

Larry Johnson & Wilkerson: Ground Conflict Could DEVASTATE Israel & UAE

#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today is Friday, March 27, 2026, and our dear friends Col. Wilkerson and Larry Johnson are here with us. Welcome back, Colonel, Larry.

#Larry

Roger that. I'm the one dressed like the funeral director today, okay?

#Lawrence

I wondered about that. You even look like you combed your hair nicely.

#Larry

Yeah, yeah, that's—I'm out in Canada, so I'm away from the home station.

#Lawrence

You say you're out in Calgary or something?

#Larry

Yeah, Calgary. Yeah.

#Lawrence

Okay.

#Larry

Snowy. Oh, cold—oh boy.

#Nima

Just imagine—from Florida to Canada. That's a drastic change in weather. From Trump to Bernie.

#Larry

The people are incredibly nice, though.

#Lawrence

I used to go to the rodeo up there when I was younger, man. It was a lot of fun. All you had to do was walk across the border and then walk back.

#Nima

Let's start with the current situation in the war between the United States and Iran, because it seems that now the war isn't really between Iran and Israel anymore—Israel is too busy with Hezbollah. They're not fighting Iran directly now. And let's talk about what General Keane said on Fox News and his assessment of the current situation. You know, Donald Trump first issued an ultimatum of 48 hours, then he said it was going to be five days.

#Nima

Right now, more than ten days in, here's what General Keane said: a little less than three more weeks, in the minds of our commanders, to complete this operation. It's taken a little over three weeks to get where we are, so you can see we still have a lot of work ahead of us. And what does that really mean? Well, for a fact, we're going to accomplish all of the assigned objectives that President Trump has given the CENTCOM commander. And in talking to the IDF, they fully intend to accomplish all the objectives that Prime Minister Netanyahu has given them. The general time frame is, as described, around three weeks.

If it happens sooner, fine. If they have to take a little longer, we've said from the beginning that this is conditions-based. The enemy has a vote. And what is the enemy trying to do right now? Number one, they're trying to personally survive and keep the regime somewhat intact. And believe me, that's an enormous problem for them—you can see it. You're reporting on it every single day, what's happening to the leadership. The paranoia inside that leadership is real, and the chaotic decision-making process in there is real. So we're fragmenting that leadership for sure, and we've got weeks to go to do more of that.

The second thing they're doing, in addition to trying to survive individually and as a regime, is trying to protect their assets. They know we know where everything is, and we're systematically taking them down. They want to save something, for sure, so they have the ability to retaliate against us when we begin to open up the Strait of Hormuz. If we're going to take Kharg Island, they're going to want to carry out some kind of military retaliation against likely allies and partners in the region, and U.S. bases would be the easiest targets. Israel would be a more challenging target, to be sure.

And they're trying to hide that, to deceive as much as possible, protect some of those resources, while at the same time still trying to fire missiles and drones at our bases and at Israel. So that makes target identification and destruction more challenging. Are we going to be able to do that? You betcha. But it takes more time, more identification, more tracking to get it done. I try to describe it with a football analogy—you know, we're in the red zone here. We're on the 20-yard line, trying to get to the goal line. And the opposition is putting up as many impediments as they can because they can see how close we are to attaining our objectives. And they're doing everything they can to prevent that from happening. Right.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Lawrence

Nima, I just—go ahead, Colonel. Go ahead. I love that analogy. I love that analogy. We've been in the red zone a number of times over the last 30 years, and we've never scored a touchdown. I wonder how this is any different. And then the second thing is, you never, never ask a person in a war, or even a simulation, if they're accomplishing their objectives, because they'll tell you yes, of course, and they'll detail all the objectives they've accomplished. You ask them, are you accomplishing your mission?

And the mission has never been expressed—not by the president, not by the Secretary of Defense, not by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Is the mission bombing relentlessly? It appears to be. But there's no question the mission isn't being accomplished if the mission is, as I think they're saying quietly, to bring the regime down. They haven't done it, and I don't think they're going to do it. So that was an idiotic presentation that I wouldn't have accepted from a Navy lieutenant commander or an Army major on a game floor without ripping his butt off.

#Nima

Larry, what's your take on what's going on, and how do you understand the situation?

#Larry

Keane is delusional. I mean, he lives in a fantasy world. Number one, the issue should be the Strait of Hormuz. You know, I didn't appreciate this at the outset of this war either—it's been accumulating knowledge as it goes on. The world is in a recession now. Normally, they define a recession as two consecutive quarters of negative economic growth. So they say, "Well, you can't call it a recession because we haven't had six months and we don't have the—" Nonsense. The world is in a recession

right now. The question is, will it become a depression? A depression means economic growth drops below 10%, ten percent negative. The disruption of oil is one thing, and ironically, in that disruption of oil, Iran has benefited.

