Scott Ritter: US-Israeli Iran Op EXPOSED! Netanyahu's Election Sabotage BACKFIRES

Scott Ritter discusses what he reports as an imminent US combat operation against Iran as Netanyahu's plan to sabotage the Israeli elections taking place October 27th. Desperation has set in as Iran and Russia remake the Middle East and the world order, and Scott breaks it all down in this must-watch show! Scott Ritter is a former US Marine Corps Intelligence Officer and UN Weapons Inspector. Support Scott's work: https://scottritter.substack.com/ PATREON.COM/DANNYHAIPHONG Support the channel in other ways: https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhai... Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: $Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: https://paypal.me/spiritofho Follow me on Telegram: https://t.me/dannyhaiphong #iranwar #trump #israel

#Danny

Welcome back to the show, everyone. As you can see, I'm joined by Scott Ritter, former U.N. weapons inspector, U.S. Marine Corps intelligence officer, and current geopolitical analyst, journalist, and author, to go over the latest developments. Well, Scott, I know you've written recently in Energy Intelligence about this U.S.-Israeli push for renewed kinetic war with Iran. New details have emerged about Netanyahu himself. As Israeli elections are going on right now, a source has been telling Israeli media that Netanyahu has been making a big push to restart strikes against Iran, but not a full-scale or large-scale offensive.

And that might have to do with the fact that, according to The New York Times, Netanyahu's push for an attack has been rejected by the chief of staff, Eyal Zamir, who's concerned that Netanyahu is pushing for this action for personal and political reasons. But The Times of Israel says that after months of threats, it seems that Trump and the United States are inevitably going to resume the war, likely after the midterm elections. Now, you wrote this article, Scott, "U.S.-Iran: The Prospects for Peace Are Dim." And you wrote at the end here that the implication right now is that the U.S., perhaps with Israel, will once again make regime change its top priority.

The mechanism for achieving this will be attacks that seek to collapse the Iranian economy while simultaneously targeting leadership, with regime change via negotiated accommodation back on the table. The timeline for such strikes is no longer driven by artificial timelines, meaning the U.S. could begin bombing at any moment, regardless of midterm elections. So, Scott, what is going on here right now? Benjamin Netanyahu is freaking out all over social media—and I can pull that up in a little bit—about the Palestinian and the so-called Arab voters turning out in record numbers. There's a lot of pandemonium about the elections themselves, but what's going on right now, and how do the elections relate to the war?

#Scott Ritter

I mean, we need to, I guess, hit reverse and recognize that the war with Iran was the endgame of a broader strategy on the part of Benjamin Netanyahu to lure the United States into a trap. You know, the United States has rejected, over the course of many years and several administrations, efforts by the Israeli government to get the United States military to join in a joint strike operation against Iran. This has always been, you know, the Israeli goal and objective. And they've pushed for this. There have been joint training exercises for this. But when it came time to pull the trigger, all American presidents before Trump's current administration, including Donald Trump in his first administration, said no. And so the trap was set, actually, on October 7th, 2023, when

#Scott Ritter

Benjamin Netanyahu had received very specific and explicit warnings from multiple sources, including his own intelligence, that Hamas was getting ready to launch an attack. You know, you had regional neighbors come in and warn him as well. He opted to ignore these and allow the attack to take place. And then, once the attack took place, he greenlit the Hannibal Directive, which empowered the Israeli military to slaughter Israeli citizens for the purpose—the singular purpose—of bumping up the death toll. And then one of these, you know, typical Israeli propaganda campaigns kicked in: beheaded babies and rapes that never happened. You know, trying to say Hamas is the worst thing in the world, justifying the Israeli action.

And then the Israelis went into Gaza knowing, I mean, the military assault was doomed to fail. There was nothing about this assault that was going to succeed militarily because it couldn't succeed militarily. It was designed to create the impression that Israel was under attack, that it would justify, you know, genocidal policies against the Palestinians, Hamas in particular, and then create the conditions for Israel to expand the conflict. Netanyahu, you know, simply used the Hamas attack as a mechanism for creating a broader war against Iran, starting with, you know, Hamas, moving on to Hezbollah, and then, you know, Yemen, the Houthis, Syria, and then the big game was, you know, Iran.

So, you know, this is Netanyahu's legacy. He has failed in Iran. It didn't work, and that failure has hurt him politically. And so he has to be seen as a man who is capable of finishing the job. And that's the position he's trying to take right now: “You must keep me in as your prime minister so I can finish this job.” You know, he has been grossly exaggerating the Iranian threat for decades now. I think he was called out by his opponent on Israeli TV, who said that, you know, he's just making stuff up, which he is. There is no Iranian bomb. There is no Iranian bomb program. Everybody knows this.

And yet he continues to articulate that Iran is a threat because of its weapons program. And he got, you know, President Trump to buy into it. Trump's trapped in this, you know, rhetorical maze that

has been created. But, you know, that's where we're at right now. Netanyahu and Trump have boxed themselves into a corner, and they don't have an off-ramp. And so the only option they have is to fight. You know, Netanyahu, if you remember the phone conversation he had with Trump, he said, "We're going to finish the job." And "finish the job" means regime change. That's the job.

The job is regime change. And so that means that they're going to target the leadership. Now, you know, will they be successful? I give them a better than 50 percent chance of being successful. You know, it's just the nature of the successful penetration of Iran by Israeli and U.S. intelligence when it comes to leadership targets. But killing the new supreme leader, Ali Khamenei's son, doesn't change the fact that Iran will simply appoint a new one. That's what their constitution requires, and Iran is a constitutional republic that operates in accordance with the rule of law, unlike, say, the other constitutional republic in the mix, the United States, where a president does whatever the hell he wants regardless of what the Constitution says.

But their next bet—and I think this is where most of the money is going—is economic collapse. There's a big narrative being pushed right now by Scott Bessent and the Commerce Secretary, whose name I can't remember right now, that Iran's economy is on the cusp of absolute failure, collapse; that they have no money, they've been denied income from oil sales, et cetera, et cetera. And if we could just strike their, you know, economic centers, including energy targets, that'll just cause the whole system to collapse, and that'll be the end of the regime as well. The problem is that Iran, if their energy targets are struck, will, of course, reach out and strike Israel.

