

# Iran's Hormuz Strategy CRUSHES Naval Blockade, Trump is TRAPPED | Johnson

Former CIA Analyst Larry Johnson joins to discuss the massive trap Iran has laid for the US in the Strait of Hormuz as Trump's desperation brings us to the brink of an even more catastrophic war. LIKE the video and Subscribe for more in-depth geopolitical analysis! Leave your thoughts in the comments below! Support the Channel: Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong> SUBSCRIBE ON RUMBLE: Rumble: <https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong> #iran #trump #israel Follow Me on Social Media: Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DannyHaiphong> Telegram: <https://t.me/DannyHaiphong> Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhaiphong> Substack: [chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com](https://chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com) Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritho> #iran #trump

## #Danny

It's your host, Danny Haiphong. I am joined by former CIA analyst, geopolitical commentator, and analyst, Larry Johnson. Larry, good to see you again.

## #Johnson

Hey, I'm here, and I'm glad you're up late in China.

## #Danny

Yeah, I am here in China, and I'm so glad to reconnect with you. Larry, I guess I wanted to just begin with the flurry of developments over the last day or so in the war with Iran. It's becoming very confusing. Maybe you could just begin by outlining where we are, because right now Trump just said the United States controls the Strait of Hormuz. They boarded another ship, it appears. But then there's all this data coming out about Iran and how much oil they're actually able to ship out. It's quite a lot, not only out of the Strait of Hormuz but into the global marketplace. And, of course, we have the whole, well, three-to-five-day ceasefire — we're going to get a deal — and then, oh, this could go on forever and ever. What's going on, Larry, with this war? It seems like Donald Trump has kind of trapped himself in this, and the United States has. But I'm curious what your assessment is of the situation so far.

## #Johnson

No, I agree. I agree with you. Trump is trapped, and he's developing the "taco meme" of "Trump always chickens out" — it's becoming quite prominent and prevalent. You know, the deadline was

Tuesday, and the Iranians had presented the United States with some very specific, precise points about what they wanted, what they were willing to negotiate on. And the United States refused to accept those and introduced new conditions of its own. And for Iran, sort of the breaking point was that the sanctions were supposed to be lifted and there was not to be a blockade. But Trump insisted that they go with a blockade. So Iran said, okay, we're not showing up. We're not going to participate.

That then led Trump to, when it was clear they weren't going to show, they weren't responding to U. S., you know, frantic U.S. messages, talking, you know, they'd send a message to the Pakistanis and call the Pakistanis, "Have they answered yet?" You know, sort of reminiscent of some teenager who's got a crush on a girl but can't talk to her directly and is always just going through another friend trying to find out, "Did she say anything about me? Did she talk about me?" So then Trump extended the ceasefire on the pretext that there's great division within the Iranian leadership and on the premise that the Iranians have not presented a precise plan. You know, both of those are false.

The 10-point plan is the 10-point plan. It doesn't get much more precise than that. And as far as splits within the leadership, sorry, but whether it's Ghalibaf, who's the speaker of their legislature, the head legislator, Araqchi, the head of the IRGC, they're all singing from the same sheet of music. So this blockade is, in many aspects, more symbolic. It's political theater for the United States. They get to show, oh, look at our Marines landing on this tanker, we're taking it over. Well, nobody asked, how many tankers have actually left the Gulf? Oh, that number's now like 40. Oh, and we've stopped how many? Three, maybe four.

So the United States does not have enough ships in the area to actually do a complete blockade, number one. Number two, they have to do it out in the Indian Ocean. They don't do it near the Strait of Hormuz because they could be hit with Iranian missiles. So, you know, Iran is going to continue to work through this, but yet the policymakers and Trump are being told a pack of lies. And I don't think it's just a matter, you know, Trump engages in what's called confabulation, where he says something that's an out-and-out lie, but he believes it's true. But others in his administration, they appear to be getting the same sort of nonsense.

You hear Scott Besson talking about it. Oh, we're going to crush the economy of Iran. They're going to run out of money. We're going to take Karg Island. All their oil wells are going to run dry because they can't pump oil, because there's no place to store it. This is nothing but nonsense. But the U.S. believes it, and they're hoping and hoping and hoping that somehow this so-called blockade is going to compel Iran to make concessions or surrender or change leadership or some magical thing. It'll be just as effective as the U.S. blockade on Cuba has been for 66 years. Any minute now, those Cubans, boy, they're going to give up. But no, you're muted.

