

Larry Johnson: Trump's Naval Blockade & Ceasefire Collapse

Trump imposes naval blockade on Iran as ceasefire begins to break down. Johnson is a former CIA intelligence analyst who also worked at the U.S. State Department's Office of Counterterrorism. Read Larry Johnson's Sonar21: <https://sonar21.com/> Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glennDiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: 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/gdieseng Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

#Glenn

Welcome back. Today is April 15, 2026, and we're joined by Larry Johnson, a former CIA analyst who now publishes at Sonar 21. I'll leave a link in the description, which I highly recommend. Thank you very much for coming back on the program—I always enjoy our conversations. Glad to hear it. So, let's start with the Strait of Hormuz. We're in a ceasefire, or at least that's what we're told. Yet a blockade has now been placed on Iran's ports, which is an act of war—a strange escalation to make during a ceasefire. It's often brought up by White House spokespeople, even as they insist we're abiding by the ceasefire. So it's unclear what the ceasefire actually means, but at least they're not shooting at them, it seems. What's the likely success of this blockade? From what I understand, they have to keep a fairly safe distance, and the waterway isn't that narrow once you go farther south. Right.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, so this is all—it's like Japanese kabuki theater. It's very stylized, very scripted. The U.S. has its version of what's going on. They're stopping every ship; there's not a ship getting out. Boy, they've got it locked down tight. Meanwhile, other reports indicate that Iran's allowing ships to leave, and those ships aren't being stopped. The people who are in a position to know what's actually happening described it—one of them said—it's like a security guard at a mall, right? You know, he's got a uniform but no real authority to do much, and he's not terribly effective. So this could potentially heat up. But as you noted in your introduction, Iran has the potential—they've got coastal defense cruise missiles.

They've got close-range ballistic missiles, and they have a variety of drones—underwater, on the surface, and in the air—so they can operate in three dimensions against any ship, any U.S. ship that gets within, say, 200 miles of the coast. The Abraham Lincoln, for example, in March, got within

about 220 miles of the coast and was attacked, suffering damage that even Donald Trump later admitted. Yeah, they'd been attacked from seventeen sides. Right now, it appears that Chinese vessels carrying oil to China have left the strait and are on their way, and they haven't been stopped. Now, this could all change, but if the U.S. wants to do a proper interdiction of these ships, you need helicopters.

Destroyers, you know, they can come out and threaten to shoot you, but they're not actually going to carry that out. And once you—well, even if you had an aircraft carrier and the two Marine ships that look like small aircraft carriers—they carry lots of helicopters—they can still only cover a limited area. It's stretching air assets. It really is putting a strain on U.S. air assets, from what I'm hearing. The maintenance costs, the stress, the time in the air—it all adds up. And it's not easy to figure out where ships are. The oceans are huge, and there's no simple, automatic way to track them. I learned that the hard way working with the Joint Special Operations Command over 23 years.

And when we did exercises—some of them maritime exercises—unless you put a transponder on a ship that sends out a beacon, like friend or foe, then fine, you might be able to track it. But otherwise, there's no way to know. You can see something on radar, but it doesn't necessarily tell you what it is. And then we get to the question: what's the purpose of the blockade? This is where the Trump administration is all over the board. Early on, they immediately lifted sanctions on Russia and Iran. Why? Because they wanted to keep the supply of oil up. But now, this week, they've reimposed sanctions on Russian oil, they're trying to shut down the flow of Iranian oil, and they've already lost 20% of the world's supply. And yet the oil markets are acting like, "Oh boy, happy days are here again."

Prices are going down on the oil futures, but the actual price people are paying when the ships finally dock is around \$140—I've seen one price as high as \$210 a barrel for Singapore. So the economic gut punch that's coming from this—the West has got its eyes closed. And what compounds it is the literal craziness of Donald Trump. He's out of touch with reality. He doesn't remember from one day to the next what he's said. He says things he sincerely believes are true that just aren't true. You know, like "Iran's begging for negotiations." No, they're not. Not at all. We're the ones begging for those negotiations. Iran can live without it. And Trump—he's emotionally volatile now, yelling at people, getting angry.

