't add up—that it'd take 30 hours to put out a laundry fire. So we're not getting the full story. This was much bigger, much

worse than anybody can imagine. And now they're saying the aircraft carrier is going to be out of commission for 14 months. So yeah, there may be some serious morale problems. I know one of the people I've talked to said they're just trying to tough it out, hoping we get to the end.

You know, people don't really understand this. They've got a variety of what are called crisis action teams. They set up an operations center, and those are staffed 24/7. They don't turn off—there are no days off. So you go in, and the shifts are normally like 6 in the morning to 6 in the evening, or sometimes 7 to 7. But you're on for 12 hours, and it's not just 12 hours, because let's say your shift ends at 7, but the new shift starts at 7. You have what's called a turnover brief, where they go over what happened in the last 12 hours and outline what's going to be done in the next 12.

So by the time that briefing's done, it usually takes anywhere from 15 minutes to half an hour. So instead of getting off right at 7, you get off at 7:30, and then you drive, you commute home, and they get really tired. Yeah, and grumpy—tempers start flaring. I've been involved in exercises that went on for seven or eight days on that kind of schedule, and it does stress people out. So across the board, yeah, I think there's a real morale issue here, because the question comes up: what's the objective? What are we trying to do?

#Speaker 04

Yeah.

#Nima

Larry, in the last three days we've seen, you know, an F-35, an F-16, and an F-15 hit by the Iranian air defense system. And many of us are wondering if they were all destroyed, as Donald Trump is trying to put out there. So how is Iran capable of doing this? I don't know if you saw this animation—there's a channel that produces these animations, and it seems to come from Iran. The Iranians are doing this and putting out some kind of information about how they shoot these down. You know, they're talking about different missiles and air defense systems. Here's one of those animations showing how the Iranian air defense system hit the F-35.

#Speaker 07

2026. I struck an F-35 for the first time in history. I am Majid, an Iranian short-range air defense system that uses infrared heat-seeking guidance. I do not use radar; I emit no signal. At 2:50 a.m. in central Iran, my infrared eye scanned the sky silently—no radar emission. Then I found my target. I locked, I launched, and I hit. It took me three seconds to bypass the F-35 threat detection system. The U.S. spent approximately \$400 billion over 30 years on the F-35's development, but that was engineered for radar, not for heat. One side spent \$400 billion; the other side built a passive heat sensor on a truck. And physics did the rest. Over 20 countries fly the F-35. Every one of them is reviewing this footage. They now have the blueprint.

#Larry

Yeah, it's a war tone.

#Nima

What's your understanding of this video? It seems like they have some kind of inside information, and that's why they're producing it—to show something.

#Larry

No, they're correct about the infrared. The missile didn't hit the plane directly. Once the pilot realized there was an inbound missile, they ejected these flares that burn hotter and create a bigger heat signature. The missile hit one of those, but it was still close enough to the plane that the shrapnel damaged it. The pilot was able to get out of Iranian airspace—my understanding is he was pretty deep, somewhere over the middle of Iran when it happened—and he managed to get out and crash-land somewhere. The plane's gone, yeah, it's destroyed.

But yeah, the Iranian air defense system—there are still parts of it active. They still haven't been able to defeat these inbound missiles or have a system capable of stopping the Tomahawks and the JASMs. I wonder if at some point the Russians and Chinese are going to step in, try to upgrade that system, and maybe deploy their own personnel to help Iran fend off the West. You know, this is escalating, despite Trump's claims earlier today that, oh yeah, we're making great progress, we've got agreement on everything but one or two things. It's like, good God. I mean, he's lying—it's not true. So we'll see a whipsaw effect: the markets do well today until it becomes clear there's no agreement and Iran isn't messing around. And, you know, the price of oil overseas will keep going up. We're gaslighting the American public right now.

#Speaker 07

No, it's not bad.

#Larry

This will be over in a day or two. No, it's not—there's no end in sight.