**#Danny**

Yeah, sorry about that. Yeah, thanks. We even saw recently, Larry, that Havana is starting to light up again with the assistance of Russia, so not even that blockade has been foolproof by any means. But, you know, President Trump has announced that the U.S. Navy needs to shoot down and kill any boat that's trying to mine the Strait of Hormuz. He's also said that he has total control over it, which is interesting. But this is the news that I wanted to ask you about. There's supposedly—this is Israeli media, of course—we have to take it with a grain of salt.

Israeli media is saying that the Trump administration has outlined its next steps for the war if negotiations are not renewed, that after the extended ceasefire expires, the United States would launch a military operation. This is what I find a real kicker—described as more intense than previous strikes, with the campaign expected to last several days before concluding. What do you think of this? I mean, what does this tell you, Larry, about the way that the United States, Israel, of course, those aggressors that are party to this war—what situation they're in right now? That's a very odd thing to leak out into the public. But your thoughts on it?

## **#Johnson**

Well, first let me say that worrying about boats mining the Strait of Hormuz—they've already mined it. I mean, I was being told that they did a heavy saturation mining last week. So, you know, that horse has already left the barn. So that's just, again, this is Trump pandering to the American public, trying to create a narrative, create an image: I'm in control, I'm acting, I'm doing important things. As far as the plans go, the United States, they are intact. They're going to hit power grids, power-generating centers. They're going to target logistics. They're going to really try to hurt Iran. Iran knows that. And Iran, by the same token, is prepared to retaliate immediately once that starts. And so that's where this calculation of what the West is going to do isn't taking into account necessarily what Iran is going to do back to it.

The U.S. presence—I wrote a piece last night outlining that there are at least 15 bases, facilities where U.S. troops have operated. Some were under U.S. control, some were under the control of the host nation, particularly in Saudi Arabia. The majority of those have been hit and significantly damaged to the point that U.S. forces are not really able to be based there. This next go-round, I think, will wipe them all out. Iran's goal is to be sure that the United States is not going to attack it again. Well, one way to do that is you wipe out all the U.S. bases, because then it makes it very difficult for the United States to launch any kind of attack, or at least you'd have ample warning that it was going to happen.

So, you know, they're going to carry on their campaign for days. Then what? They're hoping that Iran's going to plead, "Oh, stop it, we can't stand the pain"? That's, you know, look at what the Japanese endured during World War II. They suffered far more pain and damage, and it was only when the Russians entered the— or the then—Soviet Union entered the war that they decided, "Okay, we surrender, we give up." So this is, you know, as they take meaningless, albeit harmful,

military action—harmful in terms of costing lives and wounding human beings—the global economy, the situation of the global economy, is getting worse. Just out of curiosity, when did you buy your plane tickets to go to China?

## **#Danny**

I actually bought them well before February 28th, so I did not experience the massive price increases that are very obvious now when trying to fly anywhere.

## **#Johnson**

Yeah, the prices, my understanding, have tripled and quadrupled. So, you know, those impacts are going to continue. Countries that rely upon imports of oil—there's no more oil to be imported. That's now cut off in large measure. Or what is available is going to be up to \$150 a barrel, \$200 a barrel. So it's going to be that economic issue that's really going to force Trump and his team to figure out what the hell they're going to do. Because if he wants to take credit for keeping the Strait of Hormuz closed, good. You're depriving the world of 20% of its oil, 35% of its fertilizer, 25% of its liquid natural gas, and God knows how much of its helium.

## **#Danny**

Well, Larry, the reports are in that Iran is beginning to, you know, accumulate and consolidate, get together these tools that they've been instituting, that now they're collecting them for, you know, use. And I want to ask you about, you know, when it comes to Iran's overall strategy around the Strait of Hormuz, because Iran—we get a lot of misconceptions, I think, from the United States, from the Western media, about what Iran is actually doing and how Iran has actually done this. And I think it's really relevant now, given that the entire war is centered on this waterway, it seems like.

And the Trump administration is claiming that not only does the United States now control it, but Iran's leadership is in complete disarray, and they don't know what they're doing. And that's why it's going to take a little while for any kind of real peace talks to happen and come to fruition—anything significant. So, your thoughts on Iran's actual strategy here, given that it hasn't budged and now it's collecting the tolls in a significant way, and that is likely to have an impact, I'm guessing. But what's your thoughts?

