

Iran LEVELS Israel, Trump PANICS as US Marines Target Kharg & Hormuz | Johnson

Former CIA analyst Larry Johnson comes on to discuss Iran's retaliation intensifying with coordinated attacks alongside Yemen as Trump panics his way into a ground operation. The war is reaching a point of no return, and we break it all down. FOLLOW ME ON RUMBLE: <https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong> FOLLOW ME ON TELEGRAM: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> SUPPORT THE CHANNEL ON PATREON: <https://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong> Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhaiphong> Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho> Follow me on Telegram: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> #iran #trump #israel #yemen

#Danny

Welcome, everyone. Welcome back to the show. It's your host, Danny Haiphong. As you can see, I am joined by former CIA analyst, geopolitical analyst, and commentator Larry Johnson. Larry, good to see you again. Hey, I'm back. Yeah, you're back—better than ever.

#Larry Johnson

Well, I don't know about that, but, you know, I'm still on the right side of the grass.

#Danny

Hey, that's what counts. Well, let's get to it, Larry. I first wanted to cover what's happened overnight in Operation True Promise 4. Iran has been absolutely pounding Israel in conjunction with Hezbollah and now Yemen, as Israel's interceptors are either ineffective or not firing at all. I just want to pull this up because there have been some very notable strikes, especially at the Ramat Hovav chemical complex near Dimona. A Turkish journalist was there and gave a report. I won't play it because it's entirely in that language, but here's a summary from DDGO Politics. There was a massive blaze at this chemical complex, and some are speculating that a pharmaceutical company was also hit, along with multiple sites in the Negev area where this is located.

And then the big news, Larry, is that Haifa was just hit by an Iranian missile—or multiple missiles—and that's caused stocks for this oil refinery in particular to drop about 4 percent in just a matter of minutes. Larry, I wanted to ask you where you see the shape of this war now. You know, Iran hitting the Dimona area seems like a very big message—the Negev area, that complex—but it's not just that. Every single day now we're getting reports that the interceptors for all the Gulf countries could be down to just a few hundred left in the entire U.S. stockpile. Where are we in this war as the

threats keep coming from the U.S. and the fighting continues, but these strikes seem to suggest it's not going very well? What are your thoughts?

#Larry Johnson

Okay, so let's say you have a territory that's 10 square miles—or, fine, let's make it 100 square miles. I have a territory that's 10,000 square miles. You're going to launch 20 missiles at me a day, and I'm going to launch 20 missiles at you a day. Who gets saturated first?

#Danny

We know it's the smaller one.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, okay, good. So we're all agreed—that's what's going on here. You know, I'm not sure if Iran is twenty times the size of Israel or thirty times the size, but it's a lot, lot bigger than Israel. Israel really only has two major cities—three, if you count Jerusalem, Haifa, and Tel Aviv. They've got other smaller places, but about 55% of the population is in two of those cities. It's not like they've got a dozen power plants scattered around the country or a dozen oil refineries. So, just from the standpoint that if each side keeps delivering roughly the same amount of firepower on the other, the smaller one's going to run out a lot sooner and not be able to continue the fight. That's what's going on. That's about as simple as I can put it.

Israel—it hurts Israel more to lose its one chemical factory than it does for Iran to lose one of ten chemical factories. Iran's got more, let's call it, strategic depth. Now, I'm not saying Iran isn't suffering terrific damage and that it's not awful, but let's be clear: Israel's ability to withstand pain is a lot less than Iran's. And then, when you add in the literal ass-kicking Israel's getting from Hezbollah in southern Lebanon—and you've already had one former Israeli chief of staff and one current one saying, "Hey, alarm bell, we've got a three-alarm fire here. We can't keep this up. We're running out. We can't sustain this"—well, when your own military guys are blowing the whistle and raising the red flag, it tells you you've got trouble.

#Danny

Yeah, the IDF chief of staff has recently sounded the alarm that it's on the verge of collapse in the coming weeks if all of this continues. I mean, in this same salvo, the same wave of strikes by Iran, there were also reports that both Hezbollah and Ansar Allah were coordinating in various areas—the Tel Aviv area and northern Israel with Hezbollah, and then around Dimona and further south with Yemen. I mean, there were even reports that Yemen used the Palestine-2 hypersonic missile, which is an incredibly impressive weapon that can travel an extremely long distance in about 15 minutes to hit Israel. What are your thoughts?