And we see what happened in Saudi Arabia when Ansar Allah, the Houthis, started striking energy targets. I mean, it's going to be the end of Saudi Arabia. Mohammed bin Salman's in a lot of trouble right now. And imagine if the Houthis could expand their attacks on Saudi infrastructure tenfold. You know, the collapse would be immediate. Well, Iran can expand the damage done tenfold or even more and apply the same level of destructive pressure on Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and other Gulf Arab states. So that's 23% of the world's energy supplies right now. They're going to go up in flames, which means there's going to be economic collapse in Europe, Asia, and the United States. What Trump and Netanyahu seem to be betting on is what I call the race to the bottom.

Who's going to hit bottom first? And Scott Bessent is convinced that Iran will hit bottom first. That means that Iran will bottom out, the regime will collapse, and the United States can then reverse, you know, the damage that's been done and, you know, restore confidence in global energy markets and move forward. I think that they've miscalculated. I think our economy is far more vulnerable to recession, to energy depletion, than Iran's. They operate with a 60% gray economy right now anyway, meaning we have no idea how it works. How can you make assessments like Bessent and the Commerce Secretary are doing when you have incomplete data about economic reality? So I think that's where we're at right now.

#Danny

Scott, just a quick follow-up question, especially given how this war has taken shape since February, even since the 12-day war. You have the U.S. and Israel. They have been effective at decapitation, even just regionally, but particularly with Iran and Syria. But at the same time, you just said they don't know how the economy works. It also seems like they didn't have a lot of foreknowledge about Iran's capabilities. Why is there a gap there, then? Because, you know, given that I'm not an intelligence expert, I don't understand that gap. What do you think explains that, if you know?

#Scott Ritter

Well, I mean, you know, I have been unplugged from the system for some time now, so I can't speak directly to what's going on. What I can say is there was a time, many years ago, when the intelligence community of the United States was run by professionals, and we bent over backwards to make sure that our assessments were apolitical, meaning totally unbiased. Just the facts, ma'am. You know, our job wasn't to tell our bosses what they wanted to hear. It was to tell them what the facts were, and then they would get to make a policy decision based on that. And we were assisted in this by having redundancy in the system. For instance, if there was a photograph taken of a specific position, a place in the world, we had an agency, the NPIC, in the Washington Navy Yard, that would look at it.

But the CIA had their own analysts in the Office of Imagery Assessment who could look at it. The Air Force had guys up in FTD at Wright-Patterson, and the Army down in Huntsville. So you had a whole bunch of redundancy built into the system. And the beauty of it was that, you know, everybody would see something different, come together, and then you'd get a consensus that was very close to, you know, what the truth would be. And it was the same thing for all elements. You know, if you got an intercepted conversation, you'd have people listening to it. People's brains work differently, and they approach problems differently. And so somebody could hear something and say, "I think it's this." But another person would say, "Hey, you missed this," or, you know, "There's something missing."

But over here, I got it. See, we put it together. Now you get a bigger, broader picture. And we would get good intelligence. The CIA was actually, back then, fairly good at human penetration. So we had assets on the inside who were reporting back, too. So we had the broad spectrum of intelligence data coming in. The thing people need to understand about intelligence is that an intercepted conversation is not intelligence. That's raw information. A photograph is not intelligence. That's raw information. A human report is not intelligence. That's raw information. Intelligence is when you take the raw information, process it, and assess it. The first thing you do is look at a piece of information and determine, you know, what's the veracity of it? What's the quality of the source?

You know, and then, what's the reporting history behind it? And so you start assigning weight to the different pieces of information, and that allows you to disregard stuff that maybe we shouldn't be listening to, to put more emphasis on something that's probably better verified, and then to go through the process of having informed minds think it through and say, "I think this is what we've

got here." That's intelligence, the finished product. And we were pretty good at producing intelligence back then. We weren't necessarily the best in the world at acting on the intelligence. You know, politicians are politicians.

But after the Cold War ended, we wanted a peace dividend, and so we broke up the intelligence community. We basically got rid of the redundancy, and so now we had single points of analytical work. And then the other thing we did—and this is no kidding—when I was working on the Soviet target, I found something going on in Votkinsk, and I brought it to an analyst. And they said, "Hey, that could be X." Basically, we were looking at maybe a slit antenna on a missile that shouldn't be there. But if they were broadcasting telemetry, it would explain it. Telemetry means there might be a test.

So I go to the imagery analyst who watches the place where they test Soviet missiles to see if there was, you know, a test taking place. Now, this is a guy who sat at the same desk for over 20 years. And so, I mean, if a mouse farted in the fields, he would detect it. I'm exaggerating. But, you know, he knew every vehicle that came in, and he knew the configurations of where people would park. He knew everything that was associated with a test. So he could sit there and see if things were happening. When the Cold War ended, they decided that having a guy sitting at a desk, getting promoted in place, developing tremendous expertise, wasn't efficient.

What we needed to do was start rotating people through this so that we got broader experience. So people would rotate through that seat for six months. I'll tell you, when I was an Iraq inspector, I would come back from Iraq, and we'd have the CIA—the new CIA—come in with their briefers. And they'd put up a photograph of the place I was just at. They'd say, "Well, over here we have suspicious crane activity." "Why is it suspicious?" "Well, you see, it's here, and we see them moving concrete here, and they're repairing this building here. So we think that they're installing new equipment or something." I said, "Did you read the inspection report?" "Oh, no. What inspection report?" I said, "I just came from that place."

"There's nothing suspicious about that. There was a flood—heavy rains washed out that part. They're putting in a new wall. There's no equipment going in. You guys don't know what you're talking about." That was the problem. They don't know what they're talking about. They're unfamiliar with it. Had they had that 20-year veteran looking at it, he'd say, "Yeah, we have a history of this river flooding here. This isn't the first time the wall's been washed out. We're pretty sure this is just repair work," or something of that nature. And so we now have an intelligence community that's dumber because, again, intelligence is raw information processed. And if you don't have the right people processing it, the quality of the intelligence product is going to diminish.