## **#Johnson**

Well, yeah, actually the Strait of Hormuz is pretty unique when you put it in the global context. I've heard others, you know, like Professor Jiang and Gordon Chang, they were all talking about, oh, China could do that to the Malacca Strait. It just shows they don't understand, because Iran—if Iran didn't have a single boat, didn't have a single underwater drone, didn't have anybody stationed along the shore—they could still shut down the Strait of Hormuz because they've got short-range

ballistic missiles, they've got coastal defense cruise missiles, and they have drones. And all they have to do is tell people, it's closed. If you try to go through there, we're going to hit you. And so that's where you say, well, we've got to solve this militarily.

Good luck with that. Because the only way you could really solve that militarily is you would have to have a ground force land and move 100 to 200 miles inland, because some of those missiles have that range and more. So if you're going to actually control it and shut down that kind of threat—now, 20, oh, good Lord, now 40 years ago, during the Iraq, the U.S.-sponsored, U.S.-funded, U.S.-supported war of Iraq on Iran—the Iranians tried to mine the Persian Gulf and mine the Strait of Hormuz. And at that time, U.S. minesweepers could come through, clear up the mines, because there was no danger of them getting shot at with a drone or a cruise missile or a short-range ballistic missile, because Iran didn't have that in its arsenal, didn't have that capability.

Well, they do now. And Trump was just out claiming that all U.S. minesweepers are working in the Strait of Hormuz. No, they're not. It's just a lie. I mean, good Lord, the man can't stop it. And some attribute it to, you know, the prefrontal dementia, which, you know, the prefrontal lobe dementia. You know, I'm not a physician, but I do see symptoms of very odd, strange behavior in how he talks and what he says, etc. So, Strait of Hormuz, it's closed. And Iran, I don't think when they first closed it, I don't think they had actually thought through the full strategy, you know, planning this out. I think it's sort of growing upon them, saying, hey, man, we got the world in a chokehold.

And so, trying to figure out the policy. And I think part of the policy is, hey, if you're on the friends and family program, you know, you're not going to pay as much, and your ship gets to come in and out. If you're not on the friends and family program, you're going to pay a stiff fee, and you're going to pay it in Chinese yuan. You're not going to pay it in U.S. dollars. So this has really upended the international financial world as well. So the full weight and consequences of this act of closing the Strait of Hormuz, I mean, it's, you know, we're now on week eight. Let's see, we've got 23 and 31, that's 54 and 50. Yeah, so we're two days shy of eight weeks. Yeah.

## **#Danny**

Yeah. Yeah. And this war continues to morph and change character to a degree. But overall, we continue to see Iran remain firm in whatever form it has to take, and the United States more and more so looking very chaotic, very depressive, desperate in its movements. And I wanted to ask you, Larry, given what you just said about the minesweepers, they can't be operating there. And in large part, the reason why they can't be operating in this area is because they would be attacked. Iran has already attacked, in the last couple of days, ships that were trying to break the new regime, the rules. And they've docked a few of those.

I think two of the three boats they docked. So there's a report, Larry, in CBS News—I don't know if you saw it—that says Iran's military is more capable than the Trump administration is publicly acknowledging. The sources that they use are saying that 60 percent of the naval arm of the IRGC is

still in existence. So this is CBS News talking about this. Help us understand how—first of all, why is this information coming out now? And help us understand how it's actually affecting decision-making, because, yes, we are here in the eighth week, and we are now into more than a second week of ceasefire kabuki theater kind of thing.

## **#Johnson**

Well, that's a leak of government information. That's a leak of intelligence. And that's a sign that there are people within either the policy community who have access to that intelligence or people within the intelligence community, but they want that information out. And the information is to help start painting the other narrative. You know, that's been a long practice in Washington, D.C. When you've got policy disagreements, then information that's classified leaks because it's been put out to help change the argument, change the perspective. The amount of lying and self-deception, though, that goes on in D.C. is just truly staggering.

And one example with respect to Iran is this notion that their leadership is fractured, the IRGC is running everything, the civilians have no input. No, it's just not true. But the West pushes that out there, I guess, to try to justify, well, this is why we can't get anything done, not admitting that the reason is we're not willing to make any concessions that would make sense. No, no, we're going to blame it on them if they're disorganized and chaotic. This is not confined—this phenomenon, this kind of spin—is not confined to Iran. We saw it, good God, yesterday, the day before, with an article by Seymour Hersh.