The best description I've heard of it is that it's like kids living with an alcoholic, abusive father. You know—don't wake Dad up, tiptoe quietly, don't do anything to make the old man angry, because he's going to start punching or beating you. That's how they're treating Donald Trump right now, which is frightening. There's a lot going on behind the scenes, but this isn't some great 5D chess game that Trump's maneuvering, trying to accomplish one objective or another. No—he's making it up as he goes along, piece by piece. And the only one who's been firm in saying, "This is a bad decision, this is wrong," has been J.D. Vance. And Trump's gone out of his way to humiliate and isolate J.D. Vance.

#Glenn

I often wonder, when I see these tweets—like today, he tweeted that China is very happy that he's opening the Strait of Hormuz, that he's doing it for them, for the Chinese—and at the same time he's putting a blockade on Iranian ports, where 90% of the oil goes to China. And then, on the same day, Scott Besant comes out and says, well, we're going to sanction probably two Chinese banks, at least, for trading or buying Iranian oil, because Iran is, you know, sponsoring terrorism—that's the argument. So, at the same time, the U.S. is opening the Strait of Hormuz for China.

I mean, it's... I don't know who the audience is for this. The Chinese aren't sitting there going, "Oh, wonderful, how kind." I mean, is it for the MAGA cult? It's hard to see who this is for. But with the naval blockade, as you said, it requires a lot of naval assets that are already overstretched. And with more assets in the region, they have to dock somewhere for maintenance. A lot of the logistics, it appears, have taken some damage and hits. To what extent do you think this makes the U.S. more exposed, though?

#Larry Johnson

Oh, it's unsustainable. And, you know, we're winning, we're in control—then why is the George H.W. Bush carrier sailing along the west coast of Africa to get to the Persian Gulf region? Why didn't it take the shortcut through the Med, down the Suez Canal, and then through the Red Sea? Because they're scared to death they'd get sunk by the Houthis. Scared to death. That's the reality. And you bring up an excellent point about where they're going to get maintenance and service for these ships, if nothing else, to be refueled and refitted. Diego Garcia is really the closest base. So, you know, the United States has got itself in an unsustainable military operation.

So what's going on is that Trump's pronouncements—everything—is being done for the American audience. Just to give us a "Hey, things are cool, things are all right, don't worry, it's all great." But the reality of what's actually unfolding out there is something else. Meanwhile, they're attacking China, yet we've seen, at the end of last week and into this week, China and Russia stepping up their activities, trying to broker a peace agreement—working with the Saudis, the Emiratis, the Iranians. Russia approached Turkey, and the Turkish foreign minister signed on, saying, "Yeah, we'll do that."

So there's actually work underway to get around the United States—to ignore it as no longer being relevant. But to conduct the air and naval operations needed for an interdiction, things are going to get stretched thin. And to be most effective, they've got to be close to the Iranian shore. But the closer they get, the more vulnerable they become if this war kicks off and goes hot again. Right now, we have a ceasefire in effect until Monday. Pakistan is making significant efforts to get the negotiations back on track. J.D. Vance, I've learned, was the one who agreed to Iran's ten-point peace plan—or ten-point plan for restarting negotiations.

Trump, under pressure from all his Zionist donors, backed away and said, "We didn't accept any of that." They were actually making some progress until Vance was basically told, "You know, shut up and come home. Stop talking." But now the realization about the economic effects—the negative effects on the U.S. economy and the global economy—is starting to hit home. You know, God, the more I watch this Scott Bessett, the more I dislike the man. I mean, you just want to go and punch him in the face. He's such a weaselly, oily character. They try to pretend that things are great, but things are not great. You know, it's anecdotal, but one of my neighbors is a rancher—he's got a ranch about 20 miles outside of where we live.

But he was saying he's had to pay more—diesel is up over \$2 a gallon, so that's adding almost 40% to his fuel costs. Fertilizer has tripled in price. And on top of that, we've had a drought in Florida, so the hay and grass that normally feed the cattle haven't grown. He's had to buy hay, or at least try to, and he says it's very hard to find right now. Last year he bought 40 bales of hay at \$40 per bale. Now it's \$90, so it's more than doubled in price. And instead of 40 bales, he needs 90. So he's up to about \$3,600 instead of \$1,600—again, more than double the cost.

