

Col. Larry Wilkerson: Israel Might Not Survive This... Israel & Iran Nuclear Scenario

#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today is Tuesday, March 31st, 2026. And our dear friend, our brother, Col. Larry Wilkerson, is here with us. Welcome back, Colonel.

#Lawrence

Good to be with you. I had someone this morning I'd never heard from before email me and say, "If the judge kissed your head, I'd like to kiss your head." I didn't know how to respond.

#Nima

Larry, let me start with something related to the war happening right now between Iran and the United States. It's about something that happened before the war — the case of Charlie Kirk. You and I have talked about it several times: what happened, what the reality of the shooting was, the evidence, everything. But today we've learned — the Daily Mail is reporting — that the bullet used to kill Charlie Kirk didn't match the rifle they say was used by Tyler Robinson. How is that possible? It's amazing to see Kash Patel, who's been asked several times if he's sure Tyler Robinson did it, saying they're sure and that there was a lot of evidence. What do you make of what's going on with the case of Charlie Kirk? We know Charlie Kirk was against the war with Iran. He did everything he could before this disaster — the so-called war on Iran — happened. And he's not living on this planet anymore; he's passed away. What do you make of what's going on?

#Lawrence

As you know from talking with Larry Johnson and probably others too—and I know from talking with both Larry and Ray McGovern and others—we never thought this was properly presented. That is to say, we didn't think the shooter was the shooter, we didn't think the rifle was the rifle, and we didn't think the bullet was the bullet. I don't know if these new allegations are bringing this to the surface again, and whether they're doing it legitimately and accurately or not. But I won't change my view, having heard the experts' opinions and knowing something about rifles myself. There's no way this guy shot Charlie Kirk. And he certainly didn't shoot him from the position they're claiming he did. The rifle, in all of its configurations, if you will, could not have been the weapon that fired the round that killed him. So the question is, what are they hiding? And who are they hiding?

#Nima

Yeah. And do you think this administration would ever reveal what really happened? Because so far, they've been so—well, they haven't informed the public. They haven't told the media what's happened behind the scenes, what the evidence was. Kash Patel, for example, said this guy killed Charlie Kirk because all the evidence was against him. But what was that evidence? What were those documents against him? So far, we haven't seen any. Did you see any kind of document against this guy?

#Lawrence

No, I haven't seen anything that proves to me he was the shooter. I think we're looking at a similar set of circumstances to those that surrounded a much more, if you will, important killing—John Kennedy in Dallas in 1963. That took a long time and a commission—badly flawed as it was, ultimately flawed in reality, and packed as it was—but it took a lot of effort and a lot of people to finally determine the nature of the lie that was going to be told to the nation. I should say lies, plural, that were going to be told to the nation.

And the people who participated in that lying—from Earl Warren, the former Chief Justice who headed the commission, all the way down to individuals whose stories, not with their acknowledgment or complicity, were reversed, such as the team that did the first autopsy in Dallas. All to say, that was a very, very closely scrutinized process. Not closely enough, as it turns out, but it was public, and it was done in front of the klieg lights, if you will. Even though it was a falsification of the evidence, they went to some effort to do that. They've done nothing with this. Now, you could say, well, Charlie Kirk wasn't a very important character. I'd say he was pretty important.

I think some of the things he said were absolutely vile—I didn't like him at all. But when he began to shift, it was clear he got a lot of people irritated, a lot of people very, very mad, particularly Jewish American billionaires. He got them especially mad. So, you know, the next conclusion is, just like when you tried to figure out who probably shot John Kennedy—CIA, military, disgruntled Cubans, mafia—you take your pick. It was probably a conspiracy among them all. But this is a little different, because it's not that public and it's not that scrutinized. It's simply Kash Patel, and maybe some other people with the FBI. I don't even know how many people are actually in on the investigation.

So why is it taking so long to produce evidence that people could believe? Are we going to have a commission? Are we going to have to get Kash Patel out and beat the truth out of him? Does Kash Patel even know? Does he have a clue? I suspect he has the vaguest idea of who killed Charlie Kirk—no, not the vaguest idea. Now, they don't want to tell Trump that either. They don't want to tell the American people that, because it shows their incompetence. But I don't think they have a clue who killed him. I do have some clues about who I think might have killed him, that's for sure. And it ain't that guy with the rifle.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Lawrence

It's Epstein in a small capsule, right? It doesn't impact Trump. It doesn't impact any of Congress. It doesn't impact any of these important, posh people. It's just Charlie Kirk. If it were more people, they'd probably be hiding it a little more adroitly, and they'd probably be manufacturing more evidence and so forth. But since it's just Charlie Kirk out there, who cares? So why go speedily? Why go accurately? Why even try to do anything other than railroad someone? But it's going to be increasingly difficult to railroad this guy, because there are so many people out there like Larry Johnson and others who know it's a lie.

#Nima

Many things have happened since the assassination of Charlie Kirk, which was so strange. One of them was the way Donald Trump was asked—if you remember—he was asked, “How do you feel about Charlie Kirk?” He said, you know, about the assassination of Charlie, “Hey, it’s good. Look at that building, this beautiful building that we are, you know...”

#Lawrence

Look at the way he's treating people. Have you heard what he says?

