

Larry Johnson: The Strait of Hormuz Just Became a GRAVEYARD for US DOMINANCE

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#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today is Monday, April 20th, 2026, and our dear friend, our brother, Larry Johnson, is here. Wait, wait, wait, wait, hold on right there.

#Guest

Brother? No, no, no. I demand father status. Accepted. People come to you and say, "Hey, Nima, who's your daddy?" Sorry.

#Nima

Yeah, accepted. Yeah, I am a father, and I am your student as well. I accept that too.

#Guest

I am old enough to be your dad, and I have fond feelings for you. I'll put it that way. So if the situation with your own parents doesn't work out, let me know. I'll adopt you.

#Nima

Larry, let me start with what's going on right now with the case of the war in the Middle East. The latest news is that in, I don't know, a few hours, J.D. Vance, together with Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff, are going to land in Pakistan. They're going to be there. So far, from what we've seen from the Iranian side, they said no, they have not decided to go there yet. Yeah, and one of the main reasons for that is the attack on this Iranian-flagged commercial vessel by the United States. They have breached the ceasefire by attacking this vessel. So yesterday, they said they're going to respond. I don't know what the response will be on their part. What is your understanding of the current situation?

#Guest

Well, again, there's no foundation for negotiations in light of Trump's statements on Friday. Remember, Trump was, when he announced the blockade, that's an aggressive act against Iran. And initially, it was just words. But then the targeting of this cargo ship that was coming from China, you know, that's an act of war, period. And so I know that there were some behind-the-scenes negotiations between Iran, Pakistan, and the United States, and I was told on Friday that they had actually reached, through J.D. Vance's efforts, an agreement with Iran that accepted Iran's preconditions, and they were moving forward, and then Trump sabotaged it and blew it up.

So then on top of that, when he added in the blockade, that, you know, from Iran's standpoint, okay, what is there to talk about? This is, you know, the United States continues to be the aggressor here. So I anticipate they're going to attack a U.S. ship. And I think it's going to take something like the sinking of a U.S. ship to wake the United States up that we can't continue down this path. We continue to have what I call cost-free wars. We suffer very, very few casualties, or at least they're doing a good job of covering up the casualties, and inflict harm on other people and hope that, you know, our bullying will make those others come, you know, come to heel like a dog. And, you know, Iran's not playing along.

#Nima

It seems that Pakistan is doing its best to talk with the Trump administration. Donald Trump himself, as the Pakistani sources are talking about, is considering the removal of the blockade. What does it mean, Larry? Because the whole concept of attacking an Iranian commercial vessel—what does it mean? How is that going to bring leverage to the United States and to the sort of argument in the negotiations?

#Guest

Well, they see it as part of it. All they have to do is collapse the Iranian economy, and then that will force the Iranians to surrender. But, you know, it's misguided. It's based upon some false premises. But that's their thinking. If we just blockade them, again, having learned no lessons from the past. I mean, for God's sake, we've had an effective blockade on Cuba for 66 years, and that hasn't worked out well. I mean, the people of Cuba have suffered, but it hasn't compelled them to change their government or to surrender to the United States. And here, Iran's got a lot more options. You know, they're not an island. It's one thing to surround an island country and blockade them, but it's an entirely different thing when you've got open borders to the north and to the east for Iran, that they can get whatever they need over land. They don't have to worry about it coming over water.

#Nima

I think because of the nature of the issues that the United States and Iran are trying to negotiate on—which in a minute I'm going to bring up—but the nature, the whole concept of the ceasefire is based on this war. They wanted to put an end to this war of attrition, the United States at least. And

this new game that they're starting, it's some sort of a war of attrition. And the moment that the ceasefire is over, they're not going to be able to stay that close to the Iranian shores, to the Iranian coasts.

#Guest

Well, not only that, but the other factor that's going to kick in here is weather. And, you know, Professor Morandi's talked about it. I don't know if you've ever experienced what it's like to be in, let's say, Qatar in May, but it's like being in a damn pizza oven.

#Nima

It's not as harsh as Qatar, but in the southwest of Iran, we have the same sort of weather. It's going to go over 50, 60 degrees, something like that.

