

# Scott Ritter: War Goes Horribly Wrong - U.S. Could Use Nuclear Weapons

Scott Ritter is a former Major, Intelligence Officer, US Marine, and UN Weapons Inspector. Ritter discusses Trump's warning, "A whole civilization will die tonight". Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glennDiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: [https://x.com/Glenn\\_Diesen](https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen) Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glennDiesen> Support the research by Prof. Glenn Diesen: PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glennDiesen> Buy me a Coffee: [buymeacoffee.com/gdiesen](https://buymeacoffee.com/gdiesen) Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

## #Glenn

Welcome back. Today is the 7th of April, 2026, and we are joined by Scott Ritter, a former UN weapons inspector, a U.S. Marine Corps intelligence officer, and also an author. Thank you very much for taking the time. Thanks for having me. So, it's a bit uncertain at this point, after all these tweets coming from Trump, arguing that all of civilization will die tonight. Has he lost his mind, or do you think this is just a form of negotiation tactic? How do you make sense of the recent outburst on Truth Social?

## #Scott Ritter

When you have a president threatening the genocide of 90 million people, that can't be construed as rational thought under any circumstance. This is a president who's clearly lost his mind, lost his ability for rational thought, lost his ability to govern. This is a man who's not qualified to hold the office of the President of the United States of America. And if the United States hopes to retain any semblance of legitimacy—constitutionally or in terms of international law—this is a president whose reign of terror must come to an end. This is an illegal war of aggression being waged against Iran. Nobody can articulate, in any coherent way, anything other than that.

You know, Justice Jackson warned us at Nuremberg—he was the prosecutor who put the Nazis on trial—that a war of aggression was the ultimate war crime, because from a war of aggression all other war crimes emanated. And now we have the president threatening genocide. This is collective punishment, which is literally a war crime. There's no justification for this whatsoever. And there's, you know, the use of terminology by him and his vice president, who has said that there are "tools in the toolbox" that we have yet to use—tools that would be used to facilitate this civilization-ending strike. The implication is clearly that we have nuclear weapons on the line that can be used.

This is a president talking about using nuclear weapons preemptively against a non-nuclear threat—against no threat whatsoever. Again, the mere thought of using nuclear weapons brings up war crimes. So we have to talk about the distinction. You know, military planners are required to distinguish between civilian and military targets, and we know that nuclear weapons do not distinguish. Now, you could make an argument that in the case of nuclear retaliation, it just doesn't matter. But here we're talking about the preemptive use of nuclear weapons. Distinction is out the window—a war crime. We're also talking about proportionality. What is Iran doing that could be considered proportional to nuclear annihilation? And the answer is nothing.

The president is upset about Iran's continued stranglehold over the Strait of Hormuz, and he's threatening the entire Iranian nation with annihilation if the Iranian government doesn't relinquish control of the strait. This again is collective punishment. The president is threatening genocide. The man is insane—literally insane. He's insane. If this is part of a negotiating strategy, then no rational person would negotiate using such language, such positions. And he's insane simply for threatening genocide. And the American people are collectively insane if we allow this to happen. I mean, it's outrageous that people are just going back and forth to work, not doing anything, as if nothing's happening. Where's Congress?

We have one member of Congress calling for implementation of the 25th Amendment. Where is Congress? The president's cabinet? Where's the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff? I mean, at this point, it would be appropriate for somebody to say, "Mr. President, you must cease. You are the commander in chief, and your social media postings have the weight of policy behind them. You're articulating genocide, and we, the uniformed members of the United States military, will never execute orders linked to genocide. So alter this, or we must inform you that we cannot continue to receive, obey, and execute orders issued by you." This is where we're at today. This is the scope and scale of the problem, and the significance of the threat.

## **#Glenn**

It appears that some of Trump's desperation, at least, intensified after this search-and-rescue mission went wrong—or at least what appears to be a search-and-rescue mission. I was wondering, how do you make sense of this? Because the U.S. seems to have taken a lot of losses. Do you have any details on what happened during this search and rescue?