#Larry Johnson

And he says, "I'm in the red." That's happening to farmers and ranchers across the United States and around the world. So what we're looking at here is the beginning of what could be a collapse of the global food system—potentially. I mean, it could get that serious. So this is... this is very much like the Trump administration being a bit like Nero, fiddling away while Rome is burning. They haven't put out the fire. And instead, the policy moves are, as you pointed out, completely contradictory. You know, one minute it's, "Oh, we don't need the—who cares about the Strait of Hormuz?"

We don't need it, said Trump. And then the next minute he's demanding, in the most foul language possible, that Iran open the Strait. Then he's complaining that the Europeans aren't pitching in to help. After that, he turns around and blockades it so nothing gets out. And now he's saying, "Oh yeah, we're helping China. China loves us for what we're doing because we're stopping the flow of oil to China." It's a completely scatterbrained approach. And the only thing that explains it—it's not 5D chess, man. This is a mental illness.

#Glenn

Well, that's why it just looks like this shock to the system is difficult to absorb, especially now. I mean, if it had happened, you know, two or three decades ago, maybe it would've been easier. But now we have all this just-in-time logistics, where we don't rely on warehouses. Everything has to run smoothly to reduce logistics costs, so it can't absorb much shock. You've got record numbers of people living paycheck to paycheck, many of them deeply in debt. So if you suddenly get even a slight increase in food or energy prices, it's very hard to absorb. Now we're facing this massive energy shock, with prices doubling, and a major food shortage coming up. Prices are spiking.

I mean, you can see how the problems will just start to spread through the entire system. I'd like to make predictions, but because it's so all-encompassing, it's going to affect everything. So it's quite dramatic—such a massive shock to the system. I don't think they know what's coming down the road. Well, I guess we shouldn't listen too much to what Kamp is saying as opposed to what he's doing. But he did say this war will soon be over. Of course, he's been overly optimistic since day one. But do you think he's expecting a defeat of Iran? Because I see a lot of U.S. military hardware being moved into the region. Or do you think his desperation is kicking in and they need to find a way out?

#Larry Johnson

Well, it's more about creating a narrative that he thinks will sell—something that sounds good on Fox News. He literally confines himself to watching Fox, reading the New York Times, and not doing much else beyond that. So he's got a really narrow information flow. Up until about two or three weeks ago, he wasn't even getting the bad news, because if he did, he'd fly into a rage and blame the person delivering it. This is Shakespearean—I mean, it's a modern version of King Lear gone mad. And no one's come up with a solution, a fix. What do we do with this guy? He should actually be removed from office, receive medical care, be in one of those care facilities for people with dementia.

But instead, he's still allowed to be in charge of this country and to make decisions—irrational decisions at that. To think it was a good idea to send out a picture of himself as Jesus, you know, healing the sick—and then he turns around and says, "Oh, that was a doctor." What are you talking about? There's growing concern within the White House, I'm told, and I'm told by somebody who's in a position to know. This is worse than the Biden situation. Biden could fly off the handle too, but he was relatively harmless. Trump is not. Trump has a viciousness to him, and he's lost all empathy.

And so, right now, with the information coming out about the so-called blockade, it appears the Navy is deliberately lying to him—telling him what he wants to hear. Meanwhile, there are efforts underway to restart the talks and to use the whole nuclear issue as a way to get out of this. J.D. Vance wants to exit the war, and the way you do that is basically by resurrecting the JCPOA. You don't call it that, but that's what it is. It would involve on-site inspections by the IAEA and continued support of the nonproliferation treaty by Iran. But instead of a 10-year agreement, this would be a permanent one—a forever agreement.