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, the key is, you know, a lot of stuff gets labeled "hypersonic," and it's not. A true hypersonic missile is one that travels in excess of Mach 6 and—and this is the key part—can be maneuvered while in flight. In other words, it can fire additional engines and such to change direction. Let me just, you know, give a plug to Alastair Crooke and his wife, Aisling. Aisling's quite the linguist, and she goes in and reads the Hebrew-language press in Israel, because they say a lot of different things in Hebrew—like talking amongst themselves—as opposed to the English side. And in her latest piece, she wrote, quoting from one of the articles, former Israeli Defense Forces Ombudsman General Yitzhak Brick said, "What awaits Israel in the next round of the war is frightening."

Then the current chief of staff of the Israeli army stood up and said, "The IDF is collapsing." Now, those aren't outside critics. These are men who either headed up the army, played a very senior role, or, in the case of the current guy, said, "Look, this is dangerous. We can't keep this up." And, you know, the sign of that is coming out of Lebanon. In fact, here's what the chief of staff told the security cabinet: he said, "The Israeli Defense Forces are going to implode. I'm raising ten red flags for you. The IDF now needs a conscription law, a reserve law, a compulsory service extension law. In a short time, the IDF will not be ready for its routine missions, and the reserve system will not last."

Now, just in the last week—I forget which day it was, maybe last Friday or Saturday—Hezbollah hit a column of Merkava tanks. Those are the big bad boys for the Israeli army, and they knocked out 21 of them in one day. Previously, they had knocked out eight on another day. I've consistently heard from multiple sources that since Israel started this offensive into southern Lebanon, more than 100 tanks have been destroyed or rendered inert by Hezbollah. And if you're blowing up a tank, you've got a crew inside that tank, and that crew suffers wounds or even death. So Israel has got itself in a situation where they've been unable to defeat Hamas. Hamas is still intact.

And Israel, despite having every conceivable military advantage in terms of numbers, quality of weapons, and types of weapon systems, has been unable to defeat Hamas. Now they're caught in another battle, worse than what happened in 2006. In 2006, they lost—they were forced to retreat. Now they're suffering even greater losses against Hezbollah. And then they started this war with Iran. As we've seen in recent reports—I think it was from the Financial Times—about 80% of the Iranian missiles are getting through. The much-ballyhooed Israeli air defense system is crap. Iron Dome is cracked, as is David's Sling. They're getting beaten.

#Danny

Yeah. And Larry, what effect is this having on the war—particularly on the Israeli side, but maybe on the entire war effort as well? Because, you know, it's difficult to get good images. There's been a lot of surveillance and repression, censorship of these images. But every single day this is happening. As you said, now it's, you know, eight or ten of these strikes coming in. Iran always reports that

there are millions of Israelis going into shelters every single day. What impact is this actually having, especially given that Iran is getting more targeted and escalating what they're striking? Literally, I don't know. Nobody knows exactly where Israel's nuclear weapons are, but they're hitting the area where many believe they are—and that's a big deal.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, karma is a terrible thing. And Israel brought itself some bad karma by killing all the children it's killed in Gaza, and then by starting this war of aggression—the same kind of thing Adolf Hitler did to Poland—but this time against the people of Iran. And now Iran is basically able to hit any target it wants in Israel with little chance of being stopped. So, you know, maybe we shouldn't underestimate the ability of people to endure suffering. Just draw the parallel with the siege of Vicksburg during the American Civil War. There, you had a lot of these refined, high-class Southern ladies living in caves dug into the side of the Mississippi Riverbank during months of shelling and attacks. And, you know, they stuck it out.

So you can't dismiss the fact that the Israelis are going to try to tough it out. But Israel's economy is crumbling in the process, and they're not going to attract more immigrants coming into the country because of the nature of the war. And then, on top of that, the Netanyahu government is so clumsy, so stupid. When they shut down—well, it's one thing to anger the Muslims; we already know they hate them—but then they did the same to the Christians, shutting access to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre during Holy Week, stretching from Palm Sunday, which was yesterday, through to Easter Sunday coming up. And so now they've got the Vatican mad at them, Italy mad at them, Catholics mad at them. So Israel is writing the opposite book—the one Dale Carnegie wrote, **How to Win Friends and Influence People.** Israel's doing **How to Lose Friends and Have No Influence with Anybody.**