#Guest

Yeah, Celsius. Celsius. I understand that's Celsius, because Fahrenheit, it's like 120 degrees. I mean, and that's just in May. You know, I couldn't believe how hot it was. And then on top of it, the sandstorms. They come in. You know, that's a whole other dimension. So the U.S., if it's going to do something on the ground, so to speak, trying to launch ground operations, they've got sort of a short window for it. It has to be in the next three weeks. But then after that, they'll be dealing with some serious weather issues. And the heat—people think the heat just affects the soldiers. No, it affects aircraft. The maintenance issues on that increase. So, I mean, again, it forces the United States to move its air operations being launched from, say, Cyprus or from Jordan or from Israel. And that adds more wear and tear on this machinery. And these machines, they break down.

#Nima

Could that—you mentioned the situation with the weather. I understand if Donald Trump was telling us with his new sort of posts on Truth Social that he's going to attack the power grids together with bridges, all of this—and the response from Iran is going to be the attack on the same sort of plants in other countries. As you mentioned, the weather case, the weather factor is in the game that is hugely problematic for the region. And how is that going to put pressure on the parties, all parties involved in the negotiation, in the talks?

#Guest

Well, let's go with the assumption that Iran succeeds, right? In knocking out the power to the majority of the people and cities in the United Arab Emirates or in Saudi Arabia, people are going to have to abandon those cities. I mean, it will be too hot to continue living there. There will be some generators here and there, but overall it's not going to be livable. So, you know, the movement of

populations at that point, that's going to really bring some political pressure because, again, their argument is to the United States, well, you promised you'd protect us. Instead of protecting us, you made us vulnerable. You've made us a target. Of course, those countries have made themselves a target because of their cooperation with the West and allowing the military operations to be conducted from their territories. Iran has every right in the world to punish those countries for that.

#Nima

I think the issue is that I told you it would be important to talk about these zero-sum nature issues when it comes to the Strait of Hormuz. There is no cooperation between Iran and the United States in the case of the Strait of Hormuz. No, that's right. They're not going to accept anything of that sort. What is Trump trying to achieve with the case of the Strait of Hormuz?

#Guest

Well, he wants it open. I mean, it's very simple. And he wants Iran to stop exerting control. I've heard, you know, there have been some other, and I'll put quotations around it, "analysts." You know, this Professor Jiang, have you seen this guy running around? He's everywhere. And I'm listening to it, and it's like... I don't get it. You know, there's really no substance there. But, you know, he's brought on and he was talking about, oh yeah, they could block the Strait of Malacca. Okay, let's understand why Iran is effective right now in blocking the strait. Iran doesn't need a deep-water, blue-water navy, right?

It has drones and missiles that are positioned inside the country to such a depth that it's not a simple matter for the United States to fly bombers over or launch missiles to take those sites out. Because the terrain is such that it gives Iran an effective ability to control that strait. Now, on top of it, though, it does have maritime drones, underwater drones, surface drones, aerial drones on top of that. But that's not what gives it the power to control the strait. Its power is like... if you don't get our permission, if you don't coordinate with us in advance, we'll sink your ship. Real simple. Well, you can't do that in the Strait of Malacca.

In the Malacca Strait, there's no military force or bunch of missiles, bunch of drones inland. The military task of, like, if we said, okay, let's land and go inside and take over that part of Iran so that they can't fire those missiles. Now, that would be the only way to guarantee there would be no more interference with the Strait, but the problem is you're going to need about a million, two million men to do that. And then the fact that trying to get them ashore without getting them killed, good luck. So that's why I said this. These other folks are trying to draw parallels with the Bering Strait or the Malacca Strait. It's just idiotic. It really is stupid. But, you know, they get away with it and they talk about it as if they know.

#Nima

Yeah. The second issue, Larry, which is a zero-sum game, is enrichment of uranium on Iranian soil. Right. I think nobody in Iran can negotiate on that. It's impossible. It's not going to happen if Donald Trump decides to go in that direction because it doesn't make sense. For such a long time, Iran was sacrificing everything, Larry — the economy, the people who were involved in this program — to reach this point that they are at right now. And they have everything domestic when it comes to the nuclear program of Iran. And suddenly Donald Trump wants to remove that from the scene. Is it possible for Donald Trump to understand that it's impossible to do that?