You know, they went from—Trita Parsi, I forget whose show he was on—but he was explaining that prior to the war, Iran was pumping 1.1 million barrels of oil, selling it at \$47. Now they're doing 1.5 million and selling it at \$97, so more than double the price. The disruption of liquefied natural gas is significant—it's really affecting Asia. Several countries have declared states of emergency, and they've stopped frying food because the fuel for cooking comes from liquefied natural gas. Then you've got the fertilizer issue. With more than a third of the world's fertilizer sourced from the urea that comes out of the petrochemicals there in the Persian Gulf, that's gone. So we're not going to see the full effect of that for about six to eight months, because right now is the planting season.

And if the crops aren't getting properly planted with fertilizer, they're not going to grow. That means when it comes time for harvest, you're not harvesting much. So we're looking at a global food shortage. And with that comes the potential for famine or starvation in certain countries. I mean, that's not just some distant problem—it could affect us too. We don't yet know the full ramifications of that. Then there's the helium. It turns out—who knew?—that the Persian Gulf is also a major source of helium, which is essential for producing computer chips. So now those chips aren't being produced because they don't have the helium. And if those aren't produced, then the computers, cell phones, Tomahawk missiles, and everything else that depends on those chips aren't available.

And then the sulfuric acid— I mean, it just keeps going on. And it's not opening up. Even if somehow, magically, things turned around in a day or two, getting the oil and liquefied natural gas flowing again, getting the urea flowing again—it's going to take time. So this is having an economic impact on the world, particularly here in the United States. We're not, you know, we're not really paying attention to it yet. Starting to, but not fully comprehending it. So, you know, King talking about all this—this is reminiscent of McNamara during the Vietnam War, where they'd come out and say, "We killed X number of Viet Cong today." And all that turned out to be a lie too. So, you know, things haven't changed.

#Lawrence

And in addition, Nima, to what Larry's talking about—which is all the practical side of it, and it's not looking too good at all, as he's just demonstrated—I saw yesterday that we're up to 3,500 stranded ships sitting off the Strait of Hormuz right now with no place to go. This is the other side of it. And guess who summed this up? I'm going to read this because it's priceless—from our chief. He's at the emergency meeting of the U.N., called because of our attack on that school. And he says—and I'm paraphrasing, but these are the bullet points—two bullying nuclear weapons regimes have attacked a non-weapon regime. Second time. Second time they've torpedoed diplomacy. They are normalizing the crimes against humanity, which started with a vengeance—guess where?

In Palestine, at the hands of Bibi Netanyahu—and as John Mearsheimer is increasingly pointing out—probably on the pretext that most of the people killed on October 7th were killed by Israelis, not by Hamas. Twenty-seven days of illegal war, Arachi continues. No regard for humanitarian law whatsoever. Six hundred schools, hospitals, nursing homes, ambulances—stationary and on the move—water sources, food sources, all war crimes. All a product of the world ignoring Palestine, bringing it back to the genocide that has almost been buried now. But we have resolve, he ends up. We have resolve. I believe he does, and I believe his country does. We are becoming not only stalled at sea, as it were, as Larry pointed out, with grievous ramifications economically for not just us but for the world—we are also becoming the most hated nation on the face of the earth, next only to Israel.

#Nima

Larry, it seems the situation with the invasion of Iran—the invasion of Iranian islands in the Persian Gulf—is getting serious. What would the escalation be on the part of the United States and Israel? I think the next step could be an invasion of these islands. Many people are arguing about which one—are they going to invade several islands in the Persian Gulf, or just one? And here's one of them that's especially interesting in terms of strategy. This island is called Larak Island.

Larak, it comes here. You see, the route of the tankers comes from here and goes close to the island—Qeshm Island. Between Qeshm Island and Larak, you know, it passes through here. If they take this island, it could cause some sort of problem. And the other one—you go up here, what they're talking about—this island here, Kharg, which is farther away from the Strait of Hormuz. What's your understanding, Larry, of the strategy they're pursuing right now?

#Larry

What was that word you used? Strategy? Boy, you're an optimist. Look, let's start with what we know. Last week it was published on a site called Open Source Intelligence Defender on X, and that source was reporting on another one called the Intel Frog. The Intel Frog detailed that since March 12th, there have been C-17 flights—about 35 of them, with 11 more to go. So when I started looking at the bases, you realize this is a special operations mission they're launching, because they're out of Joint Base Lewis-McChord. That's the 75th Ranger 2nd Battalion, I believe.

Hunter Army Airfield. Task Force 160 has an element of that regiment deployed there, plus the 75th Rangers, 1st Battalion. Now, understand that the 75th Rangers, within the world of special operations, are what they call a Tier 2 unit. They provide support to Delta Force and SEAL Team 6. And in, you know, the 23 years I was doing exercises, we always joked that every exercise had to include an airfield the Rangers could seize. You know, that's one of the things they do—they go seize an airfield. The other flights—we're talking not just one or two C-17s, but multiple flights for each of these bases.

Oceana Naval Station, Virginia. Who's there? SEAL Team 6, as well as the East Coast SEALs. Pope Army Airfield—that's Delta Force, 82nd Battalion, the 82nd Airborne, excuse me. Fort Campbell, Kentucky, headquarters of Task Force 160, the Night Stalkers. So it was clear there was this movement. Now, there are only two possibilities when you see that kind of movement: it's an exercise, or they're going into battle. And based on things I've heard—I've got another friend who's buddies with somebody at Delta—Delta is saying, "They're sending us on a suicide mission."