#Nima

It's the whole tone, yeah.

#Lawrence

About the head of the National Counterterrorism Center—the number two guy, I guess, in the hierarchy at the ODNI—he didn't know him. I didn't know him. I gave him a job. Well, I thought he was a pretty good guy, so I gave him a job. But he's left now. I think he's wrong. Well, you listen to him talk—listen to the guy talk—and tell about the telephone conversation he had with Donald Trump, telling him he was going to leave, and the conversation Trump had with him in response to that. Totally opposite. Trump wants you to think he didn't even know this guy, that it's just inconsequential that he left. And he's wrong about the Iran war. He should have lived up to it if he felt that way. And this guy is saying, “Well, I had a long telephone call with the president, and I talked to him about what I was feeling and everything, and we went back and forth for a while.” Who's telling the truth? I'd put my money on the other guy, not the president, because he's a proverbial liar.

#Nima

Today, Larry, you had the briefing with Pete Hacksett and General Cain, and both of them mentioned—wait a minute, Nima.

#Lawrence

Just one second. I have a new analogy for you. We've been searching at Eisenhower Media Network for, you know, analogies—historical analogies. Is it Hitler? Is it Caligula? Is it Nero? All these guys. No, those are all false. The analogy is clear. You may not remember this—I'll test you. I see a few gray hairs; maybe you do remember. This is the Sith Lord and Darth Vader. Trump is the Sith Lord, and Hegseth is Darth Vader. He's Darth Vader without the redeeming feature of once being a Jedi Knight—which you may recall, if you know the movie, he turns out to be halfway decent in the end because the Jedi Knight in him comes out.

But Pete Hegseth doesn't have that redemptive feature. He's Darth Vader, and Trump is the Sith Lord—and we're the Empire. All the rest of the people in the world are Han Solo's rebel force, and they're going to attack and kill us. That's the analogy—straight out of Hollywood. I'm serious. And these kids look at me like they don't even know who Han Solo is, or who Darth Vader is, or who the Sith Lord is. "What are you talking about? Star Wars? What's Star Wars? Are you talking about Game of Thrones?"

#Nima

Larry, one of the arguments from Pete Hegseth and General Kane was that they've hit the Iranian production—the military-industrial complex—in a way that prevents them from producing more weapons, more missiles, more drones. That's why the number of missiles and drones is drastically decreasing as time goes by. Here's the information—the IRGC graph—it shows from March 11th to March 29th. The blue line shows the number of drones, and the red line shows the number of missiles.

Even the number of missiles—you see, the day before yesterday it was 60, 40. And, you know, somehow that was the highest number of missiles we'd fired, the day before yesterday. The number of drones is going up and down, but they're following the same sort of trajectory. Do they really have any solid information, or are they trying to manipulate things without providing robust numbers to the public? Because when you say something, you have to show something to back it up. But they're putting out figures that don't reflect the reality of what's going on.

#Lawrence

This administration has given a new name to lying and deceit—there's no question about it. Led by the chief man—he's the biggest liar of them all. You know, I've got a list, a partial list at least, and I

think it's pretty valid, of what I'd call second-tier targeting. The first tier they've already struck, and rather devastatingly—extraordinary accuracy, extraordinary devastation. Bahrain, for example, has no refining capacity left. That was the oldest, largest refinery in the Gulf. It's destroyed now. I was talking to some people yesterday about what that means—do they have to go in and snake out the actual piping and everything now?

And they were saying, yeah, they've got to start from ground zero and rebuild everything. It's going to cost them a huge fortune if they want to do it. So they were devastatingly accurate, and they were devastating in terms of their array of targets—what I call the first tier of extracurricular missiles. In other words, not at Israel. Missiles not shot at Israel, but at Erbil, at Prince Sultan, at other targets. So much effectiveness in Iran or in Iraq, for example, that we've gone down to emergency personnel only at our embassy in Baghdad. So I've got to look at this second tier, which I think is probably pretty accurate.

This is what they're going to hit if the states that have U.S. facilities there continue to host those facilities, and those facilities continue to be used in attacks on Iran. A reasonable proposition. If they hit this second tier of targets with the same devastation they hit the first tier with, we go into a global recession for sure—and potentially a global depression—because it's going to wreck the world economy, not just Southwest Asia but the world's economy. The one country that might be somewhat insulated from this, and actually benefit from it, is of course Russia, because of the price of oil and such.

But even they are going to be impacted by other shortages, and the rest of the world—including the Western Hemisphere, big time—is going to be majorly affected by those shortages, as are some of our allies in the East, like Taiwan, who are going to be incapable of working through this without some real help. Because of the helium shortage, because of other materials for chip-making shortages, and ultimately because of no oil. So, I mean, if Iran is saying, "Okay, China, your ships can get through, but Taiwan, your ships can't," you know, that's it.

And then, if the Houthis are really going to try to seal off the Red Sea again—and it wouldn't take much effort to do that, because we saw the first time around all it takes is frightening the insurers and the shipping companies—we're in for trouble. We're in for big trouble. And I don't see any recognition of this looming disaster on the part of the administration. Not a single one of them seems to be seized with what they're doing to the world economy. Now, I may be wrong, and they may back up at any moment here and stop what they're doing—maybe even call off this ground operation, whatever it's going to be.