#Guest

No, well, in Donald Trump's current mental state, no, he can't understand that. The entire nuclear issue is just a red herring. It's not—let's assume that Iran never had a nuclear program. Do you think then that the United States today would be saying, oh, okay, let's just live and let live, let's get along with Iran? Hell no. It's the Islamic Republic that drives us crazy. You know, we create this mythology in the West about Sharia law and the strict Islamic standards, you know, beating women in the streets if they're not wearing hijab, you know, that kind of nonsense.

So the nuclear issue is an excuse. That's all it is — to try to destroy the regime. Regime change is the ultimate goal, destroying the Islamic Republic. The United States cannot stand it that the people of Iran rose up in a popular revolution in the 1970s, in 1979, and threw the Shah out — a leader that we, the United States, had installed through a CIA coup managed by Kermit Roosevelt, the son of Teddy Roosevelt, I believe. So we can't tolerate that. We've got to be in control. How dare the Iranians assert their own independence? And the fact that they chose to be an Islamic Republic — that was their choice.

That wasn't imposed upon them from the outside. You know, I do see some parallels with the American Revolution of 1776, again, throwing off a colonial empire and trying to become a state independent of that colonizer. You know, at the root of all this, that is what enrages the West — that Iran dares to be independent. Because it's not, you know, it wasn't a creature or creation of China or Russia or space aliens. It was organic to Iran. And while, you know, the West may not like that, that's the reality. And I think we all learn to accept that.

#Nima

Larry, here is what CNN just reported — that the White House correspondents say J.D. Vance and the American delegation have not yet departed Washington, D.C. for Islamabad. It's contrary to what Donald Trump said. He said they're going over there and they're going to get there in a few hours. And, you know, it's so amazing, Larry, because Donald Trump — yesterday, it was yesterday — he said that J.D. Vance is not going to go there because of the security issues. You remember they had the same story before, for the first round of negotiations. He repeated that. Then later on,

we learned from Caroline Lovett that she said he's going to be there, he's going to lead the delegation. Right. There is something happening within the administration. Don't try to come out without talking with anybody, making these sort of arguments.

#Guest

Yeah, we ought to update the George M. Cohan song. Over there, over there, J.D. Vance, here he comes, over there. Sorry. This is absurd. Trump is trying, you know, a lot of this is just manipulation of the market. You know, yeah, and it's still going on today. I mean, I cannot believe these people on Wall Street. They bought into this crap that, oh, peace is at hand. Oh, the Iranians are going to surrender any minute. No, they're not. Newsflash. You know, Trump is caught. Trump is seeking an exit strategy. But he doesn't want to have to admit that he's wrong and has been wrong all along. But that's going to be the only way out. I don't see Iran doing anything. I would advise Iran not to do anything to help Donald Trump save face. Screw him. He brought this on for no other reason. The faces of those 168 little girls that were murdered on February 28th — that should burn forever in the hearts and minds of the Iranian people.

The United States must pay for that. And that means no concessions to the United States on that. They murdered those children. And it is the United States — whatever — they can't, the United States, in my view, cannot be trusted to make an agreement that will ensure Iran's security, short of eliminating all U.S. troops that are in the Gulf states. You're asking about the 10-point plan. That's one of the demands — to have security guarantees — and they don't necessarily tie it to the troop presence. But once you eliminate U.S. bases, you're going to make it then impossible for the United States to attack Iran, unless they start building up on those bases. So that gives Iran some warning — okay, something — they're coming after us.

#Nima

There was a phone call, Larry, moments ago between the Iranian foreign minister and the foreign minister of Pakistan. And they're trying to do it, as I told you — they're trying to do their best to convince Iran to go to Islamabad. And Donald Trump — here's what Donald Trump just said — that if the ceasefire expires, lots of bombs will be dropping on Iran. So we're literally getting back to the war.

#Guest

Yeah.

#Nima

And I don't know what else do they have right now, because we've learned a new aircraft carrier is heading to the Middle East. Gerald Ford is getting back — we had that in the news. I don't know where that is right now.

#Guest

But supposedly in the Red Sea somewhere, which I was surprised by. Because if I were them, I'd get the hell out of the Red Sea as fast as possible. Because when this goes hot — and it will go hot again, it's not a matter of if — then the Houthis have vowed that they will target the Gerald Ford. It's going to take some significant disaster, like the sinking of one of the aircraft carriers, even one of the destroyers, and the deaths of some U.S. sailors, for it to finally, finally wake up the other political leaders in the United States to tell Trump, "You've got to stop this now. You can't continue this." Because the last thing the United States is in a position to do is to get embroiled in another war overseas that's going to last for months, if not years.

