Anthony Aguilar: Trump May Resign – But First, All-Out War With Iran?

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#Glenn

Welcome back, everyone. We are joined again by Anthony Aguilar, a retired U.S. lieutenant colonel with 25 years of experience as a combat infantry officer in the Special Forces. He also became a very important whistleblower on Israeli war crimes. Thank you for coming back on the program. I've been wanting to ask you about Iran's technological capabilities, particularly its ability to intercept drones. But before we get to this, I did want to ask about the big elephant in the room, which is the midterms. Trump has been arguing quite openly that he's been waiting until after the midterms before launching this massive strike against Iran, at different times threatening to annihilate the whole nation. But the midterms are now over, and you could say that Iran became the main reason for the Republican Party's historic defeat. So what can we expect now? Will this kind of sober Trump up and restrain him? Or do you think he will shed whatever restraint he has left?

#Anthony Aguilar

So I think when you look at the U.S. midterms, they were absolutely a rebuke to the current administration, with the war with Iran being the subject of that rebuke overall. And there are

certainly other implications of that conflict in terms of the cost of living in the United States, including the price of fuel, the price of diesel, and the price of everyday goods, which have increased drastically over the last eight months. Many Americans, even those who may have been hesitantly supportive of this war when it started in February, were promised peace—that this would end quickly, that this would be a quick war.

You know, those who voted for Trump in this election cycle and for this presidency voted for a president who said, "No more endless war. We're going to bring cost savings back to the United States," etc. This war revealed that, okay, well, you broke that promise. But then promises were made: "Okay, this won't be an endless war. This will be quick. We'll have it done quickly." And here we are, going into eight months. This war is still going on, you know, and we're potentially—very likely—heading into the most escalatory and devastating part of this conflict, which we haven't even seen yet.

So, yes, in the United States, American voters across the country flipped states that were traditionally deep red to all blue—not just the Senate seats, not just the majority, if not all, of the House seats, but also, in most states, the gubernatorial positions as well. So you now have many purely blue states in the union. And that was a rebuke to Donald Trump. And the voters in the United States came out and showed that. Now, will that temper or restrain or humble Donald Trump? No, it won't. He's already looking for where to shift the blame, right? "It wasn't my fault. I was doing what no other president was willing to do. We went in. It was a good idea."

"I don't regret starting this war, but it's how it's been fought. And that's not my fault. That's Pete Hegseth's fault. That's Admiral Brad Cooper's fault. That's Dan Caine's fault." So, in the very beginning, when all of these individuals—your Dan Caines, your Pete Hegseths, your Admiral Brad Coopers—were all in on this, saying, "Yes, we're going to do this," well, now they're the fall guys because Donald Trump is saying to the American people, "Hey, you know, I wanted to go. I wanted to defeat Iran because we needed to do it. And had I been the one to plan it, because I'm a great military planner…" This is according to Donald Trump, in his mind.

"We would have had this done quickly, but it's not my fault." So we're going to see, in this post-midterm period between now and January 3rd of 2027, when the United States Congress—the 120th Congress—convenes, that there's going to be a lot of finger-pointing, a lot of blaming, a lot of cleaning house, so to speak, by Donald Trump to try to distance himself from this conflict, and then bringing in new people to try to finish it. I think Pete Hegseth is surely on his way out soon. Either he gets fired and removed by Donald Trump—we know that he's been talking to his inner-circle advisers about, you know, whether he should replace him.

"Who should we replace him with?" And then there's talk of replacing him, and potentially, if Donald Trump doesn't replace him, surely Hegseth would have to face articles of impeachment when this new Congress convenes with both a Democratic House and a Democratic Senate. And I don't mean a Democratic House and a Democratic Senate on the margins. I mean by a strong majority. So that's

what's really in Donald Trump's mind. And I still think that, you know, as the pressure builds, as Democrats begin to push for more revelations about things like the Epstein files, or begin rebuking some of these executive orders that Donald Trump has made, or start to investigate further his family's direct ties to profiteering from this war...