So across the board, we have a diminished product. Then we overlay that with the politicization of intelligence, meaning that we now have political leaders who aren't content to be briefed. They don't want somebody to give them facts and force them to think. They want people to reinforce their preconceived notions, such as George W. Bush: "Make the intelligence fit the conclusion. We have

concluded that there are weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. That's the conclusion we need to invade and occupy Iraq. So now that we've reached that conclusion, give me the intelligence that backs up that assertion." And so now the intelligence community goes in and cherry-picks. And I'm not making this up.

James Clapper was the head of what used to be the NPIC, the photo interpretation agency. I think they ended up calling it the Geospatial Intelligence Agency. He admits it. He said, "We went through and cherry-picked data so that we could make the claim that there were weapons of mass destruction when, in fact, we knew there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq." The intelligence community became broken. The other thing that happened is, because of the need for politicization, you don't let the system work. I'll give you an example. They needed stuff to come out of Iran. You ask the question, "Why don't we know anything about Iran?" Well, we used to have a network of agents in Iran. And then we had a guy—gosh, what was his name?

#Danny

Steve Rupp.

#Scott Ritter

Steve Richter, I think he was the head of Near East operations in the CIA. He and I bumped heads over Iraq because he's a piece of shit who lied and everything. He's a horrible human being, by the way. I don't know if he's still alive or not. But Steve, if you're out there, fuck you. He's the guy who was running human operations in Iran. And he was told, "You've got to get more reporting out of here." All right. Now, a normal case officer would say, "Okay, how do we do this in a way that protects our resources, our assets?" Not Steve Richter. Steve Richter said, "Triple the reporting, period. Get it out there."

And the way the human agents would do it was, you know, through covert communications. But back then, they were using mail. That's an old intelligence technique: mail it to an address in Munich. Now, if you've got, you know, one or two letters going out every month to Munich, it's not a big deal. Because, you know, the Iranians have counterintelligence guys who sit there just looking at everything, seeing, you know, where the spikes are. If there's a spike, you investigate. But with the mail, it's normal: one or two letters going to Munich. Not a big deal. Not monitored. You get it out. It's secret writing, by the way.

So if they open the letter, it's, you know, "Dear Susie, thank you very much for the gift of whatever." You know, they're looking at this: "There's nothing here. One letter. Send it." Suddenly, there's a flood of mail coming out of Iran to this Munich address where the CIA had their Iranian station. And now the Iranians sit there, pull it out, and process the letter and find the secret writing. And then

they unravel the whole network. And we lost everybody, thanks to Steve frickin' Richter, because he's just a stupid idiot who wasn't very good at what he was doing, apparently. He wasn't good in Iraq. He wasn't good in Iran. Ran the whole thing into the ground.

Then later on, when we managed to rebuild a network, we were using Gmail for covert communications. And I think it was the Iranians who figured it out, and then they reported it to the Russians and the Chinese. The Chinese took the Iranian Gmail tip and rolled up the entire CIA network in China. By the time the Russians took action on it, I think the CIA had removed some of their assets, and the Russians weren't able to do a full housecleaning. But this is the thing: we don't have any intelligence right now. And then here's the last part of it. Again, information assessed becomes intelligence. You want the person doing the assessment to be an actual expert on the issue.

Because when you look at information, if you're not an expert, what the hell do you know about what's going on? We don't have quality people anymore because of politics. You see, back in the day, back in the old Russia days, the people who did the assessments actually spoke Russian. They were in Russia. They knew Russian culture. They knew every nuance of Russian society, which means they sort of got close to it. The reason why I like John le Carré's book, Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy, and then the series, is that it actually captures perfectly what the analytical business is. But the lady who was the head of the Russian research desk, you know, she was accused of being too close to the Russians.

And so they took her out. But she was too close because she knew everything about them. So when there was a little hiccup, she'd say, "Oh, no, no, no, that's not how it operates. There's something else going on here." Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. You used to have people that close. But the problem when you have people that close is they actually tell the truth. They know what's going on. And then they start challenging people. Like, let's say you were somebody who maybe ran inspections in Iraq for seven years and knew everything about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. And then when the president says there are weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, you go, "No, Mr. President, there aren't. This is why." Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom.

No, those people become inconvenient. So they get cashiered. You don't want experts when you're doctoring intelligence. And so, instead of getting true experts on Iran, they take these people out of Los Angeles who are loyal to the Shah, and they staff the intelligence business with people who just hate Iran. And these people aren't there to give you intelligence. They're there to give you opinions. They give you opinions about how bad the Iranians are, and they reinforce the thinking of the politicians. And that's where we're at today. We don't have anybody in the CIA, anybody in the CIA, who's a qualified analyst of Iran. We have a bunch of people who don't actually know anything, because you can't get into the agency today and get promoted if you actually know something.

I'll give you an example. Let's say Scott Ritter's a lieutenant, a low-level analyst. He comes in and, you know, they give him a problem. I'll give you an example from my own history: the INF Treaty. The DIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, is part of the Department of Defense, which needs

billions of dollars for the Strategic Defense Initiative and programs to counter Soviet missiles. When I say "Strategic Defense Initiative," my dog says, "Hey." For all you people out there who don't like my dogs, again, I'm in a great mood today: fuck you. You want to give me a million dollars to build a studio so I can soundproof it? I'll do it. If not, pound sand. They're part of me.

They're part of my house. If you don't like it—Danny, it's your show—but get the fuck out. Or tell Danny never to invite me back. But you go after my dogs, you go after me. That's the end of the world because they're my family. But anyway, back to this. I was in Votkinsk, at a missile factory, making firsthand observations. I did an analysis of the traffic flow through Votkinsk and the missile output and all that, and I came to the conclusion that the Russians could produce, at most, 60 to 80 missiles a year from that factory. But the DIA was saying that the Russians could produce over 200 missiles a year, and they had exaggerated the threat, saying, "The Russians are cheating because they only declared this many."