#Nima

Donald Trump came out yesterday praising Israel for what they're doing in helping the United States. But do you see any sort of sign that Israel is doing something in that direction? It seems that they're so preoccupied with the situation on the Lebanese border, and that they're not that much involved in this war against Iran.

#Guest

No, look, they're too busy destroying statues of Jesus. They're still too busy trying to destroy Christian symbols, Islamic symbols. I mean, it's disgusting. They are a despicable culture. This is... it is... And the good news is it's starting to awaken some outrage in the United States. You know, they went after, you know, three weeks ago on Palm Sunday, celebrated within, I'll call it Western Christianity as opposed to the Eastern Orthodox. You know, they shut, they closed the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Well, you know, that church has been around, let's see, 2,000 years. Or 1900 is about 354 A.D., after the death of Christ. So it was built in the 4th century. So here we are 17 centuries later, and they're attacking that. So it is the animus by these Zionist maniacs that is the heart of the issue. They continue to attack Palestinian Christians, Palestinian Muslims, doesn't matter. They've been going after Palestinian Christians very intently. And Trump lets it happen.

#Nima

Larry, we know that this war is not going to end, and there are no serious negotiations to put an end to this conflict.

#Guest

Right.

#Nima

So when it comes to the balance of military power right now, how do you find the battlefield? I think this pause is going to end soon and they're going to get back to the war. How do you see the balance, and how do you find the situation that Israel is in right now?

#Guest

Yeah, Israel's got probably the most difficult situation. So let's step back and look at what this war, what the fighting has exposed. And it's not just now. Let's go back eight months to March of 2024. In 2024, the United States vowed that it was going to open the Red Sea, open the Bab al-Mandab Strait, and ensure the freedom of navigation by attacking the Houthis. And over a seven-week period, the United States attacked relentlessly. The Houthis kept firing missiles, and ultimately the United States said, we're declaring victory, we're going home, and we got out. So we couldn't defeat the Houthis. The attack on Iran has exposed that right now the United States is a one-trick pony. We have to rely upon air power to project force.

We got our Navy out there, and now we're grabbing a cargo ship that's unarmed. Ooh, boy, we're tough. But we have to do it far enough away from Iranian shores that we can't get hit with missiles or drones or underwater drones or submarines, you know, these mini subs that they have. So the Navy ends up being a bit of a non-factor. Yeah, they've got these very expensive aircraft carriers, and they've got a flotilla. They bring a couple of destroyers along with them, but they can't get in close to shore, which is where they need to be if they're going to be effective. And ground troops—out of the question. The era of drone warfare now has made it virtually impossible to assemble troops in any one location.

That and short-range, medium-range ballistic missiles. So the traditional way of doing things that were common in the 20th century—you can no longer do that. So it has exposed that there are limits to U.S. military power. By the same token, you've got Iran, who's shown that with missiles buried underground, with the key production facilities underground, they're safe. The United States, even if they use a nuke, is not going to destroy those sites. They are too deeply buried in granite to be touched. Which brings us to Israel, who is still fighting what I call conventional 20th-century warfare, but they're not succeeding.

I draw Hamas as the classic example of a specifically defined area, about 25 miles long, 5 to 7 miles wide, depending upon which point you're at. And the Israelis had it completely surrounded, and surrounded in such a way that I don't see how any resupplies could get in. So you'd say at some point Hamas would run out of supplies, but so far they haven't. And we're more than two years, coming close to two and a half years into this—you know, December, January, February, March. Yeah. So we're two and a half years into this, and Israel has been unable to defeat Hamas. And

what I mean by defeat—cause Hamas to surrender, say, we give up, we can't continue fighting. No, they're going to continue fighting.

Yes, Israel has leveled, virtually destroyed all of Gaza, made it into a moonscape, but it hasn't defeated Hamas. And now it's engaged in combat with Hezbollah. It's done the Gaza thing with these villages that used to be along the border—they've been leveled completely. It's created like a dead zone. But as the Israelis try to advance, Hezbollah keeps, you know, ambushing them, knocking them off. And so Israel does not have—they don't have the force structure. They're too small to fight two wars at the same time. And hell, now they're fighting three. So they're fighting in Gaza, they're fighting in the West Bank, fighting in Lebanon, and they're fighting with Iran. They will deplete their resources to the point that they will become ineffective.