#Danny

Yeah, and Larry, I wanted to ask you now about the other side of the strikes that Iran is conducting in retaliation for the U.S. and Israeli war of aggression. This is on the Gulf side. Donald Trump said he wants Gulf countries to pay for the U.S. war effort. He just said this, but it seems like it's actually going to be the Gulf that needs help paying for the aftermath of what's been happening. According to Iranian sources, precision missiles have just, as we speak, hit a UAE-U.S. command and control site. The U.S. Fifth Fleet was struck by drones. And, of course, Israel continues to get hit in various areas. An Israeli-owned container ship was just hit as well. But, you know, the Gulf has been taking a beating, and I can pull up the interceptor numbers now as you comment—but it's bad. Supposedly, 2,400 interceptors have been fired in just a month across the Gulf countries.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, and stop and ask the question: what are they firing? Because there were only, at the end of 2025, a total of 4,620 PAC-3 missiles that had been produced for the Patriot system, maximum. Well, they used up a good number of those—at least 1,000 in Ukraine, and then another 1,000, maybe 1,500, last June during the 12-day war. So right off the bat, the United States entered this war with only, let's say, 2,400 PAC-3 missiles. And those are capable of shooting down about 1,200 incoming missiles. So what are they launching? What I'm suggesting to you is there's some lying going on here. They're gaslighting.

#Danny

Yeah, and that's gaslighting. This is from Bloomberg, re-shared by DDGO Politics, talking about these numbers that are being officially reported—2,400 used, 2,800 total in the stockpile. I mean, that's bad in and of itself, Larry. That's bad in and of itself. And I'm curious, even with just those numbers, how long can this go on? Because Israel and the UAE, the Gulf countries, they seem to be— I see the videos, Larry— they seem to be using these in high numbers every single day. I mean, a dozen here, 20 there. You just see it in one video—there's six, 10, 11. So how long can this actually go on? What happens then? It seems like the Trump administration and Israel aren't too concerned about it, at least in the public-facing PR image.

#Larry Johnson

Well, they won't have—I would argue right now they've exhausted them—they're out. There are no more Patriot PAC-3 missiles to shoot. So they're probably dipping into old stocks, the PAC-2s. I think they may even have had a PAC-1. But all those do is make a nice, pretty sight in the sky as they shoot forward, lighting it up. They're not necessarily going to be effective at intercepting. And, you know, Ted Post has maintained all along that the number of interceptions claimed in previous wars or attacks like this has been grossly exaggerated. So, you know, the reality is none of the Gulf countries have an effective air defense anymore.

And Iran can hit them at will with whatever it wants, and it's doing so. One of the Iranian spokesmen said the other day, in response to Trump's claim that if Iran doesn't open the Strait of Hormuz, U.S. forces will target Iranian power plants. Well, he said the Strait is only restricted to hostile traffic and remains under Iran's control. Safe passage continues under strict rules. But he said if the U.S. strikes Iranian power plants, Iran will fully close the Strait of Hormuz until the damaged facilities are rebuilt. It'll target all Israeli energy, ICT, and infrastructure assets. It will destroy regional companies with U.S. shareholders, and it will target power plants in countries hosting U.S. bases. And that's exactly what it's doing—after the power plants were hit in Iran.

So, you know, Iran hasn't—you know, they're not playing around. And they're not making, like Trump, idle threats. They do what they say. If you're going to bomb our desalination plant, we're taking yours out. They took one out in Kuwait yesterday. Thirty-five percent of the country's fresh

water came from that plant—no longer. So I think, first, it's a race to see which country in the Gulf collapses first, disappears into history. Will it be the United Arab Emirates, or will it be Bahrain? Right now, my bet would be on Bahrain, simply because it's smaller. Its ruler has abandoned the country, and they have the largest contingent of Shia Muslims there. But Dubai is not far behind. The United Arab Emirates doesn't really have a viable path forward to continue to exist as a country.

#Danny

Yeah, and yet, Larry, again, there's all—well, I guess let's divide it into Israel and the Gulf countries. They keep pressing forward. I mean, despite the alarm bells being sounded by the chief of staff himself in Israel, despite the massive damage—I'm hearing tens of billions of dollars already across the Gulf in infrastructure and gas—despite all that, countries like the UAE and Saudi Arabia are still saying, "Push forward and make sure Iran can never do this again." And that's what they're supposedly telling the United States. I see it more as them being told to say that by the United States. But I'm curious what your thoughts are on this, because unlike the twelve-day war, it seems like they keep climbing further and further up the escalation ladder, regardless of the pain they're experiencing.

#Larry Johnson

So let's be clear about what kind of societies we're talking about. Let's start with the United Arab Emirates. They've got these massive skyscrapers—some of the tallest in the world—very elaborately designed, seemingly modern. Yet every morning, trucks have to pull into the basements of those buildings and fill up with human waste, because they don't have a sewer system. Okay? Think about this: this supposedly very modern, very advanced country has a sewage system that rivals that of India's, where a cart comes down the road every day and people pile their feces into the back. That's not a serious country. And the United Arab Emirates right now is without 83% of its income—income that came from the export of oil, trade through the Freeport at Jebel Ali, tourism, real estate, construction, and the financial industry.