So they're really going to send—now, Trump initially announced that five-day thing last Monday. When I heard him say that, I thought, okay, that means Friday, today or tomorrow, we're going to start the shoot. And originally, that's what it looked like. Let me make one other point. Remember, that air movement started on March 12th. On March 13th, they launched the first MEU—the 31st MEU—out of Okinawa. I said, okay, you head there. So this tells me this is planned. You don't start something on March 12th or 13th as just an immediate "oh my God, we've got a problem we've got to solve." No, this is planned out.

The deployment of the 11th MEU—they're about a week behind, maybe a week to ten days—which now explains why, I think, yesterday Trump announced, "Okay, we're going to give them until April 6th or 7th." That's next week, and that's when that other MEU will be in the area. So the intent of Trump's team is that they're going to launch a ground operation. Now, on Qeshm Island, my understanding is that there's one of those underground missile cities there, so they would specifically task either Delta Force or SEAL Team 6 with attacking and capturing that site. They're assuming that Iran doesn't have any defenses in place. I think that's a very foolish assumption—and actually, I don't think Delta or SEAL Team 6 would assume that.

So you're going to look at a battle where, if they capture that missile city, okay, they've got that. But that still doesn't open the Strait of Hormuz. And if you put military forces on any of those islands, that doesn't open the Strait of Hormuz either, because Iran can still start deploying more mines into the waters—and they've said they would. They said they'd flood the Gulf with mines, not just in the Strait. They've got underwater drones, submarines with torpedoes, and then missiles and drones above ground. So if you're going to open the Strait, the mission has got to be: we've got to shut down all of Iran's offensive capabilities. And just putting guys on those islands isn't going to do that.

#Lawrence

And further, Nima, I've heard so many "experts"—I'll put that in quotation marks—over the last 48 hours down at William & Mary. I heard a number of them talking about the Strait and the geography of the Strait. Man, I've been there, done that. I was doing some of the planning around Earnest Will and Praying Mantis at Pacific Command. They've got it wrong. One person said, "Well, the average depth of the Strait is so deep that you couldn't do much to it." The average depth of the Strait is 50 meters. Now, that's pretty deep—that allows you to sink a supertanker, for example, and probably not have impediments—but it's not all that deep.

And one of the things we were worried about was several ships being sunk and blocking that. And, oh, by the way, the North Channel—I think the north goes on the right side if you're looking north, and the south goes on the left side. They're different channels, and they're slightly different in terms of salinity, current, and other things that impact passage through the Strait. But this is not an easy Strait to open if somebody is intent on keeping it closed, as we learned in 1988. And they're talking about it as if it were, you know, as Larry was saying—you just do this, you do that, you get this, and you get that, and you can keep them from blocking the Strait.

Au contraire. It's awfully easy to block that Strait, and I'm sure Iran has given it detailed study since their efforts in 1988. In fact, I'd say they're probably leagues ahead, as Larry was pointing out, with weaponry, methodologies, and such. It just doesn't take much. And as Larry mentioned before, to scare the world to death—and insurers and shippers alike—all you've got to do is get one. That's all you have to do. And then it takes a long time before any navy can convince people that, hey, you can sail again.

#Larry

Yeah, and let's recall that what happened in 1988 was all in the context of the Iraq-Iran War, which the United States helped provoke and sustain. Remember, the United States was not just providing the chemical precursors to Iraq to manufacture chemical weapons, but also providing intelligence. I know then-Colonel Patrick Lang—Pat Lang—who set up the Arabic program at West Point and later was the senior defense intelligence officer for the Middle East. He was the one hand-carrying the intelligence to Iraq to help Iraq defeat Iran.

And so when Iran started mining the Strait then—this shows you how things have changed in almost forty years—we had a barge off the coast of Bahrain. It was called the Hercules Barge. It was an oil platform, but it was taken over by Navy SEALs. The SEAL who commanded that is a friend of mine; he was a commander at the time. They had Little Birds, their own gunboats, and they had several clashes with Iran. But at the time, Iran wasn't attacking with drones, Iran wasn't attacking with missiles. So Iran was really in the early, early days of its military capability. Whole different ballgame today—completely different.

#Lawrence

They set up on a couple of derricks, as I recall, and we wiped them out there because they were just exposed on those derricks. Yeah. It won't be like that this time around, I guarantee you.

#Nima

I think we had a French general—you know, he's talking to the French media—saying in French that they ran simulations with the United States a few months before all this happened. He says those simulations showed total destruction—that the entire Navy would be wiped out if they went in that

direction. That was the outcome of the simulations. And he says there's no viable option, because the United States, in his view, studied this together with the French. He also mentions that Iran has a lot of information and intelligence in that region, so they have the upper hand. So if that's the case, Colonel, what is Donald Trump trying to do?