## **#Scott Ritter**

I can only go off informed speculation based on the limited data that's been made available. Let's just start by noting that the force structure—two MC-130s loaded with Little Bird assault helicopters—is a standard combat search-and-rescue setup trained for by the Air Force Special Operations

community, together with Army Special Operations Forces. This isn't classified. In May 2023, the U. S. Air Force conducted an operation—I think they called it Agile Chariot—in Wyoming, where they used this exact force structure. They had a downed pilot injured as part of the scenario.

Two MC-130s landed on an improvised runway, offloaded MH-6 and AH-6 helicopters, which went out, carried out a combat search-and-rescue mission, found the pilot, recovered the pilot, came back, and everybody flew off. So, for the people out there saying there's no way two MC-130s could ever be involved in something like this—you're wrong, simply wrong. That's half the problem: we have people talking about things they just don't know or understand. But here's the twist—the force configuration, who was on board. We had Tier 1 Special Operations units. We had SEAL Team 6. We had Delta Force. They don't do combat search and rescue. That's just— I mean, they can do it; they're, of course, highly trained, and they could do it.

But they don't do it. And the other thing is, this package is not an Air Force Special Operations package, you know, a CSAR package. This is a Joint Special Operations Task Force. And Joint Special Operations Task Forces are formed to carry out specific mission assignments given to them not by the regional commander, but by the National Command Authority. And combat search and rescue is not a mission sent down by the National Command Authority. The other thing is, when we look at the composition of it and what the president has talked about, it appears there was a package on board that had nothing to do with combat search and rescue, but everything to do with a special mission.

And we have other hints about this because ID cards were found on board belonging to people with nuclear expertise. So what we can begin to speculate, in an informed way, is that when you have Navy SEALs—SEAL Team 6 specifically—they're trained for nuclear seizure missions. That's part of their mission profile. Delta Force likewise has similar capabilities. Delta Force and the U.S. Army also have specialized explosive ordnance disposal skills related to breaching nuclear facilities to gain access. The president made reference to equipment used for scaling mountains. No—they had helicopters, not mountain-climbing gear. But the president did give away a significant detail.

This was equipment used to lower yourself into a mountain. You know, I believe this was a Joint Special Operations Task Force that was given the mission of securing an airfield near Isfahan and then carrying out a mission of unknown duration—it could last hours, could last days—against the southern tunnel complex of Isfahan, where we had identified an air vent. The job of the SEALs and the EOD was to breach the air vent. Delta was to secure and gain access to uranium hexafluoride cylinders, recover these cylinders, and bring them out. That was the mission. That's what they were configured to do. Now, the question is, where does this pilot rescue come in?

Was this an audible call by the president, who was concerned they were going to lose this colonel to the enemy, and he went ahead and sacrificed the Isfahan mission? No. Because the airplanes went in configured for Isfahan. They didn't go in configured for combat search and rescue. They were overloaded—grossly overloaded—and that's one of the reasons they bogged down on the airfield

and couldn't take off. The other thing is, the second aircraft may have been damaged by Iranian anti-aircraft fire. There's physical evidence on the remains of the aircraft that suggests this was the case. So that plane may not have been able to take off anyway because of the damage done to it. You know, again, there's just so much that's unknown about this, but the bottom line is, this was a failed mission.

They can talk about rescuing a downed pilot, but this was a failed mission if it was linked to the Isfahan tunnel complex and recovering the material inside. The fact that this was being run out of the White House is problematic—it suggests there was something else going on. This wasn't just combat search and rescue; this was something else. And maybe this entire pilot rescue story was a cover for a larger failed operation that had to be aborted once the aircraft got bogged down or damaged. They had to call it off. But we don't know—there's just so much about this that remains unknown. What we do know is that this mission was doomed to fail from the start. Ask yourself why the Iranians were prepared.

The answer is quite obvious. Tulsi Gabbard revealed this mission when she told the United States Congress, in open session, that the Intelligence Committee has a good idea where the Iranian uranium is. Imagine being the Iranians and hearing the director of national intelligence say, "We have a good idea." Well, the Iranians know exactly where it is, so they're bound to assume that if she's right, they need to safeguard it, they need to protect it. Then the Wall Street Journal publishes an article on March 29th saying the United States is preparing a raid to do this, with details about an airfield seizure—a multi-day operation—to go after the uranium that Tulsi Gabbard says we know about.