Now, Cy has been a friend of mine for, good God, going on 43 years. And he's not real happy with me these days because I've called him out on his articles. His articles are complete horseshit. In this latest one, he claims that the Russian army is incompetent and hasn't made any advances in two years. And you're going, what? Well, they've gone so slow. You know, the Soviets conquered the Germans in four years, and now Russia can't conquer Ukraine in four years. And so, okay, if that's going to be our standard, then let's apply it evenly across the board. What the hell happened to the United States in Afghanistan? Twenty years and failed to defeat the Taliban.

So you know what, Cy? Shut the hell up. At least develop—you know, he's old. He's lost his critical thinking skills. He's just being spoon-fed and taking what he's getting. But the point was, they portray Russia in a way that is just simply not true. And the problem with that is, if I keep telling you lies about something and then you act on those lies—well, then I'm actually helping you make a mistake or put yourself at risk. And that's exactly what's happening to the United States. These lies about Iran, the lies about Russia, are leading to decisions that are both weakening and endangering the United States and its citizens. Okay.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, those are great points, Larry. And, you know, maybe now you can help us understand what exactly CBS could be talking about here, because it's so interesting to witness a sitting U.S. president and administration that continues to claim Iran has been obliterated, now claims that the leadership is in disarray, and yet is only really at this moment waging a blockade in its overall posture toward Iran and was the one that stopped hostilities. They stopped. It was the United States that called the ceasefire. So the United States has been calling on Iran for a ceasefire for a long time now during this period. So what exactly do you believe the U.S. is hesitating about? It's obvious that there's a big portion of the administration that is very much interested in continuing this war, or we wouldn't be in this position.

## **#Johnson**

So let me talk a little bit about the intelligence process. So, like, when I was an analyst, I rarely dealt with intelligence from public media. I didn't even read what stories were being published in the Washington Post and New York Times. My task was answering the question: will the Honduran government, that was somewhat civilian-controlled but always under the threat of a military coup—and there was always a lot of jockeying back and forth between these factions and the Honduran military—will they continue to support U.S. policy? That was the critical issue. And so how did I cover that?

Well, I had to rely upon cables and, you know, messages sent from the State Department, from the embassy in Tegucigalpa back to the State Department. Then we relied upon, if there were any human sources that the CIA had, what they were saying, and those were published in a CIA message. They were called TDs. It goes back to the old, the original days of the CIA when they stood for telegraphic distribution, TDs. Well, it's now, you know, digitally released. Then you'd have intercepts of conversations, intercepts of messages. You know, this was in the days before real text messaging and email became prominent. You know, so I'm a dinosaur in that regard. But, you know, so you have to look at all of that and evaluate, okay, what's going on?

You know, what's their motive? You know, the idea would be to have somebody who was, let's say, part of the president of Honduras, you know, his chief of staff or somebody, so you knew exactly what he was thinking, exactly what he was being told. But if you don't have that, then you have to start doing some reading of tea leaves. And always hanging in the back of your mind is the recognition that some of this information you're getting may have been deliberately provided to deceive you. You know, we saw that in, you know, bucket loads prior to the invasion of Iraq in 2003, where there was deliberate information about, quote, Saddam's weapons of mass destruction, particularly chemical weapons, that were being told.

What the American people were not told at the time is that the stockpile of chemical weapons Saddam had acquired came from us, the United States. We're the ones who purchased and provided the precursor chemicals that were used to construct those chemical weapons. We were the ones

who provided Saddam with intelligence on where to launch those attacks. So we knew a lot more about it than what was being let on, but we created this false public narrative. So, you know, let's jump ahead now to how we know what's going on within the Iranian leadership.

Well, ideally, we'd have intelligence assets on the inside. We do not. I'm 100% convinced we do not. Otherwise, we wouldn't be saying and acting in such a ridiculous way. So we rely upon what's called liaison reporting. Well, liaison reporting means we're getting information from the Israelis. And the Israelis keep saying, oh, we got this great source, we know exactly what's going on. They provide us that information. Who are we to argue with the Israelis? You know, so this is a way that you can manipulate the intelligence process to create an outcome. You know, someone like Israel can manipulate it, and the United States will go along with it. So that's where I come down on what I do, is I simply have to go with public statements. So I look at what is the civilian president?

What's Pozeshkin saying? What is the foreign minister Arashi saying? What's the head of the IRGC saying? What is the head of the legislature saying? And you go, huh, they're all saying basically the same thing. They're not calling each other insulting names and questioning each other's mother's sexual history. No, they're basically laying out that they're all on board. So they're singing from the same sheet of music. So that's where, when I hear Trump say something like this, this tells me that either that's what he wants to believe and he's making it up, or they've actually been receiving intelligence from Iran—I mean, about Iran—from Israel that's painting this picture, and they're buying it. Larry, why is Trump... Can we pause just for a second?