#Lawrence

Well, just to pick up on your theme there—Millennium Challenge, I think that was the name of the game in '02 or '03 that Lieutenant General Van Riper conducted. He was my old boss at the Marine Corps Development and Education Command. He ran that simulation, and we lost. He was told to run it again because we didn't like the fact that we lost. I just met with him not too long ago down in Williamsburg—he lives there—still chipper at 88, a fitness nut, and his brain's still sharp as ever. He kind of gave me the same impression again, only worse, because Iran, as Larry said, hasn't sat still. They certainly haven't sat still when it comes to new technology and watching what that technology does—and doesn't do—in Ukraine. And that's another factor coming into play now.

Zelensky's selling to both sides, trying to resurrect some of his own standing, and courting both—the way I'm told—he's courting the Iranians, in terms of giving them more drones and advice, and the Arabs in terms of the same thing. So Zelensky's playing both sides of the aisle. All to say that, as Larry indicated, I just don't think this is the same situation it was in 1988. It's quite different—a lot different—and I'm not sure we appreciate that. And that game, even in 2000—I think it was Millennium Challenge, actually conducted in '02, I think—it showed us losing. We lost, just like your Frenchman in the current simulations apparently indicates. We lost. Now, when I say "lost," I mean we basically could not reopen the Strait. And that's a loss—a huge loss—because you've really jammed up the world's shipping.

#Larry

Yeah, as long as Iran can retain the ability to launch a missile or two—or drones—at any ship going through the Strait, unless those ships are equipped with some magical new technology that prevents them from being hit by drones or missiles, that strait's going to stay closed. And reportedly, the Gulf Arabs are pressing the United States—"Oh, you've got to do something, you've got to get an agreement that limits Iran's ability to use missiles and drones." Well, the only way that's going to happen is if you fully invade Iran, conquer it, and then put your own puppets in place. That ain't happening.

The United States can't—it would bankrupt the country to try to do it. I mean, apart from the logistical challenge of mobilizing a three-million-man army, minimum, how the hell are you going to transport them over there? We don't have the merchant marine fleet to do that. And once you get them there, where are they going to disembark? Are you going to put them at some base in Saudi

Arabia, where they'd be a ripe target for Iran? I mean, this military fantasy that we can force Iran to bend to our will—no. Look, I can tell you, something's going to happen in the next four weeks. Why do I say that?

I was supposed to go to Russia with the International Unity Club, and they coordinate with the Kremlin because we were going to meet with senior Russian officials and have a number of discussions. In fact, Pepe Escobar was going to be involved in that as well. We were both notified yesterday that it's been canceled—and it's canceled because of the war in Iran. The word circulating around the Kremlin is that Russia is going to get involved in this. I'm not saying they're going to start fighting, but they're going to get involved more directly to try to bring an end to it—an end that's going to make Iran secure. They're not going to abandon Iran.

Part of the reason Iran and Russia are taking these steps, I believe, is that they're getting a number of these countries coming to beg and plead—"Oh my God, we're suffering, we're dying here, help us." But, you know, I see Russia and China actually collaborating. And it's going to be a collaboration, I think, that ultimately forces the United States out of the Persian Gulf and pushes those former Gulf allies of the United States to come to their senses. Because, you know, the reality is, the only democratically elected government in the Persian Gulf is in Iran, not Saudi Arabia. I mean, these are all family, tribal autocracies. And there we are—that's what we're backing: the autocracies, as opposed to the democracy.

#Lawrence

Which is probably one reason we're hearing from the Gulf that Mohammed bin Salman, for one, is pushing us to continue this war.

#Larry

Yeah.

#Lawrence

Good person that he is. Yemeni that he is.

#Nima

Colonel, here's what General Jim Mattis said about his assessment of the war.

#Speaker 05

What we're seeing is a situation where targetry never makes up for a lack of strategy. And by that I mean, 15,000 targets have been hit. There have been significant military successes, but they're not matched by strategic outcomes. Now, some of the strategic outcomes early on—unconditional

surrender, regime change, “we’re going to dictate who the next supreme leader is”—those were clearly nonsense. Those were delusional.

#Lawrence

Yeah, he’s right on the mark. I’ve heard some other remarks he’s made that were not so salutary, but he’s right on the mark in terms of the lack of genuine strategic objectives—by that I mean accomplishable objectives. And he’s right on the mark about what we said at the very opening of your presentation, or your interview. That is, it doesn’t matter how many bombs you drop, it doesn’t matter how many sorties you fly, it doesn’t matter how many aircraft you put over Iran—and that’s a lie too, in many respects, because they’re firing most of their ordnance from outside Iran. It doesn’t matter if you’re not accomplishing your mission. And here we have two problems.

I don't think there's a mission you could accomplish that would fit Donald Trump's wishes. And there isn't any mission expressed. When's the last time you heard a mission? I've heard everything from regime change to, “Oh, well, we're just going to do a little diplomacy and end their nuclear program.” Then, “Oh, well, we're also going to include the ballistic missiles.” And then, “Oh, well, we're back to regime change.” Meanwhile, you've got the real orchestrator of the death and destruction in Lebanon in particular—but continuing in Gaza every day, continuing in the West Bank every day—not paying attention at all and not giving a damn about what we're doing, as long as we continue to bomb. This is a cacophony of errors.