But I don't see any sign of that. And therefore, I don't see any sign that they recognize the perilous ground they're walking on. And this idea of B-52s going in and carpet bombing—well, what do you think is going to happen when the first B-52 falls to Earth in flames? This is not good, Nima. It's not

good for anybody. It's not good for Iran to keep on being pummeled like this, but it's not good for the world. I won't even count the empire led by Donald Trump, but it's not good for the world, what we're about to do. We're going to plunge it into economic distress that might take years to mend.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Lawrence

I don't blame the Iranians. If they execute that second tier of targets, I don't blame them. I really don't. You know, they'd hit Erbil two or three times before. They'd sent drones, a missile or two, whatever—just to let the Israelis and the Brits know that they knew they were there, in that underground intelligence facility. Well, this time they gave them more than just a warning. They knew they were there, and they wiped them out, virtually. If they do that to everything else on this second list of targets—it's Saudi Arabia, it's the pipelines, it's the Ras Tanura-type facilities that deliver eight to twelve million barrels a day of oil—I mean, don't even talk about getting ships out of the Strait of Hormuz. You won't have any oil to put on the ships, nor any infrastructure to generate more. We're talking about a real disaster if we move forward with this and the Iranians are forced to execute that second set of targets.

#Nima

We know that Friday is a holiday, and you've got Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. If they want to invade Iran—capture one of those islands in the Persian Gulf, close to the Strait of Hormuz—it's going to be this Friday. Good Friday. Yeah.

#Lawrence

He says, "This Good Friday—Jedi Knight, Darth Vader—I'm going to attack him on my best holiday. God's going to help me."

#Nima

He just got back from CENTCOM and said they're telling us the only thing they want is more bombs. He said that during the briefing. But Larry, here's what Erik Prince, the founder of Blackwater—one of the contractors—said about invading Iran.

#Lawrence

The Wagner Group equivalent in the Empire.

#Speaker 03

The Karg Island invasion is going to be mighty thin. You have to cycle aircraft, and that's assuming you don't have any losses from maintenance. So yeah, your initial assault on Karg Island is going to be mighty thin, because those aircraft have to cycle—and that's assuming you don't have any losses from maintenance or from missiles. Do you do a mass drop of the 82nd on Karg Island? Again, that's pretty sporty. An airborne invasion in a place that has thousands and thousands of missiles—not to mention the Iranians have been learning.

They've definitely been paying attention to modern drone warfare and have implemented FPVs down to the squad level. I mean, you see videos of the Israelis in southern Lebanon losing tanks, losing armored personnel carriers to the same FPVs the Russians have been using with great effect in Ukraine. So it is, again, a fight against Iran. They're not Arabs—they're Aryans. They're highly intelligent, highly skilled warfighters, and it would not be the pushover, by comparison, that you saw with the Iraqi army that collapsed.

#Lawrence

Yeah. The truth hurts. The truth hurts. He's right. He's right. I don't know that, uh, I don't know that they're planning that, because I have to give—you know, I think I told you what I told Colin Powell one time when I walked into his office. I was in a little bit of a pique, and I said, "Let's never make an Air Force officer chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff again." And he knew what I was saying, because they don't know anything about ground warfare. They know nothing about ground warfare. And so Kane, of course, is that. But he's got to have some Army generals who aren't just chicken-shit cowards. They've got to be telling him, "Airborne operation on Karg Island?"

Are you kidding me? You want to get 3,000 people killed before they even hit the ground? You want to get them plummeting to the earth with their parachutes burning? I'm sorry, this isn't going to work. And as he was suggesting there with the Osprey—you know what the Marines call the Osprey? The flying death trap. One Marine said to me, "Would I be within my rights, Colonel, if I were embarking on an Osprey for a training mission and I refused to get on it?" I didn't know how to answer him. Now, I have to say, it doesn't have any worse record than a couple of other aircraft over the past 50 years in terms of killing people.

Bad records, in other words. But it does have a consistent and particular problem with the rotation from forward flight to hovering flight and back again with that clutch that I think everybody knows about. And so I think every Marine who gets on an Osprey takes a moment and says to Jesus—or whatever, Mohammed—"Please let me live through this flight." This is not an aircraft I'd want to go into combat in, where it's so crucial that everything be perfectly timed—everything at exactly the right altitude, the right airspeed, the exact right landing profile, and so forth—because you're going to be interdicted majorly, if by nothing else than drones.

But certainly, you probably have some pretty powerful missiles, too. So you're asking—Trump is asking—to kill a lot of Americans for no reason. No reason whatsoever. As one Air Force sergeant said to me recently in an email, “Why are we doing this, Colonel? They present no threat to us. So why are we doing this?” That question is probably making its way through a lot of the ranks, too, in addition to the religious business and everything else. There are probably a lot of people just sitting there asking themselves, “Why are we doing this?” Not the pilots who are dropping the bombs and everything—that’s one thing I don’t like about Air Force officers being chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

They don't understand the ground. They only understand the technology that releases the bomb, the pictures, and the happy videos that show the bomb hitting. They don't understand what happens after the bomb hits. They don't understand ground warfare. They don't understand what it's like to be under that bomb. And that's bad. That's bad. Look at the IDF Air Force—bloodthirstiest people on the face of the earth. Look at what they're doing in Lebanon: bombing hotels, bombing restaurants, bombing dry cleaners, bombing old women, bombing old men, bombing babies in their carriages. That's what the IDF is good at. That's what they do. That's what air forces do—bloodthirsty air forces.