#Nima

Do you understand, Larry, when it comes to the continuation of the war, what has the United States done so far in terms of improving its position? We know that they brought one more aircraft carrier—the Gerald Ford is back—which had some sort of problems. And how is that going to change their leverage in the region?

#Guest

But it really doesn't. You know, it's just one more asset they've got to figure out where to put and keep out of harm's way. You know, the aircraft carrier is a way to have—it's a mobile air base. So you move it close enough to shore so the planes, when they launch, can penetrate deep enough into Iranian territory to do damage. Up to this point, a lot of the damage that's been done in Iran through air operations has been done with standoff missiles. The JASSMs, when they're launched, can travel up to 500 miles. So it's been rare that you've had a lot of U.S. or Israeli aircraft actually over Iranian territory. And Iran has been able to shoot several down. And I think if they go out with this next iteration of attacks on Iran and try to do it with aircraft inside Iran, it's going to turn out badly.

So, you know, the Gerald Ford, the George H.W. Bush, and the Abraham Lincoln—three carrier strike groups there—you know, if they can get in close to shore, that means you've got additional aircraft now that are going to be able to engage and conduct attacks, which may actually be, you know, what this plan to do massive bombing will hinge on. I think that's one of the reasons they're bringing the Gerald R. Ford in. You know, they may delay that. You know, there's some thought that it could happen as soon as tonight or tomorrow. But in fact, they may delay until they get all those carriers in place, that they can be properly fueled, and they'll be close enough that they can carry out strikes.

#Nima

So none of them are going to be close to Israel to defend Israel? None of these aircraft carriers?

#Guest

Yeah, no, no. They're not there for defending Israel. I mean, candidly, what can they do? You know, the air defense missiles, the PAC-3 on the Patriot and the THAAD, they've been exhausted. They're depleted or almost depleted. You know, there's no way that they got more in supply because there was a limited number to begin with. You can't emphasize that enough. Excuse me, we got all this pollen from springtime here, so it's making eyes water and nose run. Yeah, so I think that they're more for the offensive part as opposed to trying to shield Israel, because effectively they can't.

#Nima

But they're moving the air defense systems in Jordan. Here are the pictures, Larry—the THAAD and the Patriot systems in Jordan. They relocated these systems to some other places in order to be less exposed. But it seems that in the satellite images, they found them, and they know the exact location of these air defense systems. And the other point, Larry—yesterday I was talking with Stas. He mentioned something important. He said they are so close to each other, if you send a ballistic missile there, they can all be destroyed.

#Guest

Right, right, yeah. Well, and it assumes that you actually have the missiles that can be fired, you know, the PAC-3s. And like I said, they're out. Or if not, they're down to, you know, less than a dozen. You know, they could fire off in response to one missile barrage, but if there are more than one or two... No, this is just more of the self-delusion on the part of thinking that we're stronger militarily than we actually are.

#Nima

The Iranian blockade and Trump's blockade in the Persian Gulf are literally bringing GCC countries to their knees, Larry. The situation in the Persian Gulf, as we've learned—the UAE is running out of cash. They're asking the United States, if you provide us with cash, or we're going to get closer to China, we're going to use yuan and... And it seems that the GCC countries are moving in that direction. The outcome of what has happened so far is the reality that is hitting them.

#Guest

Well, yeah, that's always what we call the serendipitous effects of war. Now, I understand, I haven't taken time to watch it, but this one journalist, Richard Medhurst, is talking about this as actually going to be a victory for the petrodollar and the defeat of BRICS. Now, I'm thinking, dude, what are you smoking? Because, if anything, this has done the exact opposite. This has made it clear that the petrodollar no longer rules the world and that the alternatives that BRICS is creating—the demand for those services—is accelerating, not decelerating. And the Chinese in particular are benefiting

from this. Not only are they using their currency, but the Chinese have developed, let's call it, the financial architecture that undergirds this. The West is still dependent, you know, for interbank transfers.