That'll be Trump's. That's why he'll be able to say it's a much better agreement than what they had before—because now he's got a permanent, forever agreement, and Israel's safe. There are also reports out today that there's going to be a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah. And that, again, goes back to one of the demands Iran made. So if they pull that off, the problem is Trump is very much being driven around by Bibi Netanyahu. Even though Vice President Vance may be given the green light to do certain things, he doesn't have the ultimate authority here. And Trump's decisions are very mercurial—one day he's in favor of it, and the next day he's opposed to it.

#Glenn

I saw him give an interview where he was arguing, you know, we could have—well, again, we could have this war over with soon. We can get a deal that makes sure Iran doesn't get a nuclear weapon. And, you know, this gives me some optimism because it sounds like an out. If the goal was for Iran not to have a nuclear weapon, they could have kept the JCPOA. They could have easily gotten another agreement—something with commitments plus transparency, something they can verify. But the fact that it was first linked to these other issues—limiting its ballistic missile program or decoupling from its regional partners—meant all these things were also meant to weaken its conventional deterrence. So I thought, you know, this could be a sign of optimism.

On the other hand, I always blame myself when I listen too much to what Trump is actually saying. It's more interesting to see what he's actually doing. But otherwise, he's also—he's pushing a narrative, the victory narrative. And he always refers to how many leaders he's killed, the infrastructure destroyed, the military targets hit, which have been diminished. How do you see this? Is this a selling point for him, or does he genuinely believe that a lot of killing equals victory? Because I thought, you know, the forever wars in the Middle East prove that the U.S. can have all these tactical victories forever, but it doesn't win. Or do you think he's not appreciating that? Or is it, again, that he's just telling a story of war?

#Larry Johnson

Well, he's saying what he's being told—or repeating what he's being told. The Pentagon, through Hegseth, is basically lying to him. They're not giving him a true picture of what this conflict actually is. So they get to tout, "Oh, we've blown up this, we've blown up that." Meanwhile, they're not reporting that Iran has rapidly rebuilt and repaired several of the sites we thought we'd destroyed—sites that are now back in operation after twenty years. And what I'm hearing is that within military circles, the planners are extremely concerned about new weaponry that China has introduced.

Now they're out saying, "Oh, China's promised Trump that they're not introducing weapons." Well, A, I'm not sure China's even said that to Trump. But even if they did, they're not following it—they're doing the exact opposite. So there's real concern that there's been a significant upgrade in the air defense system, with China's assistance, and that the F-35s and all the fourth-generation fighters the United States has flown into the region will be vulnerable and likely to be shot down—at least some of them.

#Glenn

I've seen some reports of Chinese aircraft delivering unknown material to Iran. I'm assuming these are weapons. I didn't take Trump's comments too seriously about China's promise, because it looks like Trump and the Chinese essentially want the same thing. Trump needs headlines suggesting that

the Chinese respect his authority—that they wouldn't dare send weapons. And the Chinese are also happy with headlines saying they're not supplying weapons. So it seems like they both win.

But of course, I do think the Chinese are supplying. But what do you think is the likelihood that there could be—well, if the ceasefire is extended, or if there's no peace agreement, or if there's an actual peace agreement? Because I've always thought the main challenge for Trump is that, on one hand, he'd like a way out. But what the Iranians demand as an out essentially makes it too big a price to pay—too humiliating a defeat, especially after all those victory laps claiming to have won.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, yeah. Well, he'll be able to—look, I think he can build the narrative and avoid the humiliation by simply selling the story that, "Hey, I've got a permanent deal, and forever and ever Iran will never have a nuclear weapon." He can sell that and then, you know, excuse the lifting of sanctions. And we're going to, you know, fulfill our promise that Iran is going to become a great economic power. The other component of this, though, is what happens with the war between Lebanon, Hezbollah, and Israel. So, you know, I think Israel has suffered enough damage in that war that they're also looking for a way out. If they can get some sort of new ceasefire agreement in place with Hezbollah, I think they'll take it. Still doesn't solve the Gaza question.