"We say they have this many. They're cheating. They're lying. We need to kill the treaty." I came in and said, "Actually, no, the maximum production output of the factory is in alignment with what they're declaring." I was a lieutenant. I was brought into DIA to face a brigadier general and a whole bunch of colonels who were pissed at me, telling me that I was operating well above my paycheck. It wasn't the first time I heard that from Biden. Who the hell am I to come up with those numbers on Russia? Don't I know there's a multibillion-dollar budget in here? I have to recant—recant, pull the report, get it out of the system. It's no good. And I said, "Hey, I'm not doing that."

And the Marine Corps stuck up for me, and my boss stuck up for me. And they said, "No, it stays." And it turned out to be 100% correct. And, you know, that was it. But today, the system doesn't back you up, because the guys who backed me up back then knew that they were safe because we believed in the old intelligence saying: "If you lie, they die." Meaning, as intelligence officers, we have to tell the truth. That's our job. We can't make things up. We can't pull things. We can't shield things. Today, however, nobody gets promoted if they do this. There's not a single brave soul, a junior analyst who says, "I insist that this is the truth, and I will not pull this report."

His manager goes, "I guess you're counting ping-pong balls in Alaska now," and off they go, and that's the end of their career, because the mid-level manager knows that if he backs them up, he'll never become a high-level manager. And the high-level manager wants to get the cushy job in retirement. The whole system is corrupt right now. There's no one in the intelligence community capable of telling the truth, because the intelligence community is not geared towards truth-telling. It's geared towards fiction writing. Their job is to write a narrative acceptable to the powers that be. And that's the long answer to your question: Why don't we know what's going on?

Look, I wrote assessments about the Iranian ballistic missile program. I've never been to Iran, but I know missiles. I'm pretty good at missiles. And I can read things, and I know how missiles are produced. I know what the technology is. And I'm able to connect the dots and come up with what I think is a fairly accurate appraisal of the Iranian missile program. And I was pretty accurate about

how good their missiles were. If I wrote that assessment in the intelligence community, I'd be shot down. I would have to say, "Oh, they can't produce as many missiles. Their missiles are inaccurate," et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

#Danny

I mean, it seems like an exercise in futility, and it looks like it's gotten the United States into a big mess, of course. But as reports indicate, the Trump administration, Donald Trump, the oil companies—they have made money. So I guess somebody is benefiting from this catastrophe. But speaking of corruption, Scott, you have Netanyahu now, during this election, literally fearmongering on social media, pleading with what he continuously characterizes as right-wing voters to go out and vote for Likud, fearmongering that these scary Arabs and Palestinians in Israel are going to outvote them.

But it's a fake photo, of course, as it was actually taken in Jerusalem at Al-Aqsa. It has nothing to do with the current elections. And he also hyped up claims that Muslim Brotherhood supporters are raiding polling stations and stealing the elections, showing very dodgy footage of polling sites where brawls broke out. Scott, what does this tell you about the state of Israeli politics as Israel pushes for more war with Iran and, of course, is on a rampage regionally?

#Scott Ritter

Well, I mean, first of all, we know that even prior to October 7th, the Israelis were just programmed to commit genocide against Palestine. What happened after October 7th didn't happen in a vacuum. We know the Israelis have been like that. You remember the videos—I forget what year it was, 2010 or whatever—of the citizens of Ashkelon going out on the hillside, having a picnic as the Israeli military blew up Gaza and killed people. And they're like, "Yay, it's wonderful." The days of Yitzhak Rabin, or the days of a politically viable class of Israelis who empathized with the Palestinians and wanted peace with the Palestinians—people capable of Oslo.

I know it wasn't a perfect accord, but thinking in that direction—those days are long past. Israel is a terminally corrupt society. And so this has nothing to do with the Palestinian issue. In September of 2023, one month before the Hamas attack, hundreds of thousands of Israelis were in the streets condemning Benjamin Netanyahu because he was changing the law. He's a corrupt human being. He's a corrupt person. This man is just a disgusting human being. And I'm not talking about his propensity for genocide. That alone is disqualifying. I'm talking about how he's just corrupt, straight-up corrupt. And so is his wife. And they've been caught. And they're going to go to jail if he loses this election.

The Israeli president at the time, in 2023, said that Israel was on the cusp of a civil war—not civil conflict. It's a civil war, Israeli against Israeli. That's the true nature of Israeli society. And those wounds were just bandaged over after October 7th by the need to come together to take on a

threat. This is the game Netanyahu was playing. But that game's played out. And now the bandage has been ripped off, and you have an Israeli society where people just hate each other. This is what we're seeing. I mean, you know, for all the pro-Israeli people out there, your pathetic little nation is going to devolve into chaos, anarchy, and probably civil war as Israelis start killing Israelis. You know, I'm not hoping for that. I can't say nobody wants that, but, you know.

It'd be nice if problems could be solved without genocide or civil war. But this is the direction Israel's heading. Netanyahu is backed by a lot of people who believe in Greater Israel, and they want to slaughter Palestinians, and they fearmonger. I mean, hell, America's guilty of it too. I mean, how many times do we have to have the Republicans come out and run a Willie Horton commercial? You know, "You freed Willie Horton, and he went out and raped white people." And, you know, "We have to do everything we can to stop those Black people from voting. We can't let the Black people vote because if they vote, Republicans may not win." I mean, you know, the same trend is here.

And so you see Netanyahu playing the racist card. And remember, he's playing to a population. Now, again, I go back in history to 1998 and the Israeli officer responsible for doing the national threat assessment. You know, when I first started working with the Israelis in '94, Iraq was the number one threat. And because of the work we did as weapons inspectors and bringing the WMD programs under control, it was no longer the number one threat. So I asked him, "What's the number one threat? What replaced it?" And what he said was interesting because I was expecting Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas, something like that. He said, "The number one threat is Israel—the right-wing political movement in Israel." Israel had absorbed hundreds of thousands of immigrants from Ukraine and Russia who came to Israel.