**#Danny**

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**#Johnson**

My boss is calling.

**#Danny**

All right, all right. Yeah, while Larry's doing that, you know, I definitely want to discuss now—there's this, it seems like, ceasefire kabuki theater and all kinds of mixed messages being sent by Trump himself, his administration, about what kind of deadline is now being held over Iran's head with regard to settling this conflict, resuming peace talks. First, Larry, or at least recently, it's three to five days. And then Carolyn Leavitt came out today and said, oh, no, no, no, there's no deadline, no timetable, which could mean a few things. And now with this report that the U.S. is planning strikes if Iran doesn't come back to the table. But it could mean a couple of things. It could mean that the United States doesn't want to have to act in a certain short period of time by placing kind of its own ultimatum and Iran calling its bluff.

Or it could mean that, truthfully, this war seems to be one that the United States actually wants to end, that it wants to get out of, but can't. What do you make of this switch from three to five days? And it's been happening ever since the first initial ceasefire was set to expire. We had so much theater around, oh, is Vance going to go to Islamabad? Or he was going, didn't go. And now we have, oh, well, Trump is saying everything's all good, we're going to go talk to Iran very soon, and it's going to be great. And then you have Carolyn Leavitt saying, well, no, this could go on for a long time, either because we don't want to act right away or perhaps they want to continue the war for a long time. It's hard to know which one. But your thoughts on this?

## **#Johnson**

Well, again, it's just a simple matter of sitting down and doing some critical thinking about what's going on. Ask yourself a number of questions. Which country, within 10 days of starting the war, was asking for a ceasefire? Was it Iran, or was it Israel, or the United States? And in this case, it was the United States. And it has been the United States throughout. We've seen no evidence whatsoever of Iran saying, oh my God, we can't stand the pain. In fact, what we see is the opposite—people coming out into the streets every night in Tehran and in other cities around Iran in support of the government. In fact, when they got to the end of the ceasefire, they were jubilant. The Iranians were jubilant.

So they see that they correctly understand that they are fighting this global superpower to a standstill—not only to a standstill, to a point that it is actually harming the United States. So then you have to step back and say, okay, who has what military options? Iran is in a defensive position. It's always better to fight from a defensive position because you can minimize casualties and it forces the other side to expend more resources. And in this case, we have the reality of the limits of U.S. military power. Now, people say, what are you talking about? We've got this \$1.5 trillion budget for the Department of Defense. We've got the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps, the Air Force.

Nobody can match us in the world. It's not about how expensive your army is or how big our military is, how much money you've spent on it, but you have to step back and say, okay, what can it actually do? Take the Navy. What can the Navy do with respect to getting close to Iranian shores? Well, we found out. Not just here, but we found out eight months ago off the coast of Yemen that the Navy has limitations. It got driven out of the Red Sea by the Houthis. And now we see that the Abraham Lincoln got within about 200 miles of the Iranian coast and was getting shellacked with drones and missiles. Took some damage, reportedly, according to Trump. And it retreated. It had to back off.

## **#Danny**

That was funny, actually, the way he did it too.

## **#Johnson**

Yeah. So it had to retreat out to 700 miles off the coast. Well, once you do that, you've immediately limited the effect of your air power off that carrier. That was the original purpose — to bring air power closer to shore without you having to actually seize an airfield. Well, so now the Navy is limited in what it can do because the weapons systems that the United States, or that Iran has, can actually destroy our ships. We had that, actually — that happened 40 years ago, yeah, in the Persian Gulf when we were supporting Iraq against Iran. And an Iraqi pilot fired an Exocet missile, or a couple of Exocet missiles, against the USS Stark, thinking it was an Iranian ship, killed about 19 U.S. sailors. The Iraqis apologized profusely.