But the other thing—there are other pressures here. Jared Kushner, Steve Witkoff, and their associates have significant investments in the Gulf, particularly in the United Arab Emirates, and they're at risk of losing that money. So that's another incentive to get this negotiated as quickly as possible, to try to salvage their investments in those countries. I don't think the UAE is recoverable now. I think it's beyond recoverable. But you've had direct diplomatic intervention from the Chinese with the UAE yesterday or the day before, and also with the Saudis, the Qataris, and Russia as well. Russia and China are working together to try to create a peace settlement that will exclude the United States. The United States will not be a party to that. And who knows? They could conceivably pull that off. I don't rule out anything on that front.

#Glenn

I remember, yeah, after the 12-day war we spoke at length about the damage to Israel's infrastructure, economy, and industries. Do we know anything yet about the hit they've taken? Because, I mean, there are limits on the information coming out. But what do we know? Because certainly the reports we're getting don't cover everything—like the full extent of the damage. I'm just wondering what we know so far.

#Larry Johnson

It's been substantially worse. And we know that because if they hadn't suffered significant damage, the Israelis wouldn't have the level of censorship they do. They'd be letting the media in to say,

"Look, our air defense system worked spectacularly. We haven't been hit. All our structures are standing. We're in great shape." They haven't done that because the opposite is true—they've taken a serious drubbing. And, you know, they're also working this respite. We're now eight days into it, and it ends next Monday. We'll see if it gets extended—it may get extended. The Trump administration is desperate to get a deal done. And Iran's ready to go back and fight. So we'll see if Trump makes any further concessions. They'll portray it as, "Oh, Iran came begging to the table—please, let's keep talking." That's all Iran's doing, supposedly. But there's no guarantee Iran will come back to the table either.

#Glenn

Yeah, well, it's been a few humiliating rounds. I'm thinking of when Trump said, "Oh, we've had some constructive talks, so we're not going to hit them." And then the foreign minister came out and said, "No, we actually have no talks at all." I mean, if they really wanted peace, this seems like a very strange game to play. But what do we know now about the Iranian position? Because I spoke to some Iranians who made the point that the negotiations seemed—well, let's say—strange in Islamabad. Vance couldn't really answer questions; he had to pick up the phone and call—God knows who—all the time. And I was told that at the end, when they thought the negotiations were still going, Vance and his team just packed up and said, "Okay, I guess we're done," and broke it off. So it's very hard to read this kind of diplomatic behavior.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, that was, I think, the most telling part from Professor Morandi—that they didn't even have the courtesy to say, "OK, listen, folks, Foreign Minister Araghchi, we've got to recognize we're at an impasse. We're not going to be able to solve anything at this point. We're going to go now, go back and brief President Trump, and maybe we can get together next week or the following week to see if we can make some more progress." You know, nothing like that. It was just, "OK, we're out of here." And the Iranians wake up and say, "Where did the Americans go?"

Oh, they beat it. Now, when I first heard that, I sent Professor Morandi a note and just said, "Hey, I hope you guys are talking to the Russians or the Chinese about having them fly you back to Iran. Because if you're at least under Chinese or Russian protection, they won't try to kill you. Whereas if you're flying on an Iranian airplane, I wouldn't put it past them to try to shoot you down." I guess what happened is they flew back on a Pakistani-flagged airline. That prevented Iran from being attacked by Israel.

#Glenn

It's so strange that this is a new thing—killing leaders and negotiators. It's... yeah, it became normalized a bit too quickly, I feel.

#Larry Johnson

But it's going to make diplomacy very difficult in the future.

#Glenn

Indeed, the fact that this wasn't the argument—I remember, in that Washington Post article, they said this should be a form of deterrence if you don't agree to ideals that would kill the negotiators personally. This is very... it doesn't look like a good, stable peace agreement can come from that.

#Larry Johnson

Right.

#Glenn

But overall, where do you see this conflict going now? If the blockade isn't going to work, the negotiations aren't moving forward, and the military capabilities are building up—are we just going back to war? I think that's where we're ultimately headed.

#Larry Johnson

I mean, I can see... Look, from a logical standpoint, you can see there's a clear exit ramp here for Trump. They can get out of this war and try to put an economic solution in place that will start to repair the damage that's been done by closing down the Strait of Hormuz and basically shutting down the export activities out of the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. I mean, Bahrain is toast—the U.S. base there isn't coming back. Similarly, Kuwait has suffered some significant damage that may be unrecoverable. But just because we can see the logic in that doesn't mean, you know, we can solve it.