#Nima

Larry, the war isn’t just fought by the army—it’s also fought with the people of those countries. Right now, we have two countries fighting each other: Israel and Iran. The United States is coming in from the outside. We know about the support for Donald Trump in this war—how is that support diminishing in the United States? But when it comes to Israel and Iran, I don’t know if you saw the video where one of the Israeli mayors just broke down on air, crying about how dire the situation is in Israel. We had two mayors, by the way, talking about this. And the head of the IDF, in his last assessment, said the IDF is on the verge of collapse. That’s what he said. What’s your understanding of what’s going on in that direction?

#Larry

Well, look, we've got two and a half years of Israel failing—and I emphasize the word failure—to defeat Hamas. It’s beyond me how an army of 300,000, which was my understanding of what was activated with reservists, has surrounded an area that’s five miles wide and twenty-five miles long, has virtually destroyed every building above ground, and is still afraid to go in and root out the fighters in the tunnels. That’s the reality. Could an army do it? Yes—and suffer terrible losses in the process. But there’s the key right there: Israel wants to start wars, but it doesn’t want to take the pain. It wants a painless war.

Well, there's no such thing. So then, on top of it, they decided, "Oh, hey, it's great—let's, you know, we've weakened Hezbollah so much that we can now attack into southern Lebanon. We're going to take all that territory just south of the Litani River." And I'll tell you what—Hezbollah is blowing the hell out of the Israelis. I mean, by various reports, it looks like they've knocked out a total of 19 or 20 Merkava tanks over the last two weeks. They ambushed a full column coming in, and again, Hezbollah is fighting very smartly. They hit the middle of the column, which forced it to separate, and then they started picking it off from the rear.

At one point, the Israelis got out and were running for their lives. So, you know, the false story that they had decimated Hezbollah and it was weakened—that they were toast—that's not the case. Hezbollah continues to fight, launching rockets and missiles into northern Israel. They're targeting mainly military bases and installations, but they're causing great harm in Israel. And that's one of the reasons that mayor is crying. Then add to that, oh, they're going to fight Iran now. They don't have unlimited resources. They're entirely, completely dependent on the United States to sustain these combat operations.

The minute the United States pulls the plug, they're toast. And then there's the question: can Israel actually survive as a nation? Because its economy is being savaged by Iran with these missile strikes every day—multiple waves of missiles. Now, some of the Iranian missiles lately—you keep hearing Israel say, "Oh, we intercepted this, we intercepted that." Nonsense. The missiles didn't work. The missiles failed. I guarantee you, if Israel were actually intercepting them, you'd see the videos. They'd be plastered all over the place: "Look at what we're doing, man, we're wiping them out. Israel can't touch us because our air defense system is so good." Well, it's not. It sucks.

#Lawrence

In that regard, I've actually got some pretty good evidence that was given to me at William & Mary that the Iranians are using drones again because they're useful—they don't get shot down. They're using very slow-moving but lethal drones, so they're preserving their more sophisticated missiles for later and using drones to do a lot of damage because there's nothing to shoot them down. And last night, in Hebrew again—translated for me by a friend—Netanyahu said he's calling up 400,000 more reservists.

Where's he going to find these 400,000 more reservists? He just called up 300,000, of which about 30% didn't show up or are, you know, failing to report for duty, if you will. Where's he going to get these other 400,000? Do the numbers on the population of Jews in Israel and figure out where he's going to find these troops. And yet I heard him saying—and granted, it was in Hebrew and had to be translated—that he was going to call up another 400,000, and then he said it was for Lebanon. So Larry's absolutely right: he's got a problem in Lebanon, a big problem. But I don't know where he's going to find these troops.

#Nima

Larry, there's a discussion between Benjamin Netanyahu and the prime minister—I'm not sure who exactly, because there are so many rumors around Netanyahu. But let's put it this way: the head of Mossad and Benjamin Netanyahu are having discussions because the head of Mossad says he told Netanyahu what the outcome of this war would be for the network of covert operations in the southern part of the Persian Gulf. And it seems that whole network was destroyed by the war—they're not there anymore. This is creating a lot of tension between Netanyahu, the head of Mossad, and Putin. What was that? He's talking about the UAE, Bahrain—somewhere in those countries. They were working with the governments, with, I don't know, the American bases in those countries.

#Larry

So was he saying that their intelligence assets—their whole network of intelligence—were gone?

#Nima

He said that Mossad's covert networks in the southern Persian Gulf were destroyed.

#Larry

Okay. Yeah, probably intelligence networks—both people and, as well, they may have had some communication systems, for example. This is the start of the blame game. When you're losing, you've got to find a scapegoat. So, you know, my prediction is—this is an outlier prediction in the United States—but one of the people who's going to be blamed for this war not going right, and for Donald Trump not getting a win, is going to be Tulsi Gabbard. She'll get part of the blame. Hegseth too, probably. But now that Netanyahu's pointing fingers at Mossad because they're saying, "Well, Mossad told us this would be over in a week, and we believed them," okay, they're hanging Mossad out to dry.