But then after that, Iraq got pissed off at the CIA because the CIA was also providing weapons to Iran during the whole Iran-Contra business. And so they insisted that going forward, they would only deal with U.S. military personnel for delivering intelligence. And that's where my friend and deceased mentor, Pat Lyon, came in. Pat was the one who hand-carried all that intelligence. But, you know, our ability back then — we could penetrate the Gulf. Now we can't. So the Navy is limited. The Army, you know, how are you going to put a ground force in there? They talk about, oh, the U.S. has got 50,000 troops. We invaded Iraq in 2003, a country that is one-fourth the size of Iran. Let's understand — one-fourth. And we had 165,000 troops. We were able to gather them, place them along the border of Iraq and both Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

You can't do that today because Iran has this thing called ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and drones, which can just devastate any concentration of troops. So the point is, we're now faced with the limits of U.S. military power. All we can do is drop bombs, and that, frankly, is not as devastating as we lead ourselves to believe. So instead, Trump is ginning up all these photo ops — it's more important to sell it to the American public. Y'all see, we're really being effective here. When, in fact, I'm getting some memes sent to me by active-duty military — just hilarious, but they're not complimentary. In fact, the latest one is two Iraqi soldiers with this drawing, but one of them's got his hand on Donald Trump's shoulder and is saying, "We aren't reopening shit, bro." Right.

## **#Danny**

I saw that one. I saw that one. That's a great one. Um, yeah, well, uh, where to even continue. Well, I wanted your thoughts on this because it's been bothering me a lot. You know, there's been a lot made of the George W. Bush, the next aircraft carrier. What is it? Is that the last one? I don't know, but another aircraft carrier is heading to the region. And a lot of the reports have been saying, Larry, that this will mean that now the George W. Bush, Abraham Lincoln, and the Gerald Ford will all be in the region and active. But last time I checked, the Gerald Ford, I thought, wasn't active right now because of the major repairs it needs. So what kind of difference does sending the George W. Bush now over to the region make, if anything at all?

## **#Johnson**

Little. I mean, it's more symbolic for us. If nothing else, it puts one more grossly expensive asset at risk. Again, it'd be one thing if these aircraft carriers could get in close to, you know, within 100 miles of the Iraqi coast — or, excuse me, the Iranian coast — then, you know, there are aircraft they can launch because the aircraft have a combat radius of about 500, maybe 600 miles. So, you know, if they fly out 100, that means they can fly inland another 200 miles, and then they've got to turn around and head back in order to get to the ship or to get refueled.

But again, if you bring air refuelers there within 100 miles of the coast, they also are vulnerable to being shot down. And just the first, you know, until we—so we went to a ceasefire two weeks ago. So basically, after five weeks of war, we lost like 48 aircraft, a significant amount. Just the ones that were lost on the recovery of that systems weapons officer from the F-15 that got shot down south of Isfahan, the total cost of all that aircraft was like \$480 million. So, you know, what we're talking about, we're talking maybe we've had \$3 billion worth of aircraft losses. That's significant.

## **#Danny**

Hmm. Yeah, for sure. And Larry, maybe we can get into some of the global shifts and consequences of all of what we've been talking about. You know, according to recent reports, an estimated 10.7 million barrels of Iranian oil have passed through the Strait of Hormuz from the 13th to the 21st. This is by, I believe, Vortexa, which is taking this data. Reuters reported this, and a lot of this is going to China. And so I want your assessment of how Iran's lack of, I guess, capitulation toward this blockade, and how effective this blockade actually is, and what kind of effect this is having on the world situation and, of course, the geopolitical shifts that fall within it.

## **#Johnson**

Well, yeah, it goes back to the original blockade put in place by Iran. The disruption—let's use the tsunami as an example. You know, the Hollywood version of a tsunami is somebody sitting there on the beach, and all of a sudden you've got this wall of water rushing at you. But the reality of it, as we saw in Thailand, is it starts with all of the water withdrawing into the sea, and it appears calm. You know, there's no commotion, nothing that would alarm you. And then all of a sudden, it starts rushing back in. And then as it's rushing, all of a sudden it becomes so quick, you don't have time to react anymore.

I think that's the proper model to look at what's happened by blocking the Strait of Hormuz and disrupting the supply of oil, liquefied natural gas, urea for fertilizer, helium, sulfuric acid, et cetera. As a result of all this, the supply chain—what was already in motion on the sea—was still moving out there, and people were receiving it in ports. In the case of the oil, unless they had a firm contract to deliver at a certain price, I guess they had to pay, like, I know Singapore had to pay like \$221 a barrel at one point. But anyway, once all that starts offloading, there are no full ships behind that en route coming. So then you've got a problem. And that's where shortages start and rationing starts. And then it has a cascading effect all down the supply line.

And, you know, things like if you saw with air travel, it's already been affected. They're having to ration flights. Lufthansa is talking about canceling 20,000 flights by October. You're going to see, you know, with the dramatic cost of airfare going up, people that used to take vacations, they're not going to take vacations now. So fewer vacations, you know, you've got the entire, you know, hotel industry, restaurant industry, car rentals. So, again, the effects here—and these are superficial compared to people that are not going to be able to harvest enough food. So you've got a direct impact on the food supply here, and you just can't magically produce food. So there will be starvation, and there will be rioting, and there will be political unrest around the globe. So we haven't even begun to see the full effects of this.