The West is still dependent upon SWIFT. And SWIFT now has—it's an ironic name because SWIFT implies fast. But SWIFT is an email system that's actually pretty slow. It can take days and sometimes more than a week for a transaction to clear through this process. The Chinese are digital—CIPS, the Cross-Border Interbank Payment System. You know, this is like sending money online with Zelle or any other kind of electronic transfer. It's like an instantaneous transfer. So this war is redirecting, restructuring global finance. And you correctly note, the Gulf states, the UAE in particular, they're in trouble because they do not have the cash flow. You know, before, they've got lots of money maybe stashed away and, you know, owning T-bills on top of that.

But they're not sending oil out. And certain products like the liquefied natural gas out of Qatar, they're looking at three to five years before that's even back up and potentially running. Right. You know, that's the thing that, again, most people in the West and these financial analysts have been ignoring, is that the damage that's been done to the infrastructure in the Gulf is such that it's not going to be easily repaired. It's like if the war stopped today, it's not a matter of just turning the faucet and, oh, it's all back up and running. No, it's going to be months—minimum months—and more likely years before the damage is repaired and systems can be back up and operating as expected. So the crunch, the economic crunch, is coming. With each passing day, it's going to get worse.

#Nima

I think the most that the Trump administration can do with the case of this trade reform is forcing Iranians to charge at least some of these countries that are using this trade to pay in dollars. So here comes the second part of the question. Iran is under U.S. sanctions for such a long time. It doesn't make sense for Iran to go in that direction to receive dollars. So Donald Trump has to do something with the sanctions. It's all connected. You cannot single out some issues and say they're not related to each other. It's all connected. It doesn't matter what Donald Trump is trying to do. He has to accept, one way or another, if he wants to do something about the use of the dollar in the Persian Gulf, he has to reduce the sanctions or remove the sanctions on Iran. Because if not, it doesn't work for Iran.

#Guest

Well, Iran's made it clear. That was one of their ten points: remove the sanctions, lift them, and give us back our damn money. You know, you've still got frozen assets—give that back. Yeah. You know, I'm not an Iranian official, so they don't consult with me. But, you know, I'd go back and make that just as clear as possible. You know, we're not budging one inch on these. These are non-negotiable terms. You know, lift the sanctions now, stop that, and return our frozen assets. Then we can talk.

You know, it's like if you had a—let's say you were no longer married, but you had a girlfriend, and she wanted to get back together with you. Okay, fine.

But you've got to stop seeing all these other guys, okay? You're going to be with me, you're going to be with me. And that's sort of got to be Iran's position with the United States. Hey, sanctions? No, that goes away. You can't keep having sanctions and want to have a relationship with us. It's not how that works. You know, if you want to have a normal relationship, get rid of all the sanctions. And frankly, that should be the position of Russia, too, with the United States. I think the U.S. has grossly overplayed its hand through trying to coerce people through the various sanctions to behave in a certain way. And these are independent countries who say, no, we're not going to succumb to that.

#Nima

There was a report on PBS, and here is the reporter asking Donald Trump, will Iran attend the talks in Islamabad? Donald Trump's answer was, I don't know, but they are supposed to be there. And he was asked, if they don't, what would be the reaction? He said, that's fine too if they do that. That will be great. If they don't, it will be great. I don't know what he means by that.

#Guest

He's going to get to beat his hairless chest and bomb Iran some more, which is going to create further obstacles to having any kind of negotiated outcome, because the United States cannot militarily defeat Iran in practical terms. You know, people say, oh, that's—what if, you know, yes, if the United States went on a complete war footing, mobilized, you know, 3 million, 4 million men, shut down all industry, had it be directed towards supporting the war effort like we did in World War II, yeah, we could defeat Iran. It'd be costly. We'd lose a lot of people in the process. But we'd, quote, win. And then what do you have?

You know, this is more like the battle—I call it the Battle of New Guinea in World War II. It's fascinating if you study the war in the Pacific. Starting with Guadalcanal, you know, the Marines landed and they fought a six- or seven-month battle, finally defeated the Japanese. And then while this was going on, there were the landed Marines in New Guinea. And, you know, it's a fairly large island, you know, not a tiny one. And the fighting on New Guinea, despite all, you know, the United States was island-hopping and taking other places—Tarawa, Saipan, Okinawa—the fighting on New Guinea continued.