It's all basically shut down. So, you know, as a consequence, Iran has been joking about it, saying that, well, they've at least eliminated prostitution from one of the major Gulf Arab countries, because once the blockade was on and the very wealthy started getting the hell out of there, all the hookers said, "Well, no more money to be made here," and headed back north to Ukraine, where a lot of them are from. So the UAE right now is just like an angry little chihuahua—toothless, loud, vicious, but without much of a bite. And six weeks ago it was prepared to go to war with Saudi Arabia. Now the Saudis are crying on each other's shoulders about big bad Iran. And, you know, they shouldn't have picked the fight.

In fact, Saudi Arabia had pledged that it wasn't going to allow the U.S. to use its territory—and they did exactly that. None of these countries have an organic political base. They're all, you know, from one tribe that happened to dominate the other tribes. And then they established themselves—like

the Saudis did—as, “Oh, we're the royal house of Saud, we're the monarchy.” Yeah, give me a break. You guys were just camping out in the desert for years until you found oil, and all of a sudden oil made you smart, made you intelligent? I don't think so. So the power of the dollar is becoming weaker for them. And this is where, you know, think about it—there are only two countries in that whole Gulf region that elect their political leaders: one is Iraq, the other is Iran.

#Danny

Yeah, great points, Larry. And, you know, now this gets into what we're seeing from the Trump administration, which is a kind of panic masked as aggression—escalating aggression—especially around the possibility of a crisis, a ground operation, or even multiple operations. Of course, you have Israel's Channel 13; they often seem to be the megaphone for what's coming on the U.S. military front. They're saying the U.S. is preparing for ground invasions or, quote-unquote, to “open the Strait of Hormuz” with Israeli intelligence support.

And the Wall Street Journal, Larry, is reporting that Trump is weighing a military operation on the ground in Iran to extract 1,000 pounds of uranium. This comes as you probably saw those comments from Trump before we came on the program, Larry, where he's now making very contradictory claims, as he often does. He's talking about a new and better regime right now—regime change has already happened, according to him. And he's saying that if a deal isn't made soon between Iran and the U.S., he's going to end the “lovely stay” in Iran by obliterating all of their electric plants, oil wells, Karg Island, and so on. So, Larry, what do you make of this flurry of developments on the ground operations side? Because there's been a lot of buildup to this—many days of reports about forces arriving, Marines, paratroopers now. Your thoughts on this?

#Larry Johnson

Well, what's the point? I mean, OK, let's go with the Karg Island scenario. Now, recall what Donald Trump and his Secretary of the Treasury, Scott Besant, did three weeks ago—they lifted all the oil sanctions on Iran. Okay, Danny, here's your chance: why did they do that? You tell me, Larry. Well, did they want to cut the supply of oil or increase the supply of oil?

#Danny

You mean they closed the Strait of Hormuz?

#Larry Johnson

No, no. So when they lifted the sanctions—oh, yeah, they wanted to increase the supply of oil. Okay, so I want you to follow the logic here. They wanted to increase the supply of oil because they were trying to keep the price of oil low, recognizing that rising oil prices would cost everybody more money. All right, so now what is he proposing to do with Karg Island? He's going to blow up their oil

wells and basically reduce the supply of oil. Oh, okay, I get it, I think. That's completely contradictory.

#Danny

And Larry, before you go on, I was just going to say, he's already said he was going to do that, and it's already had a massively negative effect on oil prices—in the sense that they went up. But go ahead.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, so that's the objective—to inflict as much damage on Karg Island as possible so it can't pump any more oil. Or he's also said, "No, no, no, I want to get control. I want to control all the Iranian oil." Okay, great. You've got all that control up there on Karg. How do you get it out through the Strait of Hormuz? How do you get it out of the Persian Gulf? You know, attach bags of oil to dolphins and have them swim out? So it does nothing to open the Strait of Hormuz, which brings you back to the same problem. So, okay, you're going to have to count on a ground force to somehow take the Strait of Hormuz—except how does a ground force take the Strait of Hormuz? The answer is, it doesn't. To open the Strait of Hormuz, basically, you're going to have to make sure there are no mines.

So you're going to sweep up all the mines, make sure there are no underwater mini-submarines with torpedoes, no underwater marine drones that can be maneuvered to crash into your ships and blow them out of the water, no regular drones above ground that can be launched to reach the Strait of Hormuz, no artillery pieces or shore guns that can hit ships in that region, and no missiles that can strike. So explain to me how putting 5,000, 10,000, 20,000 guys onto this Qeshm Island—how that stops any of that. It doesn't. That's the point. You've got to step back and say, okay, what is the mission? You don't have to be Clausewitz or Sun Tzu or some advanced military strategist to figure this stuff out.