And as that pressure mounts and as he begins to throw people around him under the bus, he will look at this, likely coming into the next calendar year, and there's potential that he could consider resigning in the face of impeachment and conviction. Now, many people have said this, including Donald Trump. Donald Trump himself has said this in remarks at a rally: "If the Democrats take the House and the Senate, they're surely going to impeach me. I'm done. They will impeach me." Then there was, "Well, they'll take the House, but not the Senate, so maybe I'll be okay, so I can tiptoe into this."

But no, the Democrats took not only the House and the Senate, but in massive numbers, to where there is now potential for impeachment and conviction. And whether or not conviction and removal would actually happen, it's surely likely that, with impeachment moving on to the Senate for conviction, Donald Trump may resign in an attempt to save himself. And then position J.D. Vance to save the Republican Party. MAGA is dead, but at least save the Republican Party for another full term, and then rescue himself with some type of pardon. And then, you know, he goes off to Mar-a-Lago, spending his billions that he's earned in this presidency.

So I don't think it's humbled him. I think for a couple of days we've seen kind of a little, you know, sad puppy dog Donald Trump. But he'll be right back to his ways here in no time. He'll start blaming the Democrats. He'll start blaming the Muslim community. He'll start blaming everybody else more feverishly. On the night of the elections, we're talking about an 80-year-old man who, between 9 p. m. and 4 a.m., was posting nonstop on Truth Social—just incoherent, insane ramblings. So I don't think this has humbled him in any way.

I think maybe it's been a shock to him, but I think he's going to go right back into this warmongering position of total war and finishing the job in Iran tomorrow, with the backing of people still in the cabinet. I know Admiral Brad Cooper, commander of the United States Central Command, wants to continue this conflict with escalation and hostility. He has told the president, "We're locked and loaded and ready to go. We've got targets on the deck. We're ready to strike. Let's end this kinetically." So I think, unfortunately, despite this midterm election and this rebuke to the president, he is still the president, and war is very much still on the table. And I do fear that we are going to see escalation soon.

#Glenn

But if he were to resign, though, and allow his vice president, J.D. Vance, to take over, that would make some sense because J.D. Vance was very openly critical of the Iran war. So everything that the Republicans got punished for, he was kind of seen as being on the other side of. And as

president, he could also, of course, give some pardons to Trump. So it would make sense and also give him a head start for the election coming up in two years. But I'm not sure if that goes against Trump's personality, though.

#Anthony Aguilar

It certainly does go against the personality of Donald Trump. But one thing about Donald Trump, regardless of everything that we've seen, is that we can always rest assured that he will save himself above all else. He will save himself and throw his own children under the bus, you know, Eric and Don Jr. He will save himself first. So, yes, it goes against his personality, but what I specifically want to reiterate is that as the pressure mounts in terms of his legacy, in terms of the Epstein files, in terms of revealing the financial gain, the true numbers and what that looks like, and how nefarious this has been, and all of that threatens to come out, rather than face the music and stay in his position and be the president...

I think that Donald Trump only really cares about being the president because of the name and the power, not to serve the people. Being the president of the United States, regardless of all of its power and regalia, is service to the people. You are a servant to the civilians of this nation. He doesn't see it that way. He sees it as the government and the people serving him. So, though it would go against his personality, and I don't think that's necessarily the go-to option right now, I have to think that, in his calculus with his closest advisers, he's looking at, okay, how do we weather this post-midterm storm? What do we do in the next 60 days before this new Congress comes in on January 3rd?

What if there are indications that there's this growing push for impeachment? And remember, Donald Trump doesn't necessarily fear impeachment. He was impeached twice in his previous term, twice. But it never moved to the Senate. Well, now, taking that same formula of impeachment in the House—articles of impeachment—it's very likely, because of the majority in the House, that those then move to the Senate for conviction. And once it gets to conviction, well, the next step is removal. And with that, the president, despite his presidential immunity or his presidential privilege, could very much be in some very hot water because of the nature of the impeachment and conviction.