These are people who had nothing in common with the Palestinians. They hated the Palestinians. They hated Arabs and were very racist in their attitude. And they basically skewed what had been a political balance in Israel to the right. And so suddenly it wasn't about, "How can we work with the Palestinians to find a peaceful outcome?" It was, "The Palestinians are dogs, animals. Kill them all." And that's what's happened here. You have a certain group of people in Israel right now who just simply aren't going to change. And they want Greater Israel. They believe in killing. They believe in raping Arabs. I mean, this is how sick they are. This is what they want to do. And then you have others who say, "Maybe that's not the direction we want to go." But, you know, there's not going to be any reconciliation here. Israel is a fundamentally divided country.

Let's see what happens in this election. I mean, Netanyahu can pull it out and hang on by a thread, you know? He can survive a couple more years, but he's not going to survive forever. I mean, either cancer is going to get him or he's going to die in prison. But eventually, you know, he won't necessarily be able to hold the majority. You know, Trump is an interesting factor here because if the margin of Netanyahu's loss, if he does lose, is narrow enough, Trump can probably pick up a phone and put pressure on the Israeli president, even though Herzog said he's not going to yield to

this pressure. But you will yield when we pull the plug. And Trump is fully capable of saying, "If you don't give Netanyahu a chance to form a coalition, we pull the aid plug." And that's it. So it's a fascinating election right now.

#Danny

Yeah, well, there are a lot of indications, just in reports and in the way that Donald Trump is behaving in this election. I believe he's the first U.S. president to openly suggest or endorse candidates in Israeli elections, with two Truth Social posts begging Israelis to vote for Netanyahu. And then there are also a lot of rumors, Scott, that after the election is settled, if the numbers stay the same as they've been predicted for many days now, and Netanyahu doesn't have the majority to maintain leadership of a coalition, maybe the United States could launch another strike on Iran in the days after the election. That would then place pressure on the new majority to form a coalition that would keep Benjamin Netanyahu as prime minister. I don't really understand it, honestly. The politics in Israel are a bit strange to me, but nevertheless, this is the situation. Your thoughts about that scenario?

#Scott Ritter

Well, first of all, Israelis today are being asked to vote for a man who stood by and did nothing so Hamas could launch an attack, knowing that Hamas was going to launch an attack, and then ordered the murder of thousands of Israelis. That's Benjamin Netanyahu. They're saying, “Support him.” Do you understand how sick a society has to be to support a man who did this? I mean, Israel is just a fundamentally broken country. You have to be. I mean, psychologically, any nation that embraces genocide with the glee that Israelis have—they're disgusting human beings, not worthy of a nation-state to call their own. So, you know, how can you understand this?

It's like getting into the mind of Hannibal Lecter. You know, Jodie Foster went crazy doing that. So, no, I can't. I just believe that Israel is a terminally ill nation that's not going to be long for this world. I don't know the mechanism of its demise, but, you know, it's got nothing going for it. There's nothing redeeming about Israel at all. It's hard for me to say, okay, what's going on, et cetera. I'm looking at a terminally ill patient. So I'm not going to sit there and pretend that the patient can recover, that they're going to be walking again and healthy. No, they're going to die. That's what's going on with Israel. You're looking at the death throes of a nation-state.

#Danny

And what compels the Trump administration, then? Before we move on to your trip to Brussels, one last comment: What compels Trump to be so enthusiastic about what seems likely to happen in the next week—a resumption of U.S. military action against Iran? Given the reports from the last few days that we just reacted to, it seems Israel is really pushing for something like this, or at least the Netanyahu regime. Your thoughts on what compels Trump right now to make such a decision?

#Scott Ritter

Didn't I just tell you I can't get into the mind of an insane person? Now you're asking me to get into the mind of the orange-faced wonder who sits in the White House.

#Scott Ritter

First of all, you know, understand that when you receive $200 million from Miriam Adelson, you're a prostitute—a political prostitute. And that's Donald Trump. He's a political prostitute. He sold out. He sold America out to a pro-Israeli heiress who gave him $200 million. You know, you have this criminal enterprise in the White House. It's a criminal enterprise. We need to call it what it is. I mean, when you have Donald Trump selling early access to his social media posts so that you can play the market the way he's been playing the market, the way his insiders are, it's a 100% criminal enterprise. When you have Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff, you know, going around the world making economic deals that benefit them—not America, benefit them—under the guise of diplomacy, it's a criminal enterprise.

Donald Trump's a criminal, a straight-up criminal. What motivates him is what motivates any head of a cartel or any head of a mafia family, you know, keeping the criminal enterprise going. And so this is what it's about. Nothing he does is for the benefit of the United States. And the American people need to understand that he doesn't care about you at all. He's using you. And he's a fake patriot. I mean, the man just lies about everything, can't get his facts straight. And yet MAGA just sits there and takes it all in. I think MAGA is starting to get tired of it. I mean, the whole thing is getting exhausting, you know. Did you see RFK Jr.'s ridiculous tantrum supporting Mike Rogers? Just the most racist thing.

"500 million Arabs, they haven't done a damn thing. They don't do any medicine. They don't do science." Dude, they invented medicine. They invented science. Some of the great intellectual minds—Edward Said. What the hell are you talking about? I mean, this is the level of discourse we have here in America. But the thing I would tell people is, to assess Donald Trump, first of all, we have to stop looking at this as a legitimate national security problem. Because when you define something as a legitimate national security problem, that means you're looking at the military, you're looking at geopolitics, you're looking at economic concerns, you're looking at things that affect the nation.

This is about Donald Trump, the criminal master of, you know, Crime Incorporated, Trump Incorporated. To assess what Donald Trump's doing, you have to assess it from that standpoint. He is in legacy maintenance mode right now. How do I maintain the Trump legacy? How do I keep this dynasty going? How do I keep this criminal enterprise afloat? Yeah. And so this is what we're doing. And the other reason why it's important to call this out the way it is, is that normally, when you're speaking about an American politician, the Constitution of the United States applies. With Donald

Trump, the Constitution doesn't apply at all. He doesn't care about the Constitution, doesn't know the Constitution, doesn't live the Constitution.