#Nima

It seems, Larry, that what Russia learned in Ukraine, together with what Iran is learning right now, is going to be hugely influential on the future air defense systems that all these countries—Russia,

China, and Iran—will design. It would be an integrated air defense system, bringing together different parts from Russia, Iran, and China to create a comprehensive network. Is that going to be the result of this war?

#Larry

Well, yeah, I mean, the air defense system—let's take the Patriot and the THAAD. They were designed for an environment where you might have one, maybe two missiles coming in, not hundreds. So the systems get overwhelmed. And the cost of those specific missiles is prohibitive for mass production. Let's say you've got a ballistic missile—or let's just go with a Geran drone—and you're trying to shoot that down. If that Geran drone costs \$50,000 or \$100,000, and you're using a \$6 million missile...

#Larry

Two \$6 million missiles to bring it down—so \$12 million spent to take out a \$50,000 threat. You know, the economics on that don't work. And THAAD, the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missile, that's even more expensive—about \$12 to \$13 million apiece. So, yeah, there's got to be some rethinking. Because right now, what they've got—Israel says it's a multilayered system. Layer one is the Iron Dome, and that was designed more for subsonic rockets. Then David's Sling is next, and it goes up to another altitude. On top of that is the Patriot, and above that is the THAAD. Well, that system is basically broken now. It's depleted. We saw that in Dimona the other night.

In fact, you could see there was still some air defense fire going up, and you see it launch, and then the other missile just—boom—goes down and hits the ground. The air defense completely bypassed whatever system was being fired at it. So I think the Russians and Chinese—now would be a time to start testing. You've got another real combat environment. Bring in your systems, see what you can test. Russia's got a pretty good setup between the S-400 and the S-500. They've been pretty effective at shooting down most drones and missiles—not all, of course. There's no such thing as perfect in this world. But they've certainly been able to defeat significant drone attacks. Israel cannot, and the United States cannot. And whenever you hear them say, "Oh yeah, we shot down 90%," nonsense. They're lying.

#Nima

But the learning process is so important, Larry, I think. They learn how to hit the targets—the missiles, the airplanes. It's like a university for those people who are studying this sort of thing. I would assume that Russia is there, China is there, everybody is there to understand what's going on.

#Larry

Yeah, you get real-time intelligence based on what's actually happening in combat. Again, whatever air defense system Iran had has proven inadequate at preventing strikes with these missiles. A lot of these strikes have been carried out from standoff range, so they're being launched from outside or just barely inside Iran's borders. But this idea of a conventional attack on Iran—"Oh, we're taking out their airfields." Well, Iran doesn't have a big air force, nor does it rely on its air force to project military power. "Oh, we've blown up their navy." You know, Iran was never a blue-water navy; they're not out there extending their power through naval forces.

It's for defense. And that's why you've got the submarines and the maritime drones—the underwater ones. So what the United States is attacking now isn't actually diminishing Iran's military capability. Those underground missile cities and storage facilities are still there. Again, I don't think the West has a clue how many missiles—particularly advanced missiles—Iran has. And I believe they're continuing to manufacture them. I don't know how long it takes to produce different components, but it looks like they've been able to do that. So there's no immediate concern—it's not like they're going to run out of missiles next week.

#Nima

Larry, you mentioned the attack on Dimona and Arad as well. Two cities were hit by Iranian ballistic missiles—hypersonic missiles. It seems they sent just a single hypersonic missile to Arad, which shows they were confident it would hit the target. What's the understanding here? Because when you look at the Israeli media, they're saying they're investigating the case to understand what happened—why they failed to intercept the missile. Yeah. If Dimona can be hit by Iranian missiles, does that mean nobody really has any reliable protection, considering the air defenses?

#Larry

Correct. Yeah. I mean, the air defense systems don't work. They've got limited capability. And you've had Ted Postol on, talking about this extensively—he's got all the facts and figures. But, you know, all you've got to do is watch the video, the one that came out of Dimona. You saw three or four air defense missiles go up and—boom—the hypersonic just blew through them. Once in a while they get lucky, but again, there's a supply problem, particularly with Patriot and THAAD missiles.