The pressure that Trump is under from Bibi Netanyahu is significant, and he's shown that he's unwilling to really confront them and say, "Look, the United States is going to chart its own path forward." And this still doesn't—this leaves unresolved the situation in Gaza. It leaves unresolved the situation in Lebanon. And, you know, I had to go back and look. I didn't realize, but this Lebanese war has been going on now for, what, 51 years, right? Really, the civil war in Lebanon between the Christians and the Muslims—the Shia in particular—kicked off back in 1975, when the Phalangists, this Christian sect, attacked and killed about 35 Shia civilians.

And boom, the civil war was on, and that raged forever until there was sort of a truce in 1990. But, you know, in the ensuing 30 years, we've still had these constant flare-ups. In 2006, Israel again invaded southern Lebanon. There were bombings in Beirut in the '90s. So, you know, the conflict has never really gone away. And now, in this latest round, Hezbollah is holding its own and inflicting

serious damage on Israel—damage Israel can't sustain. So I can see the efforts to bring about peace. But to come back to what you said, let's look at what Trump is doing. Is Trump telling U.S. military units, "OK, start withdrawing, let's pull back, we're going to scale down"? No—just the opposite. The signals are that we're ramping up.

Now, I think the debacle surrounding the rescue of that downed pilot—or the crew member from the F-15 two weeks ago—has finally persuaded both the Pentagon and the White House that any kind of ground operation is out of the question: just too dangerous, too costly, too unpredictable. So they're going to continue with this economic pressure. One group that's advocating a complete blockade of Iranian ports believes that if we shut down their ability to export oil, it will ultimately damage their capacity to produce it. Then they'll be in a crisis—they won't have any income—and eventually they'll implode. And there are some within the Trump administration who give that very serious credence. I think it's crazy, but that's what they're pushing.

#Glenn

Could that be the goal of the ceasefire, though—that it's just to lower the intensity? Because as the war is going now, the United States is using all these expensive interceptor missiles. Their assets in the Gulf states are being attacked. Israel is getting attacked. So this high-intensity war doesn't really work to the U.S. advantage. But if one can call a ceasefire and at the same time begin to, you know, gradually bleed the Iranians instead—putting some blockade on their ports, which would also hurt the Chinese—you'd essentially have some, you know, attempt at escalation control.

A little bit like what was achieved in Ukraine, where essentially NATO countries can fire their missiles at Russia and then pretend it's Ukraine, and Russia can respond. Something similar that allows them to begin to drain and "mow the lawn," if you will, in Iran—without Iran being able to respond in a significant way. Or do you think it's delusional to believe such a blockade could be enforced properly and that Iran wouldn't retaliate in some way?

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, no, I think it's delusional on their part, because a blockade of the ports isn't Iran's only outlet. In other words, they can go through Turkmenistan, they can go through—

#Larry Johnson

So there are roads in—it's not their only access to the outside world. Now, those ports, volume-wise, could have an effect. But again, I don't think the United States has the naval power in place to really stop it completely, especially if they start involving the Chinese. The Chinese have signaled very strongly that they're not going to put up with this, and that any attempt by the United States to interfere with Chinese maritime traffic will be resisted. How so? What are the Chinese saying? Oh, they say they would treat it as an act of war. So... this is a lucky sign. Yeah.

So, I mean, I know that for U.S. military planners, the last thing they want is to get into a war with China, because I think it's now pretty apparent the United States wouldn't last two weeks with China if they actually got into a full-blown war. We simply don't have the strategic depth. We've drained our inventories of key weapon systems—THAADs, Patriots, you know, the PAC-3 batteries. JDAMs are way down. JASSMs that we've used extensively—way down. Tomahawks—way down. And then you get to the supply chain problem, which China controls. To rebuild some of those weapons systems, you need the rare earths that China isn't providing now, and we don't have a good alternative to turn to.