Nobody around him does. And Congress apparently has forgotten its constitutional role of holding the executive in check, and so too have the courts. So it's very difficult to come up with an analytical model, because that's normally what you do when you look at a problem. You build a model of how things work, and then you start plugging in data and running it through the model and seeing, okay, what if I change this a little bit? What happens to the model? What if I change this? So this way, you get a feel. As you read intelligence reports, you go, "Ah, this is happening, okay? When I put this in the model, we can anticipate this happening." But if we've got our standard political model, constitutional algorithms flowing in there, geopolitical things, military things, and then we start putting in Trump data...

The model doesn't work because the Trump data doesn't conform to the model that was built. We have to create the mafia model: Trump as a criminal enterprise. Then you put in your data, and that's how you're going to predict. Trump will do whatever it takes to keep the criminal enterprise going, which means that you have to disregard everything he says about anything, because he can say something today, but he's just gaming the system. He's just trying to shape perception. We can see this with fuel. You know, we have an energy crisis here. Why? Because Trump went to war against Iran, and it didn't go well. And the Iranians are squeezing the hell out of the Strait of Hormuz, and the Yemenis are pounding the crap out of the Saudis, and Bab al-Mandeb's not flowing.

And now, if Egypt gets involved, the Suez Canal gets shut down. It's just an absolute disaster. I think the most effective route for energy in the region to get out is the Caspian Sea route, and that's Iranian energy getting into Russia. Oh, wait a minute. Does Scott Bessent figure that out? No. So you have Trump, you know, politically liable for the actions he's taken. So what does he do? He ignores the fact that the energy crisis comes from Iran, and he focuses on the one thing, because Trump—I will give him this—he knows the American people better than most politicians. Now, what I'm about to say is probably going to insult a lot of Americans, but I don't care. We're dumber than dirt. We're stupid.

You know, James Carville's warning to Bill Clinton in 1992 not to get bogged down in geopolitics and stuff: "It's the economy, stupid." And you just discovered America today. We're a nation that has been programmed for decades now to be a consumer-based nation. And we are comfort-driven. We are convenience-driven. And as long as you keep Americans wrapped in this cocoon of comfort and convenience, the world can go to hell. We don't care. We're in our little comfort cocoon. And all you have to do is maintain the perception. I mean, remember, we're in a comfort cocoon that requires two, three jobs to maintain. I mean, we have people going to work and working their asses off all day to come back.

And how do they get their news? They sit down for 30 minutes while drinking a beer, watching CNN or Fox or whatever the corporate media puts out there. They get 30 minutes of condensed news-

based entertainment because that's what it is. If it doesn't entertain you, you're not going to watch it. So you watch it for 30 minutes. Now you think you know what's going on. You turn it off, play your computer game, do whatever, and go to bed. There's America in a nutshell. We're not an informed society. We're not even a society that wants to be informed. Now, there's a growing movement today. The alternative media is doing well, but the bulk of Americans are just stupid, dumber than dirt, lazy—intellectually lazy. There's no curiosity there whatsoever. And Trump can exploit that because the one thing they understand, the inflection point, is the economy.

The price of diesel—that's a big one, because it's very easy to say we've never had diesel above $6. What is it, $6.45 today? The price of gas—we understand that last month we were paying X; this month we're paying this. Our salaries didn't go up, but we're shelling out more. And then when we go to the grocery store, you know, we see the prices are out of this world. We can't afford to go to restaurants anymore, but if we do go to restaurants, we'll see we're paying 30% more. Everything's gone up. This, Americans understand, because now the comfort and convenience cocoon is breaking apart. We're going, "Wait a minute. We don't like this." And then the question of "Are you better off today than you were four years ago?" comes into play as we hold people to account.

And Trump knows this. So he's trying to shape perceptions leading up to the midterms. Look what he did with diesel, because the problem with diesel is coming out of the Middle East. He said, "I'm going to get the Europeans to release 50% of their emergency stockpiles of diesel." The idea isn't that you're going to change flows, because it's two weeks of supplies. That's it. Then, after two weeks, there's nothing. You haven't solved the problem. "I'm going to get the Russians to sell us diesel." That's even less than two weeks. He's just playing the game. It's a perception game. You have to calm down the commodity traders because the price of fuel is based on the exchange. And when people perceive that the market's unstable, that it's going to go crazy, going to go south, the price goes up.

But if you fake them into believing everything's stable—"I'm not going to bomb Iran before the midterms." Stability. "Russia's going to release diesel." Stability. Pressure on the price comes off, and the price is supposed to go down. And then Trump was supposed to go, "Hey, look how great I am." The problem is, none of that's happening. The prices aren't going down. None of it worked. So now Trump has to do the other thing, which is, if he can't do the, you know, "fake them into believing that he's got control of the economy" thing, then he blames the economy on a problem, and then he will act decisively. And this is where the war with Iran comes in, because I do think right now that Trump needs to be seen as acting decisively leading up to the midterms, saying, "I'm going to solve this thing."

"I'm going all in. I'm going to do this. I'm going to do that and the other thing." And then the last thing is that he doesn't care about the rule of law. He's already out there saying stupid things. He says, "I may run for a third term." No, you're not. No, you're not. You can't. It's not going to happen. But, you know, we know that the continuity-of-government programs have things called presidential emergency action decrees, I think it is, or directives—PADs—that have already been

written by Congress. They've existed since Eisenhower's time, in case we got nuked. What happens to a constitutional republic when nukes go off? How do you maintain continuity of government when Congress is not functioning and the courts are out?

You appoint an executive who then reads the directive and says, "I'm taking over. I'm making the decisions." And so Congress has already written these so that if there is a nuclear war, the president can say, you know, "In accordance with da, da, da, da." But after 9/11, we updated it to include terrorism, all this stuff. After the pandemic, it was updated again. Today, the president of the United States can, without any action by Congress, declare a national emergency. And when he declares a national emergency, Congress has given him the ability to suspend habeas corpus, to do a whole bunch of things. And I think this might be the direction Trump's going.

I think he might try to influence the vote through war because economic manipulation is not working. But if it fails before Congress is impaneled on January 1st, he'll just declare a national emergency, suspend everything, and say, "Screw it. I'm not letting Democrats, I'm not letting Jeffries come in and do what he said." You know, Hakeem Jeffries, he said, "When I become Speaker of the House, I'm impeaching the bastard. I'm going to investigate the criminal enterprise that is Trump." You think the head of the mafia is going to sit there and let that happen? No. Again, he's a criminal. This is a criminal mind that we're dealing with. He's not going to let the rule of law play out. This is the sad state of affairs we're in today.