Just ask yourself a simple question: what is it we're trying to accomplish? Other than just looking good and saying, "Hey, we're, you know, like Douglas MacArthur in his landings at Leyte Gulf," where they filmed it—seventeen takes. They wanted to get him coming off the shore, and he made sure they reshot it over and over until they had the right take. Well, this is not a PR stunt. What is the actual military consequence? I draw a parallel with the U.S. war in the Pacific, where the very first battle we fought on land with ground forces was Guadalcanal. The mission was to seize that island and prevent the Japanese from using it to launch airstrikes on any ships in the region, because it was near New Zealand and Australia.

And it was to get control, if you will, of the air by using that island as an aircraft carrier. That was the military objective, and we achieved it. That was clear—that's what you're trying to do. But you step back here and say, okay, what the hell are we trying to do on the ground? What's the military

objective? You know, piss off the Iranians? Because that's really what it's going to do. Oh, and put our soldiers in harm's way so they're more likely to be killed and wounded? Yeah, that's going to happen too. So do I think Donald Trump is going to do this? Yes, I do. I think he's got enough crazy people around him who don't understand a damn thing about logistics or military capabilities, and they're going to go ahead and encourage him to do it—and then it's going to be some unfortunate sailors, Marines, or Army personnel who pay the price.

#Danny

Yeah, Iran is saying, "Come closer." They're releasing little videos, releasing statements to their own media. The Iranian military has videos of soldiers on the shores of the Persian Gulf saying, "Come closer, we're waiting for you." I mean, there doesn't seem to be any fear, at least from what we can gather. And the idea, Larry, of seizing a thousand—what is that, a thousand pounds of uranium—from Iran? I mean, how does that even happen?

#Larry Johnson

How does that even happen?

#Danny

I don't know how.

#Larry Johnson

Well, okay, so I actually worked on an exercise to do that very thing, but it was about 20 years ago. So first of all, you've got to look at how to get there. The sites where the enriched uranium is stored are in the interior of Iran, so your first challenge is how to reach them. These helicopters, like the Chinook-47 or the Black Hawk, would be the two most likely ones to be used. Or you could use a C-130 aircraft. But again, that's assuming you can fly over Iran without getting shot down—and we've already seen that's not possible. So, particularly if you have to go 800 miles inside Iran to get to one of these sites, right?

Well, a plane has to go in ahead of time to drop off fuel bladders. These are like big, giant trash bags—huge bags filled with aviation fuel—so the helicopters can land, refuel, and then take off to get to the site. Once you get there, as we saw with the raid to get bin Laden in Pakistan, that thing was cooked from the inside. We had pre-coordinated with the Pakistanis about what we were going to do. They turned off the lights in the valley and basically made sure there was no chance the United States would face opposition. And even with that, there were problems—one of the helicopters had a catastrophic accident and crashed into a wall.

But let's say you get there, and the places are heavily defended, and you try to fight your way through. Let's say you can fight your way through, but you're going to take enormous losses. The United States would take significant casualties. That was the lesson—that was the outcome of the exercise I worked on. It was unacceptable losses. But then, once you get there, you've got to package up that thousand pounds of uranium in something that's shielded, which may add another 500 to 1,000 pounds. All of a sudden, you're talking about some real weight, and then you've got to make sure you have a helicopter that can handle it.

And so you're going to need an additional helicopter just to haul something like that. I mean, it's just... you know, the raid to recover nuclear material—it's a great Hollywood script, as long as you suspend all reality about what it takes for aircraft to get from point A to point B, and assume you don't have any accidents. But we've had too many of these experiences over the years. The hostage rescue attempt in 1980 to get the U.S. hostages out of Iran—that was called Eagle Claw—one of the planes ran into one of the helicopters out in the desert. It caught on fire and killed, I think, six people. A good friend of mine was one of the young Army Rangers on that mission. He was providing perimeter security when that happened. Then we jump ahead to the bin Laden thing—one of the helicopters crashed.

So the odds that you're going to have perfectly functioning equipment, great weather, and nobody doing anything stupid—pretty low. You always plan for, you know, there's going to be a screw-up somewhere. And then at the end, you take 1,000 pounds of enriched uranium—then what? Because you've got to shield it in such a way that you don't irradiate all your team members. Are they coming in with hazmat suits? Well, they'd have to. A hazmat suit isn't going to protect you against radiation. You've got to have shielding that prevents that radiation from penetrating, and that's why you've got to get it into containers that are protected—but then you can't move it with three or four guys. You know, 1,500 pounds—four guys aren't moving that. That's over, what, 300 pounds apiece? Or 400? Yeah. So it just doesn't make sense.