It was that they were still fighting there, and there were still Japanese fighting even after the peace treaty, the peace agreement was negotiated in August or September of 1945. And I just illustrate that, you know, in a sense, the nature of the terrain and the type of conditions in New Guinea were such that the U.S., even though it was fully mobilized for war, could not defeat the Japanese there. And that's sort of where I draw the parallel. That's what Iran represents right now to the United

States. Yeah, the United States can unleash a lot of military force, but it doesn't have all the components needed to, quote, defeat Iran, or if it decided to make the effort to create those components, it would be so costly that it would really harm the United States. So that's why I say there's no viable military option.

#Nima

Larry, there was an interview with one of the former commanders of the Army in the United States. I forgot his name. But he said, literally in this interview, that we can do the same as we did in Iraq. We can go there, we can send people on the ground to grab some part of Iran and keep it, and sustain the situation. And just comparing Iran to Iraq is mind-boggling. What is happening in the minds of these people who are basically military experts and who were part of the operation? He was part of the operation in Iraq.

#Guest

Yeah, well, you'd love to question him and say, okay, let's stop for a minute. So what was possible in Iraq was made possible because we had assembly areas in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, so we could gather U.S. forces en masse, 165,000. But where are you going to do that now? And really, you're talking about a grand operation. How much Iranian territory do you think you can seize and hold? Because Iran, you know, he probably doesn't realize that Iran's four times the size of Iraq. And look at all the trouble we had trying to control Iraq with just 165,000 troops. Iran would be a much more formidable obstacle, and it's compounded by the fact that right now we don't have any place where we can take all these troops, get them equipped, geared up, ready to go to battle, because Iran has ballistic missiles that can reach any point within 2,000 miles.

#Nima

Donald Trump has decided to extend the suspension of sanctions on Russian energy.

#Guest

I don't know how. Well, sort of. So if you've read the Besant—so Besant came out last Thursday and initially said, okay, we're cutting them off, which was incredibly stupid because it was really targeting—this is more to target China than it is Russia. But then he came out and they gave, quote, a waiver. But when you read the conditions, they say, okay, any oil that's on a Russian vessel or that comes from a Russian source as of April 17th—and that was last week, you know, three days ago—will not be sanctioned until May 18th. Well, sorry, that's not a lifting. That's just a temporary reprieve. You know, you need to lift the sanctions. And that's, again, I think the Russians need to lead the way on this with respect to the United States.

Just saying, no, this is—you want to sanction us and you want to talk. We're not talking. We're not saying a damn thing to you until these sanctions are lifted. That's a requirement. Get rid of them. Otherwise, you know, let's press this militarily. I really think that's the only thing the United States is going to understand—force. Because we've gotten so accustomed to going out and using force without suffering any consequences. And once we start suffering consequences, then all of a sudden it's going to create enough momentum that people say, well, we don't want to be involved with that. We don't need to be involved with that.

#Nima

Yeah. Larry, here is the official statement. You know, we have a statement from the Iranians. It was published on Tasnim News Agency. They're talking about the United States' naval blockade, as well as other excessive demands, which do not show a clear horizon for a diplomatic path. These excessive demands, if they are not amended, show that negotiations with the United States are a waste of time. So I think we have some sort of clear picture of what's going on.

#Guest

Were they recording what I was saying? Yeah. This ain't complicated. You know, the actions of the United States, you have to step back and look and say, is it conciliatory? Is it actually trying to make progress? Or is it, you know, window dressing with threats? Well, it's window dressing with threats. And not just threats. I mean, they've taken action. They've already boarded. They have committed another act of war. And, you know, you can't overlook that. The United States wants to pretend that, oh, let's just talk and we'll put all these issues behind us. You know, no. You attacked us with no warning, unprovoked.

And in the process, you killed 168 of our children. You know, just, you know, to the United States, damn you to hell. You can't do that. You know, there's no amount of money that's going to bring those little girls back. But that is what you are. You're a group of murdering thugs. And that's unfortunate. And that also reflects what Donald Trump is. So, you know, until the United States makes the right gesture, and it starts with, you know, stop the blockade right now. Don't even stop threatening us in public. Show that you want a deal. But, you know, you keep on with the threats and then the action. There's nothing to talk about.

#Nima

The whole situation with the talks, with this second round of talks, it shows somehow maybe it could be a cover for what they want to do with the attack, you know, while they're trying to pretend that they want to negotiate at the same time they're attacking Iran. I think that could happen. And Iran knows that. Iran is prepared for that because I talked with Professor Morandi. He said that Iran is prepared for that because they don't believe that the United States is serious in these negotiations.