#Danny

Well, Scott, in the final 10 or 15 minutes that we have left here, I wanted to ask you about the latest updates in the Ukraine conflict. I know you recently wrote an article about Ukraine, and there was a recent ceasefire in a particular location in Ukraine. And here is the article on your website about how you are coming out with interviews with Jacques Baud, who is in Brussels and literally living under sanctions. He is literally sanctioned by the European Union. So, wherever you want to go in terms of talking about the updates and how this relates to them, because obviously this is a byproduct of the war.

#Scott Ritter

I'll start with this: I just got back from Europe. The motivation for the trip goes back to September, when I went to Switzerland for a conference. And, you know, there we were talking about how Europe has basically declared war on free speech. And the name Jacques Baud, who you're familiar with and I'm familiar with, but most people aren't, came up. He's a Swiss colonel, an intelligence officer who had been sanctioned by the European Union. But, you know, the sanctions that were imposed on him are totally illegal, by the way. There's no foundation for them in the rule of law.

It's just made up by the Council of Ministers. The European Parliament didn't consider this. You know how in the United States, with every law, every court decision, when they look at a law, they

have to say, what was the intent—the legislative intent? That's very important, the legislative intent. There was no legislative intent in these sanctions. They were just arbitrarily put in place by a handful of unelected officials who decided to sanction people. The sanctions are designed to punish people who are outside of the European Union. They sanctioned Jacques Baud, who's inside the European Union.

So they deny him access to his money. Nobody can give him money. Nobody can give him food. Nobody can give him any assistance. They basically condemned him to death. This is literally the case. They condemned him to die because he was not allowed to do anything. Fortunately, people helped him. And then some wiser minds in the European Union went, "Well, we don't really mean to give him a death sentence. So, you know, people can take him to a restaurant, and people can give him a place to lay his head." But this man was condemned to die for what? He was called a Russian propagandist. That was the original claim made. They just redid it. It's an annual review of the sanctions.

And they just reviewed it, and they extended the sanctions. But this time, Danny, I'm dead serious here. They dropped the Russian propagandist thing, which was the whole reason for the sanctions to begin with, because they said he was promoting Russian propaganda. Now they're sanctioning him because they say he's too neutral and he's too unbiased, and therefore his opinions on Ukraine give weight to the Russian narrative. So they're saying that the Russians are actually telling the truth. They say, "We can't have that because if we strengthen the Russian narrative, that's bad for what we're doing. So we have to sanction Jacques Baud to shut him up because he's telling the truth, and the truth is literally inconvenient to the European Union."

Ladies and gentlemen, this is exactly what's happening. If you don't believe me, read the damn document yourself. I just went there to interview him. I said I would go. I would bring his case to the attention of the American people. And we're going to, I think, publish the first interview tomorrow. It's broken into two parts, and then we'll get the other one out by the end of the week. Please watch it. Understand that, you know, they always say that if you allow a violation of rights to happen to anybody, then it happens to all. If we allow this to happen to Jacques Baud, if the United States doesn't draw a line and intervene—I know he's not an American citizen, but free speech isn't an American right.

Read the damn Constitution. It's God-given and inalienable for all humans. That's what we said in the Constitution. We didn't say, "Hey, government, we want you to give us free speech." We said, "God gave us free speech. You can't touch it." And if we allow other people who we claim share our values to infringe on free speech, that corrupts the entire system. So we have to come to the defense of Jacques Baud, and we have to put pressure on our government to say this is a cause worth fighting for because it's about free speech. So that's that. Now we get into what's going on in Ukraine. A ceasefire was just announced in the vicinity of a city in Kherson called Oleshky. I call it the Oleshky Trap. If you read the mainstream media, you'll say, "Oh, my God, the Russians are horrible."

“They went into this town and they denied it food. They're doing all this bad stuff.” No, no, no, no, no. The Ukrainians created this man-made disaster by using drones to isolate this town and attacking humanitarian convoys coming in and blaming it all on the Russians. And it worked because Melania Trump now has intervened, and she said, “We want a ceasefire to help the humanitarian situation.” The head of the Russian negotiating team is a lady named Yana Lantratova. People might remember that name because in August of 2025, I went to Moscow and I interviewed her. And it was actually an interview that got millions of views because she's an amazing individual. She's very courageous. In 2014, she put her life on the line to go into the combat zone. As the war happened, villages would get isolated.

There were families stuck in the villages, and she would go in and rescue the children. And for that, she was condemned by the European Union and the Ukrainians. They sanctioned her. Today, she's the head of human rights in Russia. She has been talking about this humanitarian catastrophe for some time now, saying not that Russia caused it, but that the Ukrainians did. But the bottom line is there's a ceasefire now to try and rectify it. But I call it the Oleshky Trap because, you know, the Ukrainians have been saying, “We want a ceasefire, an unconditional ceasefire.” The Russians say, “No, that's not going to happen. You have to get to the root causes.” What Ukraine did here is doctor the situation so they got a ceasefire. They created a humanitarian catastrophe, and Melania Trump intervened, so now they have a limited ceasefire.

You'd say, “Okay, Scott, damage control could be done,” but now you have the Ukrainian government coming out and saying, “We need to do this over and over again.” Which means the trap is that Ukraine will continue to create humanitarian crises by targeting civilian populations in hopes that people will intervene for ceasefires. This gives their military a pause to rearm, regroup, and continue the war. Zelensky has no intention of allowing this war to end. He needs this war to go on forever. So anyway, that's the update on Zelensky. I'm headed to Russia in November to meet with Yana Lantratova and to continue work related to human rights, et cetera. And again, I just make the appeal to people that if you think this is something that's worthy of support, please go to the Substack page and hit the donate button. Yeah.

#Danny

Well, Scott, maybe your final thoughts as we begin to wrap up here on where this is all heading in terms of the Ukraine conflict? Because at this time, there's a lot of talk about Zelensky and Trump and Starlink and rifts abounding, but not a lot of talk about the realities on the ground right now.