#Danny

And then, you know, Larry, is Iran waiting for this? I assume there have been major preparations, given how Iran is talking—given how long it takes for all these forces to get to the Middle East—and now they have to prepare for an operation. So this has been many, many weeks in the making. Not to mention, I'm sure Iran has been saying in their videos and statements that they've been preparing for this for years—for a U.S. ground attack. So what happens then when Iran responds? Because I assume they'll be very aware when U.S. paratroopers or Marines, or whoever, are landing on their soil.

#Larry Johnson

Well, it depends on who's telling the story. If it's the American briefer saying, "Oh, you know, the Iranians are weak, they're a bunch of wimps, they're terrible at fighting, they'll run away, so we won't expect any opposition." Or the Iranians will say, "Yeah, we're waiting for them, we'll set up an ambush." So, you know, that's the danger here—that we've talked so much about it, and it's been so out in the open that we've eliminated the element of surprise altogether. Now, you should always keep in mind that perhaps the discussions about Karg Island and Qeshm Island, and going after a nuclear site, maybe those are deliberately being put out there to disguise some other operation. But I, for the life of me, can't imagine what that other operation would be, in terms of, you know, what it is we're actually trying to accomplish.

Uh, if we're trying to accomplish the decapitation of the Iranian regime, that still doesn't guarantee there will be a regime replacement. The depth of support for the Iranian Islamic Republic appears to be quite deep and broad. What are they going to do—take an island, Bandar Abbas, or a port, Bandar Abbas? These guys are so worried about the propaganda aspect of this for domestic political control that they toss operational security for the people going on such missions right out the window.

#Danny

Yeah, and I imagine that a lot of the push to speed up a ground attack—a ground assault on Iran—has a lot to do, as we've been hearing day after day, Larry, with the energy markets and what's been going on there. Yeah. Well, Bloomberg just reported and concluded that not only is Iran's grip on the Strait of Hormuz tighter even after a month of the war, but that this marks the biggest strategic victory in the war so far. And I wanted to show a graph that kind of gets to a major reality that's not being acknowledged by the mainstream media, by the West, and by the Trump administration, of course—that Iranian oil sales are not only up, but they are... if we look at this, this is China, and where the oil is going—to China.

It's both Iranian oil, Russian oil, and Venezuelan oil that's being stored in the South China Sea and the East China Sea, going to China. I mean, in effect, Iran has been making more money, and they've forced the United States to relieve sanctions. What has been the true impact of the closure of the Strait of Hormuz? Because every time Donald Trump talks about it, he says we don't have it—there's nothing. We don't trade that much through the Strait of Hormuz, so it doesn't really affect us. But it seems like it's having a major effect on the markets. And we haven't even gotten to Yemen yet, which has the ability at any point to close the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, which I imagine would make things even worse for the oil markets. But your assessment, Larry, of this?

#Larry Johnson

So you're an urban kid, right? You don't have a car—or do you?

#Danny

No. Well, my wife has a car. I don't have one. We're both city kids, but she does have a car. Okay.

#Larry Johnson

But has she been having to pay more for gas to fill that thing up?

#Danny

Yeah, well, we were just in California, and gas was six dollars a gallon. We didn't have to fill up because we were with family, and we drove a little bit with them. But yeah—no, really bad. Really bad.

#Larry Johnson

So, did you drive cross-country to California? Yeah.

#Danny

No, no, we flew—and the ticket prices were really expensive. But when we were in California, we drove around there.

#Larry Johnson

We rented a car. Okay. So that's the number one thing hitting Americans right now—the price of oil has gone up, and so has the price of gas, as well as diesel. Diesel's up, like, you know, if gas has gone up a dollar, diesel's gone up twice that—two dollars, right? Well, then you look around at everything that hauls food, hauls all the essentials of life. Those are trucks running on diesel right now. We haven't gotten to the age where Elon Musk's electric trucks are ruling the roads. But with that kind of impact on the economy, it's only going to get worse. Inflation is going to go up, not down. And then we're stuck in a situation where the economy is slowing, people are losing jobs, but prices are going up. That's called stagflation. The last time we had a major battle with this was in the 1970s, back when I was in college and just starting out in life.