I've talked about that before. There wasn't an unlimited inventory, and frankly, a significant amount has been depleted by what was sent to Ukraine and what was used up in the 12-day war last June. And now, the intensity—we're going into day 25. So we're coming up on, you know, in about eight hours it'll be past midnight in Iran and the start of day 25. And Iran keeps going, you know, like clockwork—they're launching missile strike after missile strike at targets in Israel and in the Persian Gulf.

#Nima

Larry, what do you make of what happened last night? The United States has moved its soldiers from Iraq to Jordan, and before that we learned that other NATO countries are withdrawing their troops from Iraq. What's happening? Is this connected to something that's going to happen in the near future—a confrontation between Iran and the United States on the ground—or is it something different that doesn't have anything to do with that?

#Larry

Well, no, I mean, it's just one more sign that the United States doesn't have control of the situation. They had to pull their personnel out of Iraq because otherwise they were going to be—well, we don't know how many have been killed or wounded. I've seen some videos online; I don't know if they're real, but one was from Qatar, and it showed a strike with personnel in a courtyard. So we really don't know how many U.S. troops have been killed or wounded. But, you know, they had to pull them out. It's not sustainable. The U.S. does not have enough military personnel to protect against and defeat the Iranian-supported groups that are attacking them. So, you know, finally, 20, 23 years after the invasion by the United States of Iraq, the U.S. is being driven out. I mean, that's another ultimate victory for Iran.

#Nima

Is Iran planning for the monetization? Do they want to monetize control over the Strait of Hormuz? Sure. And how far do you see the United States going to go against this sort of policy? How successful can they be if they try to oppose what Iran is doing in the Strait of Hormuz? Because so far, we've heard from Iranian government officials that more than 20 countries are in contact with Iran to manage that—to pay just to pass—without having any sort of difficulties.

#Larry

Yeah, well, go ahead.

#Nima

Go ahead.

#Larry

No, no, go ahead.

#Nima

How do you see Donald Trump dealing with that?

#Larry

Well, what's his leverage, okay? The necessity of keeping cars running, keeping factories running—these other countries are going to, you know, follow the money. And what this means is that dollar supremacy is in trouble. You know, it's just... the international economic order is being reestablished. The Bretton Woods system is dead. Trump's trying to keep it alive. But now Iran really has acquired some leverage, and the game is going to heat up. So if you watch Japan and South Korea start buying oil with yuan—holy smokes—that's significant. That's what we need to focus on: seeing what's actually happening with who's doing what in financial transactions here.

#Nima

Yemen is prepared, Larry. They've announced they're ready to join the fight, but so far we haven't seen anything coming from Yemen.

#Larry

Yeah.

#Nima

What would be the conditions under which they'd join?

#Larry

Yeah, I think they're going to wait and see. If there's an attack on the Iranian power grid, then at that point they'll shut down the Red Sea. So far, that hasn't happened. I think the Houthis are biding their time for now. I don't see them wanting to expand the war just yet. They'll also watch what Saudi Arabia actually does. You know, Saudi Arabia talks a good game, threatens to do a variety of things, but so far it hasn't actually launched attacks on Iran. I think if the Saudis do launch attacks on Iran, then you're going to see the Houthis start hitting Saudi Arabia with missiles from the south.

#Nima

Are we getting to a point where all these Arab states don't matter anymore—to either side, to the Iranians or to the United States?

#Larry

Yeah, well, that's where the Gulf Arabs are. They're on the road to irrelevance. You know, their ability to supply oil—and, excuse me for a second—oil, liquefied natural gas, fertilizer, the chemical industry, that's what made them important. Well, that's gone away. And a lot of that's not a simple

matter, like flipping a switch and suddenly they're back in business. So the three countries that have the least cushion to absorb the shock are Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. Qatar in particular, you know, has basically been the house slave of the United States.