And so now the Iranians are able to look outward and say, "Okay, well, here's an airfield they would have to land at. Here's what they'd do." And they start defending it. We compromised this mission from the very beginning. I mean, my God, if we were going to do this mission, the job of the director of national intelligence would be to go to Congress and say, "We have no idea where the uranium is. We're still looking for it." See, now you get the Iranians to drop their guard. You don't leak your plan to the Wall Street Journal. In fact, what you say is the exact opposite: "No, we're not prepared to do this because we don't know where it is. We wouldn't even know where to begin looking for it or conducting a raid."

And then you deploy your forces in secret. Instead, when they surged, you could literally define the composition of a joint special operations task force based on where forces were surging from—Pope Air Force Base, Hunter Airfield, Fort Bragg, Oceana—the various locations where all these special operations capabilities reside. They were all suddenly surging forward at one time, highly publicized. We gave away this operation. It was doomed from the very start. This is one of the most foolhardy things ever attempted. It was never going to succeed because the Iranians were always going to be ready for it. The entire thing is just mind-boggling.

**#Glenn**

Well, if you put it in that context, it does make sense, but it also sheds some light on the recent threats. That is, if this military operation failed, then the alternative would be to bomb really heavily. I mean, either use nuclear weapons, as you suggested, or use conventional weapons to go after nuclear power plants or bridges—whatever it may be. But if you follow the Israeli media, at least one of the channels has a countdown to 8 p.m. on the 7th of April, which is just a few hours away, and there's great excitement about it. How do you think the Israelis are planning this out?

Are they pushing for this massive war? It seems they'd have some reason to be cautious, because if it looks like Iran's going down, they're not going to restrain themselves. I think that's one of the hallmarks of the Iranian strategy—to follow this escalation ladder quite diligently. That is, if the US and Israel take a step up, they follow. But if someone tried to inflict such severe damage on Iran—when we're talking about the death of a civilization—you can imagine the Iranians hitting back in a very heavy way.

## **#Scott Ritter**

No, you're absolutely right. The Iranians have maintained escalation control, meaning there's no hesitation. In the past, the United States and Israel believed they could carry out an action and the Iranians would be hesitant. Here, the Iranians respond decisively. We saw that when the United States and Israel struck—primarily Israel struck—some chemical plants in Iran the other day. Iran immediately responded by taking out some of the most critical chemical plants in Saudi Arabia, the SABIC plant and others, destroying them, rendering them useless. And in doing so, they inflicted huge harm on the global economy. A lot of the resources we rely on—petroleum-based resources—are now not going to be available, and there is no alternative.

You know, SABIC is a unique manufacturing capability. We have a SABIC plant right here. I guess it's the biggest SABIC plant in the world today, because the one in Saudi Arabia has been taken out of service. But the danger now is that when we get into the erasure of a civilization, how does Iran respond? So far, Iran has not inflicted lethal damage on any nation-state. Iran would be in a position to justify eliminating all desalination plants in Israel, all desalination plants in the Gulf Arab states. And Iran has the capacity to do this. When that happens, these nation-states will no longer be able to function, no longer able to survive, because you need water—and there is no alternative water source for millions of people.

And you'll see, the Israelis have the ability to get on boats and airplanes and leave their country. Many of them have passports; they can go live in other nations. But for the Gulf Arabs—where are they going to go? And for the expats who call these so-called bastions of civilization home, what happens when they turn out to be nothing more than glorified desert outposts? You can't drink the oil, and that's all that'll be left to drink if the desalination plants are taken down. So, you know, there

are going to be consequences for Donald Trump's actions—and they could be nation-killing consequences. I don't know what Iran is going to do. They've always had a very civilized approach to this.

But when faced with, you know, existential survival, Iran may have to—and deterrence only works if people are convinced you're going to pull the trigger. And if the United States does this, then Iran needs to terminate a nation, literally. And I don't mean through nuclear weapons or anything like that, but make it impossible for that nation-state to survive. Whether they pick Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait—it doesn't matter. But one nation needs to cease to exist so that all nations understand what their fate will be if they continue to be passive in the face of America declaring genocide as its official policy.