#Lawrence

You're going to see them fighting blood fights among the leadership in Israel. It's just inevitable. You fought. You were at fault. You were at fault. You did this. You did that. You're already seeing it with some of the retirees who've come out of the woodwork to say things. But it's going to start with the people who are actually around Netanyahu and others. I don't think Ben-Gvir and Smotrich and people like that will ever go. You'd have to kill them with a silver bullet or a stake through the heart. But there are other Israelis who are really getting worried—really seriously worried. And well, they should be. Well, they should be. If the videos I'm seeing coming out of there now—smuggled out, but nonetheless good videos—are accurate, I have no reason to doubt they aren't. There's everything coming down and nothing going up. I mean, everything is hitting. Everything is hitting.

#Nima

And they're attacking Naftali Bennett as well, because yesterday he had an interview in Hebrew where he said that Netanyahu is losing against Lebanon, against Hezbollah. He lost in Gaza, and he lost against Iran as well. These comments are causing a lot of repercussions in Israel. They're accusing him of being a traitor because we're in the middle of this war and he's making these kinds of comments. But everybody knows who Naftali Bennett is, and when he talks this way, it means something.

#Lawrence

Well, Naftali Bennett is also mad at Netanyahu for allowing what happened in Gaza to happen, because it slowed down the killing considerably. They're still killing every day—there's not a day that goes by that 30 or 40 Palestinians don't die—but it's not the hundreds or thousands that were dying before. So Bennett's angry at him for allowing Trump to do that, for allowing that UN resolution, for allowing the thing to be set up in a way that limits his ability to kill Palestinians. That's what Bennett's angry about. These are the same people, Nima. They just wear different clothes. They're bloodthirsty cretins.

#Nima

Larry, Axios reported that the Vice President of the United States, J.D. Vance, had a difficult call with the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, on Monday. He said that Israel's assessments for toppling the Iranian regime were not realistic enough—that they were too optimistic. And it seems that not only in Israel, where the blame game is going on, but also in the United States, they're trying to manage the fallout. Yesterday you saw cabinet members meeting, everyone trying to defend Donald Trump. Even J.D. Vance mentioned that if we weren't attacking Iran, they might use those vests—suicide vests with nuclear bombs.

#Larry

Suicide vests, yeah. I mean, it shows his ignorance of history—the fact that 90% of the suicide bombers are Sunni, not Shia.

#Lawrence

Yeah.

#Larry

I mean, it's not—the groups that carry those out are, I mean, outside of the Sunni radicals, the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka. They used to be heavily into that too. But not Iran. Iran's not—they're not a suicide-bomber kind of country.

#Lawrence

Now, if you want to see a Gulf-based sponsor of terrorism in a state configuration, look at Riyadh. Yeah.

#Nima

Larry, Donald Trump was talking about a big gift from the Iranians, and he finally revealed that gift yesterday. Here's what he said.

#Speaker 06

He revealed the present: "You can do anything you want," they said, "to show you that we're real and solid and we're there. We're going to let you have eight boats of oil—eight boats, eight big boats of oil." This was two days ago, and they were supposed to sail up tomorrow. That was three days ago, and I didn't think much about it. Then I watched the news, and they said something unusual was happening—there were eight boats going right up the middle of the Strait of Hormuz. And I said, "Well, I guess we're dealing with the right people." Then they actually apologized for something they'd said and told us they were going to send two more boats. So it ended up being ten boats. Yeah.

#Larry

You know, what a buffoon. Because, okay, I'll just send those boats with oil and sell them at \$97 a barrel. That money's going into Iran's pocket. What a gift. What a gift. And Trump—Trump's trying to put the shine on that. All he's doing is helping. You know, two months ago, starting on December 28th, we crashed the economy. Scott Besson bragged about it. Yeah, we did that. We devalued, we forced the bank to collapse. Man, we're filling that bank up with money now. So, you know, the Iranians go, "Hey, these Americans—what are you gonna do?" Because the United States has a history of just flat-out ignorance in interacting with this region.

Because remember, when we took out Saddam Hussein, that ended up empowering Iran. The two major Shia groups—I'm not talking about the one headed by Muqtada al-Sadr, or "Muki," as I used to call him—but the other, the Dawa and the other group, they were closely aligned with Iran. They ended up running the government. They even fought alongside U.S. troops against al-Qaeda and

ISIS. So, here's Trump once again—that's his gift. I don't know, did you see the cartoon I got from somebody? It showed the gift that was given to Donald Trump: a giant golden middle finger. He unwraps the box and looks up at it. That was the gift from Iran.

#Lawrence

Another thing about that cabinet meeting yesterday, Nima, I have no way of checking the value or the truth or accuracy of this, but it just rings true to me. If you go back and listen to Witkoff's presentation as a special envoy, there was nothing in there about the money he and Jared Kushner made in terms of, oh yeah, that's neat, in terms of contracts. But I'm told they have not met directly with a single member of the Iranian government during this entire negotiating process. Not a single one. It's all been through the good offices of Pakistan or Oman or someone else. They haven't talked to anyone. And yet he talked as if he had presented that deal and it had been completely refused. And you needed a jar of Vaseline beside every seat, if you get my drift. I've never seen such a group of sycophants pretending to be a cabinet.