So it's something we haven't seen for well over 50 years, and it's going to be hitting us. And it's also hitting globally. So, you know, the price of fuel is going up, the price of transportation is going up dramatically, fertilizer prices are going up dramatically. And this is not cost-free—it means the country is going to be doing without certain things. And then you've got shortages in the supply chain on top of that. So what Iran achieved by tightening and putting controls on the products coming out of the Persian Gulf essentially set off a bomb. It's like setting off a bomb on board a plane—it's exploded, and the plane's going to crash. Because it's not just affecting the oil sector; it's

affecting the liquefied natural gas sector, which has secondary and tertiary effects on other activities, right?

And then, you know, it's affected the fertilizer market by raising costs dramatically, because urea is processed out of some of the petrochemical plants. Helium is apparently critical for the production of computer chips—I didn't know that, but now I do. And sulfuric acid, which is, you know, a major, let's call it a precursor chemical involved in generating nuclear fuel from uranium. So there are a lot of secondary and tertiary consequences from this decision to close the Gulf that nobody really thought through. I'm sure you'd never read an article on it, but now that it's happening, all of a sudden people are realizing how dependent they are on that Persian Gulf to handle the flow of oil and everything else.

#Danny

Yeah. And Larry, what does the entrance of Yemen into the war mean? There's not a lot of panic about Yemen's capabilities adding to Iran's in the missile arena—attacks on Israel and perhaps even the Gulf if it gets to that point. But more so, it's all focused on Iran. All across Axios, Bloomberg—they're all talking about Iran, the Houthis demonstrating. So what does Yemen's entrance into the war mean for the coming days and weeks? What do you expect?

#Larry Johnson

Well, actually, not a lot. From the standpoint of, number one, the freedom of navigation in the Red Sea hasn't been reestablished since December 2023, so it's been limited. No ships are going to Israel, and no Israeli ships are allowed to pass. The Houthis have been willing to allow other ships to sail in and out, but a lot of those ships have declined and go down around the Horn of Africa simply because their insurance companies say, "If you go through the Red Sea, we're not covering you. Too dangerous." So I think what you're seeing right now is more of a symbolic gesture by the Houthis—"Hey, we're in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Iran and elsewhere." Now, if they get a big, fat, juicy target, they'll take it, and they've already launched some missiles. But it's not going to dramatically change the face of the war, because the key, the vital sector—the Red Sea—is already basically closed. The one that's got everybody going crazy is the Strait of Hormuz.

#Danny

Yeah, and I've been asking everyone this, Larry. What do you make of the overall regional picture on the side of the Axis of Resistance now that we're over a month into this war? Because we touched briefly on Hezbollah—I believe the number now is between 80 and 100 Israeli Merkava tanks destroyed. But there's heavy fighting all across. They're firing advanced missiles, confronting the Israeli occupation army directly as well. And then the Iraqi resistance has been a major force in Iraq

during this time. And of course, we have Ansar Allah—and the big one, Iran—which was forced to defend itself from aggression immediately and initially. So what's your take on this moment now that we've seen how it's transpired, especially regionally, on the side of the Axis of Resistance?

#Larry Johnson

Well, number one, the Gulf Arabs are dying. I think there's a real question whether the United Arab Emirates and the government in Bahrain will even exist in a year. They may be gone within six months because there's no there there. Populations like Qatar and Kuwait—I anticipate that Iraq will take control of Kuwait within the year as this war progresses, because I don't see this war slackening off. And I think the alliance between Iran and Iraq will continue to grow stronger, not weaker. So when you look at Saudi Arabia, the kingdom of the Saudis, about 45% of the people who "live" there are indentured servants.

They're not living there because they're thinking, "Damn, is Saudi Arabia a cool place to live or what?" You know, with the restrictions they have on alcohol, the restrictions they have on women—what women can do, what women can't do. Iran, by contrast, is far more open and lax on those issues compared to the Saudis. The Saudis, like all of these countries, lack a political constituency. They lack the concept of national identity, right? Because whether it's bringing in a soccer team or whatever, they're always hiring outsiders to come do their stuff for them since they can't do anything on their own. So what Iran is doing is basically restructuring the political power setup in the Persian Gulf. And it wouldn't surprise me to see Turkey's Erdogan want to work closely with the Iranians on that.

#Danny

Yeah, yeah. I mean, and then finally, Larry, we get into the bigger picture here. What do you make of this? You know, not only has China made out very well with regard to Iran—sources are showing that they're saying they're letting ships through the Strait of Hormuz. It's just that they're Chinese tankers, affiliated tankers.

#Larry Johnson

And they're paying.

#Danny

The toll, yes—yeah.

#Larry Johnson

Which Marco Rubio said is never going to happen.