## **#Danny**

And in your opinion, Larry, a lot of this may already be unavoidable, it seems, given that what happened cannot be taken back.

## **#Johnson**

What has happened over the last... Yeah, I mean, you can't... Let's say that they get a peace agreement tomorrow and say, okay, never mind, we didn't mean it, we're sorry, let's all be friends. It's not all going to get turned back on. The damage to some of the infrastructure in the Gulf Arab countries is—they're talking months, if not years—to repair, particularly with respect to the liquefied natural gas and aluminum. Aluminum production was another one that was severely hurt. So then we've got the weather effects that are going to come into play.

You know, I don't know how many of the people that listen to you or watch you have ever had the pleasure of visiting Qatar or Bahrain or Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates, but... yeah, as long as you're in one of those fancy buildings in Dubai, it looks great. But the weather—already it's starting to turn—but by mid-May, it's like you'd rather go sit inside a pizza oven that's on full blast. I mean, it is blistering hot. So if this conflict restarts, and basically the power grids are taken out in those Gulf Arab states, you're going to see a massive population evacuation.

You can't survive in that kind of heat without air conditioning and potable water. Iran is not in that situation. Iran has mountains—snow-covered mountains—that Professor Morandi was commenting on the other day. And you remember we were talking about the massive water shortage that Iran was facing previously, that all they're going to have to evacuate to Iran? That's over. It looks like the U.S. may have been trying to manipulate, using cloud seeding and other things, to create arid conditions in Iran. But those sites apparently have been destroyed. And guess what? You've got lots of rain, lots of water in Tehran right now.

## **#Danny**

And in the last 10 minutes or so, maybe a shade under that we have here, Larry, maybe we can talk about who's made out—who's made out as a winner of all this so far. Because we have many media reports talking about China being a big winner of everything that's gone on here. The New York Times even had a number—"the Iran war by the numbers." Doesn't look good for the United States. There have been recent reports of the U.S.'s own massive depletion of its air defense interceptors—the THAADs, the Patriots—having been depleted 50-plus percent just in eight weeks or so, which kind of makes sense. What I was thinking was like, OK, well, 12 days, 20 percent of just Israel's were depleted. And then if you expand that to include the United States, the whole region, you know, the Gulf, and, you know, Israel itself—yeah, 50-plus percent sounds about right. But who's made out as a winner here? Have Russia and China made out as winners of all this, or is it more complicated than that?

## **#Johnson**

Well, let's start with the Donald Trump metrics. We've destroyed all their Air Force. We've destroyed all their Navy. We've killed all their top leadership. Therefore, we win. Except with all that damage that we've inflicted, that the United States has inflicted on Iran, has it caused the Iranians to change their policy? Has it caused them to surrender? Has it caused them to acquiesce to Western demands? And the answer on that is no. So, has the United States, as a result of this action, strengthened or attracted more support in the world from other countries? No. No. In fact, we've seen, particularly with Spain and Italy, they're telling the United States basically to screw off. You're not going to use our territory to launch any attacks on Iran.

And, you know, that's creating, as they said in Star Wars, a disturbance in the Force. Look at it from Iran's standpoint. Yeah, they've suffered some significant losses. You can never replace people. I mean, new people can step into positions of leadership, but there's no going back on that. They suffered those losses. They've suffered physical damage to some key infrastructure. But they have also inflicted massive damage on the United States' military infrastructure. It's something that nobody thought possible, including the U.S. military. They assumed that their THAAD and Patriot systems would be sufficient to thwart any Iranian attack. That failed. Then on top of it, Iran has depleted Israel's air defense system. Israel does not have an intact air defense system now, even after two weeks of pause in fighting.

They may have got a few more, scraped together a couple more Patriot missiles or THAAD missiles, but nothing in any quantity that could withstand a missile attack of, you know, say, 200 missiles. They'd be completely overwhelmed. China's position and Russia's position both are strengthened now relative to that of the United States. China, by virtue of the fact that people who once would take all their money and pour it into the United States because they said, oh my God, we don't know what's going to happen here, and they'd be nervous—instead, they're putting it in China, and China's selling bonds to Deutsche Bank in Germany. They're called panda bonds. So they're turning out to be benefiting financially from this. The West exaggerates China's dependence on oil.