#Larry

Yeah, it's just sickening.

#Nima

Larry, the UAE wants to make some sort of coalition with the United States over these islands in the Persian Gulf that belong—or they claim belong—to Iran. They say these are UAE islands. But they're talking about forming a coalition in the Gulf, around those islands, to manage the situation with the Strait of Hormuz. And they're not even that close to the Strait of Hormuz. That's why I found it so inaccurate when you talked about it. But what are the actual capabilities of the UAE? Because it seems to me their ego is writing a check their body can't cash.

#Lawrence

Little Sparta. Little Sparta.

#Larry

That's their name. None of these countries—neither the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, nor the Saudis—have any real military capability. I mean, look at the Saudis. They fought a ten-year war with the Houthis, and how'd that go? They lost. So, you know, these guys are indulging a fantasy. The UAE is in a serious, serious economic crisis right now. When you consider that about 25% of their income comes from oil exports—well, that's going down, so take 25% off the table. Then

another 20% or so of their income was generated through trade that went through Jebel Ali, the free trade port, the free trade zone. It's one of the largest, maybe the second largest, in the world. Well, that's shut down because there are no ships coming in or out with goods to trade.

Um, what about the financial district? You know, they were big—they became a major center for handling money and finance. The people running those offices, they bugged out. They've gone back to New York, or to London, or to Switzerland, but they're not hanging out in Dubai anymore. The construction industry—those brand-new, glowing condos—and the real estate market, you had all these foreigners coming in, thinking about buying a place in Dubai. They're not buying. The airplanes arriving in Dubai from outside are empty, and when they fly out, they're full. So Dubai could literally cease to exist as we know it. If this goes on for another six months, the United Arab Emirates will just implode, because there's no there there.

#Nima

Colonel, the head of the Iranian parliament said that if the invasion happens, it would be the end of the UAE. He didn't mention the UAE by name, but he said one of the Arab states in the Persian Gulf that's cooperating with the United States in the invasion. They have a list of targets—five or six of them—and he said they're going to destroy all of them. And...

#Lawrence

All they'd have to do, Nima, is—when we did the simulation in Beijing in 2009—we took down Ras Tanura, which at that time was the leading Saudi export port. It was about eight million barrels a day coming out of there. There's another one now—I forget the name—but it's putting out even more than that. And, of course, Iraq has gotten to the point now where they're producing almost as much as the main Saudi port. So when we did that, oil—West Texas WTI and Brent crude—went above 150 within ten hours, and within the day it was above 200. You do that sort of thing, you eliminate that kind of capacity, and you've got, as Larry was saying earlier, a tremendously deep and more profound global economic problem. And you're not going to restore it anytime soon. So Iran still has some arrows in its quiver that would be deadly against some of these other states. As Larry was indicating, they're just petro-states—that's all they are. You take that away from them, they disappear.

#Nima

Yeah, and I'm trying to bring up the list of targets that the Iranian media somehow published. One of them is Jebel Ali—it handles about 15% of the gas going out of the Gulf. And then there's Barakah. They've got a list of these targets in the UAE.

#Lawrence

They're probably taking out the pipeline head too. I'd imagine the one the Saudis finally ran over toward Jeddah, to empty into the Red Sea instead of the Persian Gulf.

#Nima

Here's the list of targets they mentioned. It includes about 50% of the gas facilities, the nuclear plant they have, and all the major gas and energy production sites. It's all about energy and gas production.

#Lawrence

Nima, I've got to run. Ted Postol won't forgive me if I don't get this out. He talked to me for about 45 minutes down at William & Mary the other night. He thinks—and he gave me enough credibility to believe he might be at least 60%, 70%, maybe 80% right—that the Iranians have underground capability to build a nuclear weapon, and that they are doing it. And at some point, they're going to hook that up with a warhead and a hypersonic missile, and they're going to say, "We've got it, and we can shoot it. Would you like a demonstration?" or whatever. That adds a new dimension to this. And if he's right, and they do have that, and it's pretty much sacrosanct because it's so deeply underground—much the way the Koreans did when they surprised the hell out of us with not one but two nuclear tests—that changes the game completely. So I just wanted to get that out because I promised Ted I would.

#Nima

Larry, there are a lot of discussions in Iran about the NPT. What does the NPT even mean anymore? What will Iran's policy be as time goes on with its nuclear program? And considering all of that, you see the head of the IAEA, Grossi, saying the only solution to the Iranian nuclear program is to nuke them. Here's what he said.

#Speaker 07

We still need to find a framework—a good framework—that gives us the necessary visibility and a clear sense of where they are and where they want to go.

#Speaker 08

Because this war will not destroy Iran's nuclear ambitions or capabilities.

#Speaker 07

I would say any war—any war—unless it were a nuclear war and you went for destruction in an unfathomable way, which we hope, of course, will not happen.