Soldiers know better. Marines know better. And it's terrible to hurl them into this conflict. Just terrible. I feel for all of them—not to mention the Iranians under the bombs. I mean, did you hear Araghchi in front of the UN emergency panel on Manab School? He told it like it was. He said, “We are evil. We are evil. We torpedoed diplomacy not once but twice.” He used that English word—“torpedo.” We torpedoed diplomacy twice. In the middle of diplomacy, we bombed people. “Palestine started it all,” he said. “Palestine is the issue. It started it all.” And he's right. And Bibi's still in there. Naftali Bennett is angry with Bibi because he's not killing the Palestinians fast enough.

#Nima

Larry, the reality is that Donald Trump, Pete Hegseth, and many others around Trump are making money off these wars. Yes. You know, the Financial Times reported that Pete Hegseth's broker tried to buy a defense fund before the attack on Iran. These guys are making a lot of money.

#Lawrence

Look at Markwayne Mullin. Markwayne Mullin didn't wait to be a senator to make a million-plus. He made it as he waltzed into Congress. He was already making money because he was already plugged into the Pelosi—you know, the insider trading. I mean, you sometimes have a hard time defending America anymore. And then that report that's coming out—have you heard about the report that's been very carefully put together by, I guess, Brown and Brown University and some others?

Since 2000, we have killed 38 million people with our sanctions—38 million people, half of whom are women and children. Add to that Libya, Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia—I bet our toll is over Joseph Stalin's, over Mao Zedong's, and probably over Hitler's, in terms of people the empire has killed. This is unconscionable. And Araghchi was absolutely right in his damnation of this empire. I don't care what anybody thinks about Iran. You can think it's the most evil Islamic theocracy on the face of the earth—it does not hold a candle to the American empire.

#Nima

Yeah. Actually, Pete Hegseth was bragging today about how precise the attacks on Iran are, saying we're hitting strategic points in strategic locations. But the reality is, Larry, they're attacking pharmaceutical companies—mostly ones producing cancer medicine for the people. He listed it. Same thing they're doing in Cuba.

#Lawrence

I saw what's happened to Cuba yesterday in aggregate. It's horrible. One of the best healthcare systems on the face of the earth. I know—I toured their hospitals. I toured their Hermanos Viñales. What John Bolton called a chemical facility was actually a biosafety level three facility that made really good medicines. They wiped out Japanese encephalitis completely—wiped it out on the island. They did it all by themselves. Maybe they were helped a little by the Brazilians, but mostly they did it on their own.

#Nima

We have a lot of Cuban doctors here in Brazil.

#Lawrence

They're amazing. And they're just broken now—broken. This Russian tanker may give them a little bit of life. I hope so, because it's carrying a lot of energy, if you will. They were doing things like taking babies off respirators because they had to conserve power, then hoping that when the power came back for an hour or two, the baby wouldn't be dead.

#Nima

Larry, when it comes to the situation in Israel, we have a new report online. You know, the guy who's in Israel, reporting for Fox News—he was saying the situation is getting worse as time goes by with this war. And here's what he reported.

#Speaker 04

What we're hearing from the Israeli people we talk to is: finish the job. They don't want to have to deal with this anymore. They don't want their children growing up in bomb shelters. On Wednesday—tomorrow—the Israeli people will mark the first night of Passover, and many of them will be having their Passover seders in bomb shelters. It's just a reality they're tired of. They want these threats against their country reduced, and they'd like to live in peace and stability.

#Speaker 05

It's such a good point, Trey, because, you know, there's divided government in Israel. You've got a prime minister from one side and a president from another. But the one thing they agree on is the threat that Iran poses to their country. And I think that tells us a lot.

#Lawrence

Yeah, they're missing the point, though. They're missing the point. Those Israelis want Netanyahu to wipe out the Palestinians and wipe out the Iranians. That's the solution they want. They don't understand that the solution is impossible to achieve—and that they're the ones who are going to be wiped out. That's the truth of it.

#Nima

And they're not going to be part of the operation if the United States decides to go underground on one of these islands.

#Lawrence

No, you won't find the Israelis anywhere near that. They know better.

#Nima

And they're taking a lot of significant casualties along the border with Lebanon.

#Lawrence

The armored forces in Lebanon—I'm seeing pictures I never thought I'd see of the IDF's vaunted armored corps. Moshe Dayan's rolling over in his grave. These people are unlimbering their tanks and running, because their column—well, Hezbollah's fighters are very smart. They take out the lead tank, then the rear tank, then one or two in the center. After that, the rest are just sitting ducks, because they're not even maintaining tactical distance in their columns. They're so used to not having to. So they're just moving in as fast as they can, bumper to bumper almost. That's extremely stupid—especially under this kind of warfare—because they're dying.