## **#Glenn**

Well, initially I was optimistic about Trump. I thought a lot of his ideas were built around scaling back the empire to save the republic. But he seems to be destroying the republic—at least in terms of reputational damage to the United States. This is difficult to recover from. The ramifications are quite global, though. I mean, how do you see it? I guess it's hard to measure the military, the economic, and also the political consequences of this. But if you're sitting in Beijing or Moscow, what kind of considerations do you think they're taking into account here? Because Iran is not a nothing country—it's quite an important strategic partner.

## **#Scott Ritter**

Yeah, I mean, it's 90 million people. It's not some insignificant African country. Tremendous economic potential. You know, Russia and China have taken a very pragmatic stance when it comes to the United States and Donald Trump. But that stance was always based on the idea that working with the United States, no matter how difficult, was still better than working against it. If Donald Trump follows through—if he uses nuclear weapons—all bets are off. He needs to be treated as a pariah in the United States. He needs to be treated as a pariah. All nations need to cease and desist any relationship with the United States. Americans must be told they are *persona non grata* anywhere in the world.

American embassies must be shut down. American businesses must be taken over. And Russia and China need to put the United States on notice that they will treat any American aggression as an existential threat and confront the United States with the real possibility of thermonuclear war. If the United States uses nuclear weapons against Iran, it means there are no red lines for the United States—none whatsoever. It becomes a rabid dog, and a rabid dog must be put down. I hate to say it, because this is my country, I live here, but this is the reality. We, the people of the United States, can't tolerate this government. We have to oppose this government with all the powers available to us.

And I'm not talking about revolution or going into the streets or anything like that. It's about the power of the vote. We must terminate this presidency. We must elect people who are willing to impeach this president and convict this president, and everybody who obeys his unlawful orders. We need to put the generals on notice that if you obey these orders, you will be hunted down and held accountable at some point in the future—that there will be no refuge for anybody who articulates support for genocidal policies or illegal wars of aggression. If we don't do that, then we've lost our status as a sovereign people in a sovereign state. This is an existential moment for the United States of America. We elected a madman. And the question now is, what are we going to do about it?

## **#Glenn**

Well, if the U.S. doesn't go for this option—that is, either use nuclear weapons or try to destroy everything, energy plants, all of that across Iran—what are the alternatives? Because at the moment, it's unclear what ground troops can achieve. Especially after this failed mission, one would assume there'd be more apprehension or caution in the Pentagon. But are there any possibilities now—opening up the Strait of Hormuz, any real purpose for ground troops? I'm just wondering if Trump is sitting at his desk now with the different options, what is it that he could do?

## **#Scott Ritter**

Nothing. There's nothing he can do. We don't have the force structure capable of doing anything meaningful on the ground. You know, the Marines could take Karg Island, but they couldn't hold it because they'd be subjected to bombardment. It's not logistically sustainable, and we'd be taking casualties just sitting there getting hit. So that's meaningless. And besides, taking Karg Island wouldn't open up the strait—it would have no impact on it. I think what we need to do is, you know, Trump needs to take the Iranian proposal and maybe throw in a twist. When the Iranians say they'll operate under safeguards, that they have to be allowed to have uranium—if I were the United States, I'd say, "You must give us the deal that you had on the table before we started bombing you."

That's our non-negotiable position. In exchange for that, if I were the United States, I'd also say we will never pay you reparations directly. But what we will allow is for you to set up a tolling station at the Strait of Hormuz and collect money to repair your country—operated like a New York State thruway post. You're supposed to collect the toll only until you've paid off the cost of building the highway, and then the tollbooth is supposed to disappear. I'd tell the Iranians, as part of this deal, that we won't pay you directly, but you can open this toll booth and collect the money needed for reconstruction. The United Nations will agree on an amount, and then you'll submit a report annually.

And when you've received the money to pay for the reparations, then the Strait of Hormuz will revert from your control to international control—something of that nature. And then, you know, we have to lift sanctions. We have to allow Iran to sell its oil in an unfettered fashion and all that. I think this would be a victory for Iran, and it would provide, you know, an opportunity—an off-ramp—

that could be politically acceptable for Trump. He could say, "I have accomplished what nobody has accomplished. I have brought an end to Iran's nuclear weapons potential." Whether the American people will believe this enough to reward him in November is yet to be seen. But there is a diplomatic off-ramp. The United States just has to have the courage to take it—the courage and the wisdom.