#Guest

Yeah, correctly so. You know, I think it's just a ruse. You know, if Trump comes out and unilaterally announces, "Okay, we're extending the ceasefire," he's not doing that. He's talking about, again, bombing all power stations and bridges, turning the lights off in Iran. That's not just a negotiating tactic. That's a threat to the well-being of the civilians. It is an attack on the civilian population.

#Nima

Larry, looking at the big picture, we know that all this madness, this chaos that is happening both in Ukraine and in the Middle East, in West Asia against Iran, is somehow connected to the global economy — how they can run the global economy, dominate the global economy. And you wrote a piece on your website about the St. Petersburg Economic Forum, which is going to be in June, if I'm not mistaken.

#Guest

Right, right.

#Nima

And how important and how crucial is that for the future of, you know, the global economy and the way that BRICS or the Global South sees this, in these two conflicts together with the solution for this sort of chaos that is happening?

#Guest

Yeah, the... the SPIEF, you know, St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, is really something to behold. I attended in 2024. I hope to go back this year. But the number of countries that show up for that, and it highlights both the business opportunities, economic opportunities in Russia, which are quite formidable. So this shift that's underway to the creation of a new economic order with BRICS as sort of the foundation of it — Russia and China are the two key cornerstones to it. But within that, Iran is going to play an increasingly important role in the future, once this war is concluded, once it is freed from all of the Western sanctions.

But actually, part of the beauty of BRICS is the West can impose those sanctions, and BRICS is now creating an alternative that's outside the sanctions. So that countries, you know, you're going to take our dollars? We don't deal with dollars anymore. So, okay, take it. You know, it would be like, I think I told you the story when we were doing a product counterfeiting investigation, and this one guy who was in Panama said — a fellow named Nidal Waked — you know, he was involved with product

counterfeiting. And I thought I had him, you know, I got him in his office and I said, boy, you know, if you don't stop this, you're going to suffer, 'cause I'm going to go to the embassy and make sure you never get a visa.

And he just, he laughed at me, opened his drawer. He pulled out, he had like a Canadian passport, he had a Colombian passport, he had a European Union passport, and, you know, go ahead, I don't need the United States. This is what his message was. And that's sort of where I think I see the BRICS nations going. And SPIEF is just, you know, St. Petersburg International Economic Forum is just one other venue where these people come together, they interact. You know, it's a big deal. And then you see that also with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. And then, you know, BRICS is going to be like the hub of a wheel that brings all the different spokes that run in. I think BRICS will be the unifier. You're muted. You're muted.

#Nima

Larry, we know that Israel has defined a yellow line in the southern part of Lebanon, as you've mentioned. And looking at some villages in the southern part of Lebanon, it looks like Gaza because they're destroying everything, everything. I think the long-term strategy is not just to occupy, but to annex the southern part of Lebanon. Correct? That is happening. And how do you see the understanding of the Lebanese government and the way that they're trying to, because they said that they're gonna have the second round of negotiations on Thursday between Israel and Lebanon?

#Guest

It's emasculated. It has no power. What's it going to threaten Israel with? You know, its army is weak. So the only way for Lebanon to be truly effective is for the Lebanese government, the Christians—basically the Lebanese Christians—are going to have to unite with Hezbollah. They unite with Hezbollah, create a united front. Then all of a sudden Israel will have a formidable foe to contend with. They're already suffering at the hands of Hezbollah. But then if that's combined with the rest of Lebanon, then it'll be a more difficult challenge for Israel to try to control it.

#Nima

Thank you. Thank you, Larry. Let's see what happens.

#Guest

I think as time goes by, we'll know by Friday. But unfortunately, I think bombs will be flying by then.

#Nima

Just let me read a joke right now from Donald Trump, which was published by Al Jazeera. It says, "Donald Trump says, breaking: Al Jazeera. And Trump says, 'Iran deal to be signed today in Pakistan.'"

#Guest

Was that serious? Serious. Serious.

#Nima

Al Jazeera just reported the breaking news.

#Guest

Oh God.

#Nima

It's just unbelievable. Unbelievable.

#Guest

Trump has a rich fantasy life. I'll give him that. All right.

#Nima

Thank you, Larry.

#Guest

My son, go forth and prosper.

#Nima

Thank you. See you soon, Larry. Later, man. Bye-bye. Later.

#Guest

Bye-bye.