I saw Haaretz this morning—five more dead from the armored corps in Lebanon—and they're not reporting all the casualties. I mean, there's a tight restriction on casualty reporting. Like I told you earlier, the official list in the hospitals was 5,817, I think. And then Netanyahu came out and said, "Yeah, but all but 137 of them have been released back to the bomb shelter," or whatever. Yeah, right. How were they released back? Minus a hand, minus a foot, minus an arm. I mean, don't tell me you have over 5,000, almost 6,000, in your hospitals and only 137 are there now—and all the rest of them were just, you know, a Band-Aid.

#Nima

Larry, when it comes to policy in Israel, do you think it even matters who the prime minister is anymore? Oh my—yeah.

#Lawrence

Because all of them, you see—I don't think there's any relief on the horizon. Labor's been killed. I'm not even sure what Labor is anymore. Yitzhak Rabin's assassination, I think, just set them back so far they couldn't see the light anymore. So there's no leavening force in Israel, which is another reason why it's not a democracy. It's a single-party state. It's Likud—and the allies it has that are even further to the right than Likud.

And I understand yesterday they were out there beating Israelis with bullwhips or whatever—the Orthodox who were refusing to go into the lines, you know, refusing to serve. This isn't creating a very healthy situation either, that they're having to pound these people just to get them to serve. What kind of soldiers are they going to make? Are they just going to feed them into the caves and tunnels or whatever and let them die? I'm sure some of them probably would like to do that with them—getting a free ride, not serving at all because of their religious beliefs.

#Lawrence

Yeah.

#Lawrence

Israel is in turmoil. I think that's putting it lightly. They're in turmoil. They've never been this hard-pressed before. It's certainly not a safe haven for Jews anymore—it's anything but a safe haven. Living in bomb shelters 24/7, eating in bomb shelters, celebrating in bomb shelters. You come out of the bomb shelter and you've got a real good chance of being severely wounded or dying. When you do come out, you're seeing everything around you aflame or destroyed, including now lots of civilian properties, buildings, and businesses. You've had another 400,000 people called up on top of the 300,000 called up before. Who's running your economy? No one. No one. Your

economy isn't running. This is a disaster for Israel, and no one is willing to admit it, correct it, and move in some other direction.

#Nima

They're just talking about the southern part of Lebanon. They don't want to leave; they want to grab the land.

#Lawrence

And let's slide off and get Syria too. We want that Syrian guy dead as well. We don't want him in charge of the government in Damascus anymore. Let's make it chaos. We're going to make Iran chaos. We'll make it chaos. And then we'll just wade into the chaos with settlers. And guess what? Have you looked at the West Bank lately? They have IDF units now that are turning against the Palestinians remaining there and helping the settlers finish them off. At least that didn't used to happen. Maybe an individual IDF soldier might help an individual settler kill a Palestinian or run him off his land. But now you've got whole units helping them destroy what's left of Palestinian life in the West Bank. You know, bloodthirsty people—bloodthirsty people who are getting their comeuppance.

#Nima

But in the case of the war against Iran, the situation isn't going the way they want it to, because the United States is putting pressure on Poland to send its Patriot systems to Israel. You know, when you look at all these systems—after South Korea, now Poland—they've rejected it, by the way. It shows the reality of what's happening in Israel.

#Lawrence

Good for the Poles. I saw the list the other day—you probably did too. You know, four days left, six days left, seven days left, nine days left, and so on. It's a pretty grim-looking list for the most critical munitions that are needed right now. That's why you're not seeing much going up at the moment. The report out of Haaretz this morning said the government is "husbanding" its missiles, right? Well, that means two things: one, you recognize you're running out; and two, you know they are, because otherwise you wouldn't be husbanding them, right?

You know, you put this out—oh, they'll be out soon, they'll be out soon. They don't have that many missiles left. Well, why are you holding so many of your missiles and not firing them when missiles are coming in, if you think they're running out? You're holding them because you know their supplies are still pretty robust. And this second tier of targets—their supplies have to be fairly strong in order to execute that tier. So if it's out there to be executed, and it seemed like—who's the speaker of the Majlis? Kadibov.

#Lawrence

Kadibov, yeah.

#Lawrence

He made some statements yesterday that were very indicative that they're right about to launch that second tier. So they must have plenty of missiles.

#Nima

They know the situation in Israel. They have a lot of intelligence coming out of there. Before the war started, we all thought—well, I was thinking—that Mossad would have a lot of leverage in Iran. But as time goes by, it seems they don't have anything in Iran.

#Lawrence

I think they got them pretty badly after that last one. You know, remember Pence talking about the guy in the street—the Iranian protesting—and the Mossad agent was right behind him, pushing him? I think they found those Mossad agents and those CIA agents, and they got rid of them. And they found the Armenians, Azerbaijanis, Kurds, and others who were helping, and they got rid of them too. So they did some major damage to Israel. And I was told—I don't know this for sure, the source was a little questionable—but that there were quite a few that Israel put back in to try and reconstitute that line of intelligence, if you will. And they rounded them up forthwith—got them too.