## **#Glenn**

Yeah, that's the courage and the wisdom. It doesn't come from Trump, I'm feeling. Do you see anything, though, within the U.S.? I saw Marjorie Taylor Greene making the point that Trump should essentially seize power now. But are there any significant political forces actually pushing back against this? Because, I mean, I'm seeing across Europe that none of America's allies appear to be raising their voices. But of course, there are concerns in Europe, East Asia, even the Middle East, from allies about how reliable any security guarantees would be, or the possible risks of making themselves too dependent. But... is there any pushback coming—if not from allies, then from adversaries? What do you think?

## **#Scott Ritter**

There's no pushback right now except from Iran. There's no internal pushback of any significance. Yes, there are some outliers—Marjorie Taylor Greene, Ro Khanna—calling for, you know, invocation of the 25th Amendment to remove this man from office. But there's no serious political movement to follow through on that. Europe just doesn't matter anymore. Literally doesn't matter. No one cares what Europe says. The hypocrisy of Europe—calling Donald Trump out for his criminal statements while condoning the attack against Russian energy infrastructure—is just mind-boggling. But again, Europe has made itself totally irrelevant. Europe has nothing to bring to the table, nothing to offer. Their economy is about to be hit by a tidal wave of energy shortages.

And the only solution is the one they won't accept, which is returning to Russian energy. And at this point, Russia may not even want to. Right now, I don't know if they have the capacity to support Europe, or if Russia is just busy signing contracts with everyone else in the world, meeting their energy needs now that 22% of the world's energy supplies have been taken off the market. So Europe is irrelevant. You know, in Asia, the United States is committing irreparable harm here. South Korea and Japan are talking about fuel rationing. They're totally dependent on the Middle East for most of their energy supplies. And there's going to be resentment toward the United States, which has not only failed to protect them but is responsible for the harm that's hitting them right now.

This is a disaster for the United States—an absolute disaster. Maybe it's a blessing for the world. Maybe this is what had to happen to allow the world to gather around and celebrate, you know, saying the wicked witch is dead—because we are the wicked witch. We are the bad people of the world. I mean, we can laugh at the analogy, but the fact is, my president has articulated a policy that would make us the greatest genocidal nation in the history of the world. If we successfully

implement this policy, we'll have done worse harm than Nazi Germany, worse harm than Imperial Japan. And as an American, that's just intolerable. Intolerable.

## **#Glenn**

If this is part of a very immoral and dangerous negotiation tactic, what do you think can actually be achieved at this point? Because the Iranians, last I heard, have frozen the negotiations given the aggressive rhetoric coming out of Washington. But on the other hand, it appears that Witkoff, Kushner has been taken off, and J.D. Vance—who apparently never wanted this war—will handle some of the negotiations. Do you think there's any pathway at all, or are the two sides just too far apart?

## **#Scott Ritter**

This is where I get in trouble with my Iranian friends, because they point to the people in the streets of Iran who are telling the government, "Stay the course, finish this thing, don't give in—no ceasefires, no nothing." And that's the passion of a people that's very empowering in terms of their expression of support. But we're dealing with a government that has been trying for decades now to get sanctions lifted and to bring a better life to the people of Iran. This struggle has created the potential for sanctions to be lifted, for Iran to be allowed to rejoin the family of nations in full membership, for the Iranian government to deliver to the Iranian people all that has been promised over the past several decades. So how do you get there from where they're at?

It's going to require some leadership on the part of Iran. They need to understand that if they seek to demand too much—no matter how justified it is—I'm not saying the Iranians aren't justified in pursuing a victory that benefits them, given all they've sacrificed and that they believe they're on the right side of history. But sometimes you can get a Pyrrhic victory—the price you pay for your victory is too high. At some point, if Iran doesn't find a formula that's acceptable to the United States, the United States will move on, making Iran disappear. We're never going to surrender to Iran. And this is where the Iranian government has to be smart, to find a solution that ends this conflict, lifts sanctions, and allows Iran's economy to be fully engaged.