#Nima

This was, you know, making a huge sort of influence in Iran, and everybody's talking about it. They're calling him a Mossad or CIA agent and saying this guy is—well, I think, Larry, we're finally going to witness a huge shift, as the Colonel just mentioned, in the Iranian nuclear program. They're considering all these options because, you know, when the head of the IAEA talks this way, that's hugely problematic.

#Larry

Yeah, yeah. Col. Wilkerson, do you need to bail?

#Lawrence

I'm going to bail right now, if you don't mind.

#Larry

Yeah, yeah, yeah. See you later, my friend. Take care. See you, Larry. Yeah, so, you know, what we're dealing with here is actually—I think it is—the end of the international order that was erected in the aftermath of World War II. I'm not just talking about the Bretton Woods economic system; I mean, that's coming apart at the seams. But it's also this whole concept of international law that Donald Trump clearly rejected. His entire administration rejected international law, and in doing so, they abandoned it. It's now about who's biggest, who's strongest, and who's got the most bullets behind them. So we're likely to go through some period of great—beyond what we're seeing right now—an escalating war.

And it will be out of that war that a new system will be created. The United Nations—it's done. It's irrelevant. The United Nations is no longer relevant. It's become what the League of Nations was. Remember, the League of Nations continued to operate during the 1930s, and they didn't finally close it down until after World War II, when the United Nations was put into place. They still had a headquarters in Switzerland and were pretending to be relevant—but they weren't. They're no longer relevant. And so this whole issue with the Non-Proliferation Treaty—the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty—yeah, that used to carry some weight. But we've seen, as Col. Wilkerson quoted Arachi saying, you know, two nuclear powers attacked a country that didn't have nuclear weapons.

And so now, you know, this failure to abide by international law—or even basic human decency—has created a situation where, I think, Iran may have decided it has no alternative but to develop a nuclear weapon. That's the only thing that's going to absolutely defend them from these kinds of attacks going forward. Because if Israel knows that Iran can launch a hypersonic missile carrying a

nuclear warhead, Israel will cease to exist—excuse me, I mean Israel, not Iran. But Iran's already under that threat. One nuke, two nukes from Israel aren't going to make Iran cease to exist. Iran's too big; Israel's too small.

#Nima

Yesterday, Larry, here's what Donald Trump said when he was asked whether the United States is going to leave those Arab states in the Persian Gulf. Here's what he said.

#Speaker 09

There are some reports that Gulf allies are concerned about ending the war too soon, potentially leaving Iran in a stronger position.

#Speaker 06

Well, they'd probably like us to stay. But if we don't stay—look, the beautiful thing about airplanes that go 2,000 miles an hour is you can get back there very quickly. If we don't stay, we're still going to be protecting them. We know they've been very good—hey, Qatar, Saudi Arabia in particular.

#Larry

Two thousand miles per hour—an airplane traveling at two thousand. I think that's like the space shuttle. Okay, that's not a planet.

#Nima

Oh my God. There was an article in the New York Times about fighting remotely. What is that? What is this concept, Larry? It seems the situation with the USS Gerald Ford aircraft carrier is serious. They're saying the carrier can't get back to the fight. And when you want to go ahead with an invasion and your aircraft carrier is far away—like the Abraham Lincoln is far from the Iranian coast—who's going to support that operation?

#Larry

Well, the traditional concept of invading a country from the sea means you use the—I forget if it's called the LPD or the LHD. The Marine Corps has two different ships. One of them has, in the bottom of the ship, amphibious landing craft that they can literally launch by opening the gates at the front of the bow. These landing craft shoot out and carry Marines to shore. The problem with that is the ship has to get close to shore—five miles off, ten miles off—and all of a sudden it's a sitting duck for missiles and drones. So, you know, this is where war has changed because of the technologies involved.

During World War II, we saw the beginnings of the threat to the carrier force with kamikaze pilots, when the Japanese started dive-bombing into them. That was basically a human drone at that point, and it caused a lot of damage and killed a lot of sailors. But we survived that, and Japan ultimately conceded. We're in a whole different world now, where the aircraft carrier—even the destroyers—they're not safe. They're no longer capable of projecting the kind of power that we used to. So now, what do you do? Because the issue is, how are you going to get troops to shore? Either you carry them over the water, you carry them over land, or you drop them from the sky.

And again, dropping them from the sky assumes you can fly over an area that no longer has air defenses. Because those planes have to fly fairly slow just to get people out—you know, to parachute without ripping them apart. Flying at 500 miles an hour creates problems for jumpers. So we're operating on a military model that's no longer relevant to the technology that exists. And I think that's one of the lessons being exposed right now with Iran—its missile force and its drone force basically holding the West at bay.

#Nima

Thank you, Larry, for being with us today. You're in Canada, and your voice is getting dry—I totally understand the dryness of the weather you're feeling right now.

#Larry

No humidity, so I've got a gravelly voice.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Larry

All right, we'll see you on Monday. Stay safe.

#Nima

See you on Monday—yeah, at your headquarters in Florida.

#Larry

Yeah, back to corporate headquarters. Thanks a lot. Bye-bye.