So when it comes to Donald Trump saving himself or his pride, I think he's willing to save himself. And then, in his mind, he will tell everybody, in terms of his legacy, "It was the big, bad, mean Democrats that did this. And as the bigger man, I'm going to step down to allow the Republican Party to live on with J.D. Vance." And of course, that sets up J.D. Vance to not only finish this president's term, but then run two more times. So Donald Trump will definitely spin that, too: "It's because of the big, bad Democrats. They did this. They are forcing me to step down." And in a way, he can save himself.

As Donald Trump approaches this fork in the road that the U.S. midterms have placed clearly in his path, I'm not saying that that's the path he's already on. But it's certainly an option that I see Donald Trump taking as the pressure mounts and the choice is to either save himself or serve our country. And I definitely do think that Donald Trump will choose to serve himself first and foremost. So I agree it would be against his personality and his ego. But when you put that up against saving himself financially and criminally, I think he'll take that path out because service is not his priority.

#Glenn

Well, that would be, I think, probably a very good outcome for the United States as well because, again, he built the case for America First, but he never followed through, obviously, with the Iran war and being unable or unwilling to finish off the Ukraine war. But, you know, he opened that America First door and wasn't able to walk through. If he at least lets J.D. Vance walk through and, you know, carry it out the way it was supposed to be carried out, at least that's something, you know? Of course, I don't disagree with what you're saying. If he does it, it will definitely be to serve his own interests. But a lot of miscalculations have been made in this war.

I mean, yes, many people make the point that Trump probably took too much bad advice from the Israelis. He was probably too emboldened by the success against Venezuela. But one of the other miscalculations appears to be the assumption of technological superiority. I mean, hubris can be a horrible thing. That's not just Americans; it's Europeans as well. They perpetually live in the 1990s, the glory days of overwhelming dominance. But that can be a curse now that things have changed. What do we know about Iranian capabilities? Because every time they launch a new drone or long-range missiles, or use electronic weapons to bring down enemy drones, we're always surprised. So how do you assess the technological capabilities of Iran here?

#Anthony Aguilar

Well, I have never doubted or downplayed the technological, tactical, and operational capabilities of Iran, both in terms of what they have and their ability to use it. So having the capability is one thing; having the ability to employ it tactically and operationally at the right time, in the right place, to have an effect from a defensive posture is entirely another thing. But Iran has demonstrated, one, that they have that capability, and two, that they understand its application and how to use it effectively against an adversary that has a very effective air force—or air forces—and naval forces and missile capability. So what I know is that, you know, Iran has got a very in-depth...

It goes to the concept of defense in depth. You don't, you know, have all your defense capability up front. You layer your defenses in depth, not only geographically—in terms of the coast, the interior, the center, the hills, the mountains—but also in space and time, so that various capabilities can shoot farther, giving you that time and separation. They can also span geography and time in terms of interdicting aircraft and incoming missiles. It gives you layers of defense. And what Iran has done,

and what they're continuing to do, is have their key air defense systems in place. They have a long-range system.

And a medium-range system. So those long-range systems, you know, you could put here throughout central Iran and hit targets coming in here. Your medium-range systems, you can put in positions closer to here to hit a variety of targets here. Iran is a very large country geographically. But they have the S-300 systems, and they have their own domestic development capability. People think that, oh, they've just gotten everything from Russia or everything from China, and that's not true. They have the Bavar-373 defense system, which is very capable. I think that's what's actually been used to interdict a lot of these aircraft that we've seen that have been fired at us.