But also, it gives America a dignified exit. You know, this is about politics right now. And so there will have to be some compromise on the part of the Iranians if they want to turn this victory into something meaningful. I mean, they can fight to the end and claim victory, but if the price of victory is the absolute devastation and destruction of your nation, then that's literally the definition of a Pyrrhic victory. I don't think Iran is looking for a Pyrrhic victory. I think they're looking for a termination of the situation that has existed for the past five decades, where the United States is seeking hegemonic domination over a region that includes Iran.

## **#Glenn**

No, no, I tend to agree with that sentiment. I think if the victory were too great, either the United States—as suggested by Trump—or Israel could reach for a nuclear weapon, or just do whatever it takes to destroy Iran. But that's why this is such a critical point, it seems, because up until now there was still a possibility, I think, to get some kind of deal. But if Trump moves forward with this, it seems to be all over, doesn't it? I mean, if it's not a nuclear weapon this time—if they, let's say, just go after its nuclear power plants, destroy them, cause nuclear fallout, take out the bridges, all of that—then it's going to be very hard for Iran, when everything has been destroyed, to actually turn around and agree to anything.

## **#Scott Ritter**

I mean, yes, of course. But people need to understand that infrastructure can be rebuilt. The Chinese are very good at it. And I do believe that if this conflict ends, China will play a very important role in the reconstruction of Iran. Russia will play a role too. The concern is the energy infrastructure—how much damage is done there. Because even if you lift sanctions and allow Iran to plug back in, if they're not able to produce the energy, they're going to be, you know, challenged. And the longer Iran waits to get plugged back in, the more the market is going to be, you know, taken up by others.

You know, Russia, to name one. And Russia is a good friend and a good ally, but I don't think Russia is the kind of friend that gives away half their paycheck. So Iran needs to be realistic here about what they can achieve. I know they're very angry, and I know they have righteousness on their side, but they also need to be realistic about what can be achieved. The strategic defeat of the United States is an impossibility because we're a nuclear-armed nation, and we will use nuclear weapons before we allow ourselves to collapse.

Uh, so if Iran is seeking to collapse America—no, you know, we've already seen that Iran has made it impossible for American forces to remain in Qatar. They've said they're shutting down the Al Udeid Air Base and America's presence there. You know, what other nations will follow suit? Can the United States afford to come back and reconstitute its footprint in the Middle East? And what policies will a heavy military footprint favor? So, you know, there are a lot of unknowns out there that need to be better defined. But bringing an end to this conflict, while Iran can still function as a member of the international community, should be the goal and objective of every Iranian politician.

## **#Glenn**

Well, one goal, which you mentioned earlier, would be perhaps seizing Karg Island. I heard—what was his name? General... oh, God, my mind's blank now—General Keith Kellogg, sorry. He was making the point that, at a minimum, the U.S. should seize Karg Island, and either hold it with the energy facilities or just destroy everything that's there. Do you think either of those could be one of the main options? Because if that's shut down, that's a huge chunk of Iran's economy.

## **#Scott Ritter**

Well, the Iranians have said they'll simply—it's a place that's used right now to transfer oil onto tankers and such—but Iran can easily build, again with Chinese assistance, they can make Bandar Abbas or the port of Chabahar, or even build a new port entirely dedicated to that purpose. Losing Karg Island doesn't end everything; it's just a matter of convenience. But again, that shows how the United States becomes singularly focused on issues that haven't been well thought out. The physical occupation of Karg, of course, can be accomplished—that's what the Marine Corps does. We have two battalion landing teams.

There's no doubt in my mind that these battalion landing teams would be able to secure a foothold ashore, fight their way through, and occupy the island. Then what? First of all, it could come at great cost. The Iranians are underground in tunnels—it could be a nightmare to dig them out. But we'll dig them out, because we're Marines. Now we have to hold an island, and the Iranian mainland is right there. They have missiles and drones, so they'll just keep coming in, keep coming in, keep coming in. At some point, we'll have to leave Karg Island. And what will you have achieved? Nothing. So I'm hoping the president is now being informed by his cabinet and others that they can't support this kind of operation—that there's no military reason for it.