#Nima

I think that's right, because from what I've seen and what I've heard so far, they're just blind. They don't know what they're doing. That's why they're hitting universities, hospitals, schools. This is the reason—if you have strategic locations, you go and hit the strategic locations. You don't hit these.

#Lawrence

All war crimes. All war crimes. Every time you hit something like that, it's a war crime. But she said, "No one cares anymore, apparently." He always takes it back to the Palestinians—starting with the Palestinians. No one cares anymore. All the rules are gone.

#Nima

Netanyahu wants Larry to form a new kind of alliance with the Arab states to go against the acts of resistance. But when it comes to building some sort of new coalition against that resistance, you have to have the army—Israeli or not—and who's going to help them? In Saudi Arabia? In Kuwait, I'

d say? In the UAE? Most of the people, public opinion, are against Israel. It doesn't matter if it's the elites or the guy who's running things—the king, or whatever they have in their countries. The guy's just not that popular.

#Lawrence

What a way to set up the fall of your own monarchy. I mean, no kidding. What a way to give the Arab Spring a new life—and a vicious one. I wonder about Bahrain in particular, because it's just been blasted. And the fact that the people haven't taken advantage of that and just thrown the monarchy out on its fanny is a little bit remarkable. I've got to think that maybe some of the people were blasted too, you know—that they really are kind of shivering in shock right now. People have told me I wouldn't even believe Bahrain if I went there, that it's just so utterly destroyed.

#Lawrence

Yeah.

#Nima

Larry, what do you make of the Arab states trying to—well, we've learned from the Associated Press—they reported that Saudi Arabia, together with the UAE, is trying to push, to force Donald Trump to stay in the fight, to continue this war. You know, on one hand, if you want to keep this conflict going, this war, you have to have the weapons, the bombs, the missiles—everything. That's one hand. On the other hand, it seems they're ready to provide the United States, to give money to Donald Trump and his administration. But money isn't going to make the bombs.

#Lawrence

No.

#Nima

It's huge—you know, the process is getting way too time-consuming. And...

#Lawrence

I think they're very frightened—frightened of their own people, of course. They're always afraid of that, and they always keep a weather eye on the streets. But they're also scared that if the United States pulls out and there's no rescuer for them—and there's a reason, if you think about it, why neither China nor Russia wants to assume that position—then who else is there? There is no rescuer for them. And when their people sense that, their time is over. Now, the chaos that might follow could be worse than what came before, but I think I'd rather risk that than keep those horrible

monarchies going further into the future. And the reason those monarchies have been able to survive is us.

We've propped them up. We've given them the weapons to destroy their own people if they need to, and the Praetorian Guards to do it. That's what the Saudi National Guard is really for—it's a Praetorian Guard for the royals. So, you know, you're damned if you do and damned if you don't. But in this case, as someone who likes to think of himself as having at least some humanitarian instincts, I'd like to see these people get a little freedom. So overthrow these people—overthrow them. That's anathema to my government, or it was to my government. I don't know. Compare that to the talk Donald Trump gave—do you remember the one he gave there in Riyadh? I think it was Riyadh.

And he had all the potentates out there, telling them how he understood their circumstances and appreciated their situation, and that he was going to protect them and all that kind of thing. And now look at what's happening. Where do they turn, other than asking him to be even more aggressive so they don't end up with an Iran that's empowered to come over and smack them upside the head? I don't think Iran would do that anyway. I think it's going to take years for Iran to recover from all this pummeling we've given it—to rebuild its schools, its hospitals, everything, virtually. But I think their fear is that, after the U.S. presence is gone and with no other great power stepping in, Iran's going to take them.

I don't think that fear is justified. I really don't. They're just trying to save themselves, that's all. I go back to Powell telling me about Prince Bandar and the royals in general, saying, "Larry, don't worry. The Saudis will always go to the most potent power, taking their money with them." And when it comes to the end of the day for the Saudi royal family—when it becomes untenable for them to stay around anymore—the same applies to Jordan and to Egypt. Mubarak proved it in Egypt; they just didn't consolidate it well. They're gone. They're gone. And the implication on Powell's part was: good riddance. He wasn't comfortable with that relationship either.

#Speaker 03

Yeah.

#Nima

Here's what Pete Hackett said today about regime change in Iran.

#Speaker 07

Because regime change has occurred, it should be wiser than the last. President Trump will make a deal if he's willing, and the terms of that deal are already known to them. If Iran isn't willing, then the U.S. War Department will continue with even more intensity.

#Nima

Yeah. The regime change has happened, you know.

#Lawrence

All you've got to do is put a helmet on him, and he's Darth Vader. Just put a black helmet on him and have it go— That's the way Darth Vader breathed through that helmet, and he's Darth Vader. I mean, you can't make this crap up, Nima. Yeah. We're the empire, and everyone else out there is Princess Leia and Han Solo and the Millennium Falcon and justice and truth and the galactic way—the prime imperative, as Star Trek would put it. That's who we are. We're the people the world hates.

#Nima

It's not just Pete Hackett. Donald Trump is negotiating behind the scenes with himself, it seems.

#Lawrence

Oh, yeah. Talks to himself at night between nightmares. Yeah. And then they had—what did they do in Pakistan? They had the Egyptian foreign minister, they had the Pakistani foreign minister. Who else did they have? They had a couple of other people there. And they were supposedly talking about the war in Iran. Now, what the hell do you think they were talking about—the war in Iran? They were talking about the United States and how dangerous we've become.