#Danny

But Larry, I think it's already happening from what I've seen. So how does this affect the overall push toward a multipolar world and the dollar? There was one graph I saw that showed the percentage of reserves held in the dollar as of 2025 had already been plummeting, and it's getting worse. Does this make things worse—the energy crisis that we're seeing? And what does it mean for the changing world order?

#Larry Johnson

Well, let's say—worse for who, okay? It's going to create an inflationary spike across the board. The price of oil will be so high that it'll increase and incentivize people to buy electric vehicles. And the number one country on that front, making electric vehicles, is China. So you get a shift to electric vehicles, at least in a lot of the urban areas. I'm not sure it makes sense for some of the rural or remote areas. It's going to enrich, as you said, both Iran and Russia. And I would expect other OPEC countries that also produce oil, like Nigeria. There may be—you know—it'll be a boon for Venezuela, but again, they're limited because their infrastructure is such that they can only get out, let's say, a million barrels a day.

So they're not drawing out huge quantities. This is what I argue we're witnessing—the emergence of an entirely new economic and political order, in the same way your father, mother, or grandparents witnessed the emergence of the United Nations and the Bretton Woods financial system. That basically set up the United States to be the dominant power in the world, followed by Russia. But it wasn't until 1972, when Nixon opened China with his initiative, that China came out of the Cultural Revolution days and started into the capitalist reform era.

And just an incredible, incredible transformation of society in 50 years. China has become the most modern, most industrialized society in the world, and they're running rings around the United States in terms of using robots to produce a whole variety of things. So this war in Iran is sort of a natural outcome of that, because Iran is going to play a critical role in this new economy, particularly in solidifying the north-south corridor that runs from Russia to the Caspian Sea, all the way down through Tehran to Chabahar. So we are witnessing something consequential.

Remember, the League of Nations, which was set up to try to keep nations from going to war—I think its last day in existence was around April of 1946. I mean, it was completely irrelevant during the war. And that's what we're seeing now: the United Nations is completely irrelevant. You know, UN personnel get killed—who cares? The UN Security Council passes a resolution, and if countries don't like it, they just wipe their ass with it and move on. Right. So you've got that breakdown. And then we've also got what I'd call a scientific and cultural gap. There's both an economic and a military dimension. So the question is this: what do skyscraping office buildings have in common with U.S. aircraft carriers?

#Danny

What?

#Larry Johnson

They're both irrelevant for the 21st century. I mean, think of it this way: you've got a 100-story office building, but your people can all work from home. They don't need to go to the office, so why have that building? That's why so many of these buildings now are sitting empty. They were built during an era when the model was, hey, go to the office, and, you know, you have your office Christmas parties and people get blackmail material on each other. It's the same with an aircraft carrier—it seemed like a great idea in the 20th century, when there weren't hypersonic missiles.

And so you could sail in fairly close to the coast of a country, launch your air missions, and intimidate the hell out of them by bombing them. But now you've got to stay maybe a thousand miles offshore to avoid getting hit with a hypersonic missile, which sort of defeats the idea of carrying those airplanes, because the airplanes only have about a five-hundred-mile range. So if you're a thousand miles out, they can't even get halfway to the mainland where you want them to go without getting refueled. We're living in a changing world. The technology is changing it. AI is changing it. Russia and China—their rise as genuine military powers—now changes the whole equation.

#Danny

Yeah, yeah, definitely. And we didn't even get to the fact that these aircraft carriers—Larry, we have one of them that's been completely taken out of service in this war, the Gerald Ford—which... You were on this show, I believe, with our friend Colonel Wilkerson, and we were talking about the plumbing problems that were happening there. And then suddenly there's a massive so-called laundry fire, which Donald Trump later said wasn't a laundry fire at all. He said, "We were actually fired upon many times." He told this to his financier buddies. So this is indeed a crisis, Larry. Anything you want to close with now as we end the program? Anything we didn't cover? I'll leave it to you.

#Larry Johnson

Well, watching Donald Trump is like watching a Wimbledon tennis match where the same player is playing himself—back and forth, back and forth—and he's on both sides of the net. It's not going to get any better. I worry. I've received signs out of Moscow. I was supposed to go there in the middle of April, and with Pepe Escobar, we were both told that the meeting, the session we were going to have, had been canceled because there's an expectation from the Kremlin that there's going to be a dramatic escalation of this war with Iran. So, we'll see.

#Danny

Yeah, yeah, we'll see. Well, we'll head out of here together. I want to thank everybody who gave a super chat and became members—so many of you. I really appreciate it. Hit the like button before you go, and be sure to follow Larry at sonar21.com. I'll be back tomorrow at 12 noon Eastern time with our friend Stas Kropivnik. And until then, everybody, bye-bye. See you. Bye-bye.