## **#Glenn**

My last question is about Israel, because they seem to have been a key driving force—well, incentivizing Trump to go forward with this. Do you think they might play a larger role if the U.S. were to go for this, you know, complete destruction of Iran?

## **#Scott Ritter**

If we take this route, we're doing the Israeli plan. This is what the Israelis want—what they've wanted all along. So Israel will be cheering on the sidelines. But the Israelis aren't confronting the reality that it's over for Israel. You know, back in September 2023, Benjamin Netanyahu, upon hearing Joe Biden's announcement in New Delhi during the G20 meeting about the intent to create the India–Middle East–European Economic Corridor, came out and said, "This is the most important day in modern Israeli history." People have forgotten about this—the most important day in modern Israeli history. Why? Because the fact is, Israel is a dysfunctional state until it can become an economic superpower in the region.

And this corridor was going to position Israel to be just that. You know, this corridor was seen as an extension of the policies of the Abraham Accords. And again, the idea was for the Arab nations to recognize Israel, do business with Israel, and establish partnerships where Israel would have a leading role. This would have made Israel legitimate in the eyes of the regional countries and therefore a player in the overall global climate of humanity. That's done. There will be no change. The India–Middle East Economic Corridor—Israel is being destroyed as we speak. Who's going to

pay for Israeli reconstruction? And if they take it to the next level, we're going to see the population suddenly drop by two, three, four million as people flee because there's no water to sustain life.

You know, Israel still has political clout here at home. But the fact is, Israel has suffered such damage because of this conflict—the conflict they started, the conflict they defined the scope and scale of. Israel has suffered huge damage. Who's going to pay for their reconstruction? Not the United States. And how are they going to survive? Their economy is already in tatters. No one's going to do business with them. I think this is the end of Israel as a modern Jewish homeland. I don't think that's a sustainable model anymore. And this will be one of the great victories of all time—but it will be a victory of Iran over Israel.

## **#Glenn**

It's always dangerous when countries face this kind of existential threat. But just—sorry—one last question. Final question. What do we know so far about the damage that's been inflicted on Israel? Because we don't get a lot of information out of Israel.

## **#Scott Ritter**

Again, we don't know a lot. We do know that photographs keep being taken of missiles hitting targets even after the Israelis say the missiles were intercepted. But the proof will be in the pudding. What is Israel's economic performance right now? What contracts are they engaged in? Where are they earning money? And the answer is—they're not. Israel isn't open for business right now. The businesses don't function normally; they can't function normally, being under continuous bombardment from the West. You know, Israel literally invented the idea of short-term pain for long-term gain—that seems to be the Israeli approach right now. But the pain they're suffering is something the Israelis always worried about.

They—uh, in June, they said, "We have to stop because we're taking too much pain, and we don't have an identifiable off-ramp, since the United States did not join in." Now they have the United States involved. This is actually a political victory for Benjamin Netanyahu—to get President Trump to do what no other president was willing to do, and that is to join in a concerted, military-driven plan to eliminate the theocracy. So the Israelis have what they wanted, but it's not going the way they wanted. The United States is incapable of sealing the deal on victory, and Israel lacks the capacity to achieve victory unilaterally. And now we have a situation where the United States is looking for an off-ramp.

What happens if the United States accepts an off-ramp and says, "We can't control Israel; that's between Iran and Israel"? Then Israel is on its own, with the Iranians continuing to pound them on a daily basis. How long can Israel—what will Israel look like, you know, this time next year? Will it be the same grotesquely enlarged, you know, parasite that it is? Or will the Israelis have reverted back to their, you know, 1968 borders and learned to live in peace with their Palestinian neighbors? Yeah.

The bottom line is, Israel is the fundamental problem, and unless the solution to this conflict includes a viable way to limit Israel's ability to project power aggressively against its neighbors, it's hard to talk about peace terms that would be acceptable to Iran.

## **#Glenn**

Well, thank you for taking the time. I guess in a few hours we'll find out what to make of Trump's rather vulgar and aggressive claims. So, thanks again.

## **#Scott Ritter**

Thank you very much.