#Nima

And just adding, you know, when you have the Treasury Secretary, you might expect some sort of sanity from him because he has the numbers. And here's what he said about this rate of, uh, hormones, Larry.

#Lawrence

It's well supplied, and we're seeing more and more ships go through on a daily basis as individual countries cut deals with the Iranian regime for the time being. But over time, the U.S. is going to retake control of the straits, and there will be freedom of navigation, whether it's through U.S. escorts or a multinational escort.

#Lawrence

So he just described the situation exactly the way it is. If Iran wants you to get through, you get through. If Iran doesn't want you to get through, you don't get through. Now, can they maintain that posture indefinitely? Probably not. But can they maintain a sense of danger significant enough

to keep insurers and shippers from going back full bore? Yes, probably for the indefinite future they can do that. Unless these ground operations succeed in some spectacular way—which I do not expect at all—the spectacle will be American boys and girls dying. Otherwise, I think they can probably maintain this selective passage for some time.

And he's talking out of the top of his head. We don't have the naval craft, the naval munitions, or the naval capacity to keep that strait open on a continuing basis against a still fairly well-armed Iran. We just don't. So he's pipe-dreaming. He's pipe-dreaming at least six months down the road, and at the end of those six months, who the hell knows what's going to happen? Because Trump is plunging in the polls, MAGA is leading that plunge, and there's no way the Republicans are going to win the midterms unless they cheat colossally. And I can't believe the Democrats will let them get away with that. I just can't. Not again.

#Nima

We know that Egypt is making eight hundred million to a billion dollars a month through the Suez Canal.

#Nima

I think Iran is preparing for something like that, Larry, when it comes to the Strait of Hormuz—this preparation they're talking about.

#Lawrence

Yeah, they're already doing it. As I understand it, they're already doing it. They're putting a permit cost on even their friends and partners. Ahmadinejad actually suggested that in New York when we were talking—that they'd never thought about it before, but they should, and maybe share it with others in the Gulf—Bahrain, the UAE, whatever.

#Nima

Oman is going to be part of it.

#Lawrence

Oman. That's the first one I'd pick too, if I were Iran—a decent country with an eye toward peace all the time instead of war. Yeah, they should. They should do that. The Law of the Sea Treaty would amend the record with regard to that and charge, just like Egypt charges for passing through the Suez Canal. And Panama charges for going through the Panama Canal.

#Nima

Whenever we talk about the war with Iran, I think in the background we always see the threat of using nuclear bombs, Larry. I think the possibility of using nuclear weapons is still there. And as long as Israel is in a desperate situation—we know what's going on in Israel—the population isn't happy, as we've seen in that report on Fox News. People are suffering a lot because they're in the bunkers. You can see the casualties on the border with Lebanon, how Lebanon is somehow dominating the IDF, and the pressure from Iranian missiles. So if, out of all these circumstances, Israel decides to use nuclear weapons, what's your understanding of that scenario?

#Lawrence

I understand it simply from a military perspective that, as I've said before, one or two wouldn't be sufficient to decisively influence the situation. So I would look at Israel targeting those facilities it believes are producing missile launches—on rails, underground, whatever—in mountainous terrain in most cases. And that would mean quite a few nuclear weapons, at least fifty probably. So that's really not just letting the genie out of the bottle; that's asking for retaliation, and from more than one power in the region, even. Yesterday we got some reports that S-500s were being delivered, along with Russians to operate them.

That would put F-35s—everything—in jeopardy. Six-hundred-mile radar range, I think. They could see them coming from 600 miles away; you could pop an F-35, anything you want, with that. I don't know if that's actually the case—we haven't been able to verify it. The report was that S-500s were there in quantity, with Russian technicians to operate them. So any time you introduce something like that into this conflict—short of nuclear weapons—it might not be ultimately decisive, but it would certainly be tactically decisive at the moment, and probably for several moments after that. It would force us to readjust a lot of things. You wouldn't fly any B-52s over, for example, which Trump is threatening now. He's apparently put B-52s on alert to go over there and drop carpet bombs, you know.

And the other thing is, the B-52s can carry the air-launched cruise missile—the ALCM—and other weapons like that. So they don't necessarily have to overfly Iranian territory. And then you've got, is it Lincoln, I think? Lincoln's still sitting about a thousand kilometers out in the Arabian Sea. They haven't tried anything yet because, at that distance—do the math—even a very fast missile with a carpet-bombing-type warhead has trouble. The flank speed of a fully loaded carrier is over 33 knots, which is really fast for a platform that size. So you can get out of the way of the missile, as it were.

It can't target you that fast in its terminal phase if you're going that fast and maneuvering too. That's how they lost the plane in the Red Sea, for example—their arc of turn was too sharp and the plane fell off. Well, they'd batten down the hatches, or they just wouldn't do anything, just try to evade the missile. So you wouldn't want to, you know, waste a couple of those missiles knowing they were going to miss at that extended range. You come in any closer and that gets a lot easier—it's a lot easier for the missile to hit you, and for you to get up to flank speed and get away from it. So this has got lots of dimensions to it that haven't been explored yet.