#Glenn

Yeah, it looked like—well, given that China is the main peer competitor of the United States, and ever since the days of Obama, back in 2016 at least, the goal was to pivot to Asia to contain China—none of what's being done now by Trump seems to make much sense. I mean, when he came to power, he suggested, "I'll wrap up the Ukraine war, I'll end the forever wars." All of that made sense if the objective was to transfer resources to the Western Hemisphere and East Asia. But now the U. S. is still fighting in Ukraine—or at least, you know, selling weapons.

It still has its intelligence assets there, and now it's also doing this for every war with Iran. It's hard to see how the wider or larger strategic objective in this massive shift of power can actually be achieved. It's very strange to watch, given that it looked like Trump had a very strategic outlook when he came in, and how little that corresponds with his actual actions. But let me just ask a last question: what do you think will be the wider consequences of this? I mean, of course, there's the energy crisis, we may have a food crisis—but without a crystal ball, what do you think are the likely developments we might see from this war?

#Larry Johnson

Look, we're trying to figure out what the hell they're going to do. The U.S. is losing influence in the Gulf. Basically, it promised all these Gulf states, "Hey, we've got your back. We can protect you. You sign up with us, we'll protect you." Well, it turned out they couldn't protect them. The most bizarre actions and behavior are those of the UAE. They're the most virulently opposed to Iran, and they've taken the biggest beating of all—maybe with the exception of Bahrain. The Saudis are still playing a double game. They're trying to stay in bed with the United States, but they're under pressure to seek an accommodation with Iran.

So, you know, they just announced that the pipeline flowing to the Red Sea, the one that had been sabotaged, has now been repaired. They hit it the other day, but it's back up and running—the oil is moving again. Still, they don't move that much oil. I mean, it's around 7 million barrels per day, which sounds like a lot, but it's not that much. It's still about 50% of what they were putting out before, and it's still vulnerable. If this war goes hot, the Houthis will take out that port, that terminus. So the ability of the United States to dictate the future of that region is limited. The power

of the U.S. dollar is going away. We saw the auction for Treasury bills drop again in terms of the percentage of foreign buyers.

So the Fed had to step in and buy that amount. I think you're going to see an expansion of Chinese and Russian influence throughout the Gulf. And I don't see Iran backing off from, you know, let's say, charging a user's fee if you're coming to the Gulf—you're going to have to pay a fee. That's one way they're going to recover and pay for the damages caused by this war launched by the United States and Israel. Trump's erratic behavior—he's not going to get better. In fact, we'll see further deterioration. I honestly don't know if he'll make it to the end of his term because his behavior is so... odd, and it's creating real concern now in Washington. So that's going to be a factor.

#Glenn

The ability to lead—the seeming personal meltdown, the collapse—or not collapse, but the divisions within MAGA and the decline of his administration. I think all of this is creating a lot of panic and desperation, which is not what you want to see in a president at war. But here we are.

#Larry Johnson

Well, the news about the midterms—the prediction markets, the Polymarkets, as they're called—are showing a growing probability that the Democrats are going to sweep, not just the House but the Senate. They could end up with a majority of 54 or 55 senators, with Republicans losing well over 10 seats. At that point, Trump has no agenda left. And, you know, he can be mad all he wants. The question is, will the Democrats impeach him, or will they just let him sit there and sort of twist slowly in the wind, like a body hanging from a scaffold? You know, J.D. Vance has tried desperately to keep Trump from going down the path of going to war with Iran—and he failed.

And, you know, you're going to see a mixture of political chaos in Washington, with the possibility of Trump making some very irrational, dangerous decisions. But the good news for Iran is that it's got solid backing and relationships with China and Russia. And increasingly, it looks like the Asian countries—you know, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam—they're starting to go in their own direction. The influence the United States once wielded there is slipping away very, very rapidly. Yeah, not the best spacecraft we've seen. So, I know you have a busy day ahead of you—thank you very much for taking the time. All right, my friend, keep doing the good work. The world benefits from your wisdom.

#Glenn

Will do. Okay, thanks.

#Larry Johnson

Take care. Bye.