#Scott Ritter

Well, again, this war is very difficult. The Ukrainians know how to fight. They oftentimes are willing to fight to the death. To give you an example of how desperate this situation is, I've been engaged in a little Twitter war with this lady who raises funds for this group called the Da Vinci Wolves, the

108th Separate Assault Battalion. But the Da Vinci Wolves were a Nazi organization created in 2014 by a literal Nazi guy who flies the flag of Bandera. And, you know, they were volunteers, which means that they're just right-wing people going around murdering people. And that's what they did up until 2022. They were incorporated into the Ukrainian military. But again, at their headquarters in Avdiivka, I think it was, you know, they had the Bandera flag. Just Nazis, Nazis, Nazis. Bad people.

The unit leader died in 2023 in Bakhmut, and the unit was pulled out and got reconfigured as a drone unit. And they were around there doing their drone thing for a while. And she's raising money for them, thinking that it's okay: these are Ukrainian defenders. No, they're Nazis. They're murderers. These are the drone thugs. If you look at the videos, you see Russian prisoners being released, and then the drones come in and kill them so the Ukrainians can publish that. Or they have drone after drone murdering civilians. The thing is, when the Russians capture these drone operators—like most criminals, they record their crimes, and so their phones are full of these videos—that's the end of them. So these guys are there.

The situation around Pokrovsk is so desperate for the Ukrainians. They're so short of manpower that they pulled this battalion and the brigade—the 59th Brigade, I think it is—away from drone duty because these Nazis were sitting back there enjoying murdering people. And now they've said, "You've got to go to the front line of Pokrovsk," which is a death sentence. They're all going to die. But that's the reality. Ukraine's run out of manpower, so they have to take drone units, reconfigure them as infantry, and send them to the front line to fight because they're out of infantry. They're out of manpower. This is the reality. The war is going badly for them. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian economy is being devastated by Russian attacks. Winter is coming. If it's a cold one, that's the end of Ukraine.

And so there's a lot of desperation on the part of Ukrainians right now to bring this war to an end, but they can't bring it to an end. I wrote an article a while back that said that Firepoint was just a scam, that the Flamingo missile was a scam. The whole thing's a scam about making money. Well, you know, as you run out of money—Firepoint, this defense industry, they were saying, "The Flamingo is the best thing in the world. We're striking." They shut down Flamingo production. They can't afford it. The scam has been called out. They can't afford anything. Ukraine's run out of money. Zelensky's right now snorting cocaine, going before Europe, begging for money. Literally. I mean, guys, you can say I'm attacking him. Look at him, sniffling, snorting. His eyes are bad.

He's under the influence. And the more desperate he gets, as they run out of money, he can't sustain this war. The more cocaine he snorts, the more he falls apart. This is the future of Ukraine. You know, Frankenstein's monster, which we've created, is going to die an ugly death. There are problems between Trump and Zelensky right now because Trump is, you know, tired of playing the political game. He recognizes that Zelensky is the obstacle to bringing this conflict to an end. It's over for Ukraine. Ukraine is going to die. Lavrov, though, just recently came out. Everybody's like, "Oh, it's going to happen quickly."

There's going to be compromise. Peskov came out. Lavrov said this war is not only not going to end soon, but it's going to escalate even further. Now, again, I'll just leave it at this. The bloodiest month for American troops in Europe in World War II wasn't D-Day, June 1944. It wasn't, you know, November, December 1944, the Battle of the Bulge. It wasn't, you know, the Hürtgen Forest in 1945. It was April 1945, the last month of the war, right before, you know, Nazi Germany collapsed in the first week of May. April 1945 was the bloodiest month for Americans because even though Germany was defeated and everybody knew it, they fought to the bitter end, these fanatics.

And right now, Ukraine is a nation governed by fanatics. You have so many of these Nazis, like the Da Vinci Wolves out there, who know that if they're captured by the Russians, it's over. Look at the Aidar Battalion. The Aidar Battalion is another volunteer organization formed in Lugansk in 2014. Their whole thing was to kill Russians and to rape Russians and to torture Russians. And then they said, "We were legitimate in 2022 when the Russians made their move." And so they were fighting. Every person captured by the Russians who's from Aidar doesn't get processed as a prisoner of war. They're categorized as a terrorist, and they're given long prison sentences.

The same thing with Azov. The same thing with Da Vinci. All of these volunteer units, all of these Nazis, it's not going to end well for them. And so they're going to fight. They're going to fight, and they're going to take the nation down with them. And that's the direction we're headed. Anybody thinking that we're headed towards a rapid resolution of this problem is mistaken. And the other thing I'll just say is that the Europeans—you know, Merz, Macron, this crowd—their entire political future is dependent upon continued funding of this war. Look at France right now. Eight hundred thousand people filled the streets of Paris the other day.

And one of the things they're saying is, “You have to fund the schools. You can't be sending money to Ukraine.” I mean, Ukraine is now a political flashpoint. Germany's heading in that direction. You have German foreign ministers and the Italian defense minister saying, “The will of the people doesn't matter. The right thing to do is to support Ukraine.” No, no, no. It's not the right thing to do, except for you, because you make money off the Fire Point contractual kickbacks that are taking place. But I think we're going to see the collapse of Europe as well. Ukraine isn't going to collapse in a vacuum. It's going to take NATO and the European Union down with it.

#Danny

Well, Scott, it was a great program today. I want to reinforce that your Substack is in the video description below, and that's where people can support all the work you're doing. So do check that out. All the places to support this show are there in the video description too. So tomorrow I'll be back at 1 p.m. Eastern time, everybody, October 28th. I'll announce what's going on soon. Scott, any final words before we head out of here?

#Scott Ritter

No, I mean, what's that old Chinese curse? “May you live in interesting times.” So we are aptly cursed.

#Danny

Yeah, we are. We are very, very, very much so. All right, everybody, hit the like button before you go. That was the show. Check out the video description, and I'll see you tomorrow at 1 p.m. Eastern. Bye-bye.