One of those possibilities is a lucky hit on an aircraft carrier—five thousand Americans dead in one fell swoop. There are so many things that could happen to complicate this war. What would the American people's reaction be if a main battle cruiser like that—a capital ship, as we used to call them, an aircraft carrier in this case—went down with five thousand men and women dead? Would the American people's view change? Because they don't support this war now, not a majority of them. Would they shift and suddenly support it because of those deaths? I don't know. The American people can be very fickle sometimes. I don't think they would. I think their lack of support would become even stronger if that were to happen.

They'd start wagging their fingers and saying, "See, we told you, you shouldn't be doing this. You've just killed five thousand men and women." I don't know. There are so many different things in war that, as Clausewitz points out repeatedly, you just don't know when something's going to change the dynamics. Powell used to call it the CNN effect. You know what he meant by that? A single soldier or Marine on the battlefield, filmed by CNN doing something, might change the whole prospect of the war. Think about Mogadishu—'93, was it?—when that warrant officer was dragged through the street, burned, wounded badly, and dead, ultimately pulled from the helicopter—Black Hawk Down—and how that changed Americans' views of that conflict.

And Clinton got out faster than greased lightning. He gave the commander an order to withdraw under pressure and do it tomorrow. And that's the CNN effect—you don't know about that. The camera catches one little tactical episode, and all of a sudden the people's support for the war disappears. You never know when something like that's going to happen. For example, Clark Island—Ospreys burning, Marines dying, paratroopers in the air with their parachutes aflame. Those kinds of scenes would get the American people on President Trump's back like shit on a stick. So you never know when something like that's going to happen and change the whole complexion of the war, for one side at least.

#Nima

I think in Donald Trump's case, you'd have to call it the Fox effect, not the CNN effect.

#Lawrence

Yeah, you're right. You're right—the Fox effect. Yeah, maybe Fox is the only one with enough guts to go over there.

#Lawrence

Yeah.

#Lawrence

Did you see my article on the front page of The Washington Post? No, I haven't seen it. It wasn't my article—it was Michelle Boorstein, the religion reporter for The Washington Post, quoting me in the piece. She called me an admiral—Admiral Wilkerson. Thanks for the promotion. But that article was the first one talking about Hegseth and his prayer meetings at the Pentagon, and about how Trump is tolerating that—how unconstitutional it is, you know. It was the first article, above the fold, left side, front page of The Washington Post. That's the first time we've been able to get anything into the mainstream media.

#Nima

It's just amazing to get there, because they don't like the people who are being criticized.

#Lawrence

We're traitors. We're traitors. We're traitors—just like Bobby Lee was a traitor. Only Bobby Lee was really a traitor. Yeah.

#Nima

The only buddy in this system—the only one who's not a traitor in this system—is Lindsey Graham, who's just... yeah, he's straightforward. The guy is...

#Lawrence

I'm being told by people in my home state right now that not only is— I think she's a pediatrician, the woman who's running against him as a Democrat— not only is she gaining ground, but also the guy in the Republican primary running against Lindsey Graham is worse than Graham, but he's tolerable. So they think there's a chance he might unseat Graham in the primary before it even gets to the election. He's MAGA through and through, but he's a little— you know, he's not a weird dude like Lindsey is. Yeah.

#Nima

Lindsey is just a hybrid guy, you know—he's both Democrat and Republican. It doesn't matter.

#Lawrence

It doesn't matter. He reminds me of John Taylor.

#Nima

He's just establishment. He's establishment—part of the establishment.

#Lawrence

He's a strange character, really. He could only be from South Carolina. This is the state that fired on Fort Sumter. This is the state where the Consul General reported back to the British, "You don't want to ally with these people." You know, from Charleston. I mean, that's what he was saying to the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of Great Britain—he was saying, "You don't want an alliance with these people. They're horrible people."

#Nima

Thank you. Thank you, Larry. And we're going to talk again on Friday. Let's see what happens. It seems that if they go—if they want to invade, if they want to go underground—it's going to be on Friday, if it happens.

#Lawrence

I think that's what Larry thinks. Yeah.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Speaker 05

Let's see.

#Lawrence

We'll see. In the meantime, have some pupus. What do you call pupu?

#Nima

What do you call pupu? I really hope they don't do that because, you know, it's just—we know, I know—the outcome. I'm sure about the outcome. The outcome is not good. You're killing people. Why? Why are you doing this? It has nothing to do with Donald Trump.

#Lawrence

That's the fundamental question. Why are we doing this? Why are we attacking, mercilessly, a country that presents no viable threat to the United States of America? Why are we doing that? And the answer that it's Israel has a grain of truth to it, but I don't think it's the full answer. It's not the full answer. Maybe the full answer, as the Speaker of the Majlis and the Foreign Minister suggested, is that we're just plain evil.

#Nima

Yeah. Thank you, Larry. See you soon.

#Lawrence

Take care. See you Friday.

#Nima

Take care.

#Lawrence

If I'm still alive.

#Nima

Sure, we're going to talk. Take care. Bye-bye.

#Lawrence

Take care.

#Nima

Bye-bye.