And they've been, you know, they've made a bad bed. They sort of—you know, you're not supposed to put all your eggs in one basket. Well, they put all their eggs in that basket. And now their finances are drying up. The longer this war goes on, the more economic damage is done to them. These are autocratic countries—regimes, you know, family-based, tribal-based. They don't enjoy any kind of popular support. So we have yet to see the full effect of what's happened to these countries because, you know, Dubai in particular had become a center attracting lots of money and lots of foreigners.

I mean, hell, even Tucker Carlson was talking about buying a condo in either Qatar or the United Arab Emirates. I don't think he's going forward with that purchase now because, you know, they don't want to sit there and dodge missiles, and the infrastructure isn't going to be able to sustain it. So we're on sort of the precipice. If the United States and Israel—and you can't rule out that Israel may try to go ahead and attack the power grid in Iran—and as you noted earlier, it's fairly decentralized. However, if it is attacked in any form or fashion, Israel is going to be the big target. Iran is then going to wipe out, destroy the power grid in Israel. Much easier to do.

#Nima

Not just the power grid—desalination, everything, Larry.

#Larry

Yeah. So up to this point, Iran's avoided taking that step. But if Israel and the United States persist with these attacks that are killing civilians, I think Iran's in a position to escalate and make the United States pay a terrible price.

#Nima

Larry, here's what Donald Trump said about managing the Strait of Hormuz.

#Speaker 04

They have. Thank you.

#Speaker 08

What about the Strait of Hormuz? Who's going to control that?

#Speaker 04

That'll be opened very soon, if this works.

#Speaker 08

How soon? And who's in control of it? Will Iran still be able to control the flow of oil?

#Speaker 04

Be jointly controlled.

#Speaker 08

By whom?

#Speaker 04

Maybe me.

#Speaker 08

Maybe me.

#Speaker 04

Me and the Ayatollah—whoever the Ayatollah is, whoever the next Ayatollah is. Look, there'll also be a very serious form of regime change. Now, in all fairness, everybody's been killed from the regime.

#Nima

So this is—this is, yeah. I mean, it's the guy—it's kidding. We have to laugh just to keep from crying.

#Larry

You know, there are some people out there—without mentioning names—who insist that this is all some sort of theater by Donald Trump, that he's not really this stupid anymore. No, no. Actually, he really is this stupid. He's just detached from reality. This isn't some master plan he has in place to remake the world. They did plan this in advance. They thought they could pull off this regime change in Iran. And, you know, the color revolution attempt that started on December 28th and went through, say, January 10th—that was a precursor. But they kept moving forward. The attack that took place on February 28th was planned in advance. They didn't decide on it in just a couple of weeks.

What they counted on was being able to actually get a regime change. They really did believe the Islamic Republic was extremely unpopular, and that if they just killed a few top-level people, the majority of the Iranian population would rise up and establish a democracy or something. Well, it didn't happen. And now the United States and Israel are caught, trying to figure out, okay, how do we exit this? Because they want to reset the chessboard, as it were. They've sort of lost this match, so now they need to reestablish the chessboard, since they're not backing away from their goal of destroying Iran.

They want a regime change—somebody in charge of running the government, the military, and the economy in Iran who's going to be subservient to the West. They think they can really pull that off. So what they're looking for now is a pause. I think Iran understands that, and they're not going to take their foot off the throat of the West. Basically, if the West tries to destroy Iran, Iran will destroy the global economy the West depends on. It won't be universal—Russia's going to do fine out of this, and China will actually do pretty well—but a number of other countries are going to suffer greatly. And Iran is basically sending the message: if you align yourself with the United States and Israel, you're going to suffer too.

#Nima

Yeah, thank you so much, Larry. We're going to meet again on Friday.

#Larry

Yes, yes. I'll be on the road then, but I'll be available.

#Nima

See you soon, then.

#Larry

All right, you behave yourself this week. Sure. All right, bye-bye. Bye-bye.