Yes, it imports a lot of oil from the Persian Gulf, or did, because it's a big, it's really the largest world economy. But the last number I saw was, in terms of its total energy needs, that oil only accounts for 15%. I'm not saying that's insignificant, but it's not in the realm of, boy, if that's cut off, we're going to die territory. Similarly, Russia, which was before under the sanctioned regime, was selling oil at a discount to people like India at \$47 a barrel. Now everybody needs what it has, and it's selling it at \$97 a barrel. The same with liquefied natural gas. And it's also the world's largest supplier of fertilizer. So people have to come hat in hand to Russia on that front. So, yeah, this is, in terms of strengthening the West or strengthening the new Global South, the new BRICS, it's strengthened BRICS and the Global South.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, well, my final question, Larry, as we head out of here then is, do you foresee the United States restarting the hostilities, the attacks, strikes on Iran again in the coming days ahead? Given that this now, after almost, what was it, after five-plus weeks of a war in Iran, the landscape just looks so much different now. Do you see that there is a possibility the United States tries to re-engage in the way that it had prior to the ceasefire?

## **#Johnson**

Yes. No, I think even despite what Trump's saying in public, there are some desperate moves by the United States behind the scenes to try to re-engage the Pakistanis, somehow get the Iranians back to the table. And the Iranians made clear that we've got our demands. We told you what we want. Lift the damn blockade. Lift the sanctions. Unfreeze the assets, for starters. You know, it's something that the U.S. could do that would not damage U.S. national security interests. But because of Donald Trump's ego, and coupled with his own mental deterioration, I don't think they would do that. They should do that. I don't think they would. But if they do that, yes, then we're going to be on the road to getting a negotiated settlement. But it's still the economic damage that's been done. The full impact will be going through this year into next. But if they don't do that and the war renews, then the potential for global economic depression is real. And that's what I think we'll be facing.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, yeah, and recently, maybe to close on your comments on this, I was asked, was there anyone in the beginning, before the war started, before the strikes, who was not wanting this within the military, perhaps within the Pentagon? And then the question became, well, if there were anyone that opposed this, wouldn't they try their best to stop it from happening again, from restarting? So, yours?

## **#Johnson**

I mean, we know that Trump was warned not to do it by—or discouraged from doing it by—J.D. Vance. Even John Ratcliffe supposedly weighed in on that front, Marco Rubio. But Trump did it anyway. So now it's just a matter of the question of can Donald Trump turn around and admit he was wrong? I doubt that. Again, we're dealing with someone who not only is a pathological narcissist, but now he's an impaired pathological narcissist. It would be helpful if the people around him could actually wrest control, make the decisions. But to be realistic, I don't think that'll happen. I hope I'm wrong. I hope I'm wrong, that pragmatism will finally prevail. But that hasn't always been a popular thing in Washington, D.C. People don't get rewarded for being pragmatic.

## **#Danny**

Yeah, and quickly, just some super chats here as we head out. Someone wanted to ask me—Chili Pepper wanted me to ask—Larry, what naval sailors are saying. Do you have any insight on that, Larry?

## **#Johnson**

I don't. My sources are in other branches.

## **#Danny**

Okay. Trump can't do anything unless he's freed from Zionist control. Thanks, American Odyssey Court. And then Ibrahim Al-Khansa. Hi, Danny and Larry. How likely is war restarting? And you just answered that question, Larry has said. And I think we all—everyone who's watching this may not agree—but I think there's a high expectation that the way the U.S. is behaving is leading towards some kind of resumption of hostilities in the near future. Um, Larry, any final comments before we say goodbye to the audience? No, I just will—this is a roller coaster ride, and just, uh, please everybody, put your seat belts on. It's gonna be a wild ride. Yeah. Everybody hit the like button before you go.

That helps boost the stream and YouTube's algorithm. Thanks to all the super chats. Thanks to all those who watched today, all the moderators who are in the chat too, helping. In the video description, I'm going to be putting Larry Johnson's Sonar 21 blog, so be sure to follow that. You can do that after the show. Hit the like button again. All right, everybody, I'll see you again soon. I think 7:30 a.m. Eastern, 7 a.m. Eastern time, because it's 7 p.m. here with Victor Gao earlier tomorrow. But be sure to have your breakfast with it if you're morning Eastern time, or maybe if you're later, you can have your lunch, etc. But all right, say goodbye, everybody. Bye-bye.

## **#Johnson**

Thanks, Danny. Later.