Or that threat to the airspace, to where the United States hasn't gone in and penetrated that airspace. If you think back to Iraq in 2003, you know, the air campaign, the shock and awe before we sent in ground forces, that was done largely through a lot of aircraft because the United States gained early air supremacy, air superiority over the skies of Iraq. We have not achieved that over the skies of Iran. We have not even achieved that in interdicting Iranian airspace. We haven't even achieved air parity. We haven't even achieved air dominance, much less air superiority. So Iran has held off defensively with that.

They also have some older systems, systems that we've heard of before: the SA-2 and the SA-5. They also have an older system called the Hawk-23. That's actually a U.S. system. Iran had these systems, and they've developed them over time. They've basically tinkered with them and made them better. They originally acquired the Hawk-23 surface-to-air missile system in 1979, and they've kept it and made upgrades to it—an American system that they're using against us. So they have that, but they also have quite a robust radar and early warning array. So if you think about the Iron Dome in Israel, right? The Iron Dome's value comes not from its interceptors, but from its ability to identify effectively.

And that's where the United States and Israel have integrated theater high-altitude air defense systems and local radar systems into this array. The Iron Dome is really an array of radar and early warning systems. It's not, you know, that when Israel says, "Activate the Iron Dome," Netanyahu pushes a button and this iron dome goes around Israel. It's an array of radar systems and early warning systems with an intercepting missile system tied to it automatically: see, identify, shoot. So Iran has this capability as well. And they actually have a lot more of them in their Ghadir systems, their Sepehr systems, and their Rezonans systems. And these are systems that, yes, some have come from Russia, but many of them are developed by the IRGC, by the Iranian military within Iran.

And they are effective. Now, the other thing you've got to consider is the scale of the inventory. Iran has massive numbers of these radars and interceptors, along with the interceptor missiles that go with them. So what we've seen a lot of from Iran in terms of strikes has been their long-range precision-strike missiles and drones, of which they have many. They have a massive stockpile. But they also have massive stockpiles of those defensive capabilities within Iran to cover Iran's skies,

including interceptor missiles, which the United States and Israel are critically short on. So if we go into another round of escalation where it's just a pure shooting war, well, the United States and Israel run out first.

They run out of interceptors first, and they run out of precision-strike munitions to counterstrike. So when it comes down to the math problem, Iran wins in terms of what they have and how much they can use. So the only way the United States can change that is by either destroying those stockpiles or destroying those radars, which would require interdiction deep into Iranian airspace. That would surely lead to one or more U.S. aircraft being shot down in the attempt. So you see how the math of the problem quickly shifts towards the Iranian side here when it comes to interceptors, interdiction, munitions, and radar systems. Many of the U.S. early-warning and radar systems in the region have been completely destroyed.

#Glenn

Yeah, I was in Iran in May of last year, before the Israelis began bombing. And I saw a few of those drones and how they've evolved over time. They've been working on this for a long time. I actually saw a few American drones they'd brought down as well. So I guess they borrowed some technology as well. But a lot of this technology has also been developed internally. So the focus on drones and missiles, I think, is key to understanding their defense, but also how it complements their quite unique geography. I mean, not many countries in the world are built up like a fortress in this manner.

#Anthony Aguilar

Geographically, yes, very much so.

#Glenn

But what kind of a military campaign could the U.S. and Israel launch against Iran? Because this will be round three. So they've tried this before. Will this simply be strikes at different targets? Do you expect a land invasion? We hear concerns about the use of tactical nuclear weapons. If you were to design an invasion or an attack plan against Iran, how would you do it? Or how do you think the administration is planning it? I mean, what is on the table here? What are the possible options for the United States and Israel?

#Anthony Aguilar

Well, one thing I quickly want to cover, because you mentioned it, is Iran's ability to reverse-engineer and adapt. I think it's important to understand. So, years ago, the United States flew a drone called the RQ-170 Sentinel. It had a Pratt & Whitney engine. You know, no one had seen this type of drone before. It was an unmanned drone system. It was not necessarily a one-way attack drone. It was a surveillance drone. Well, over years of reverse-engineering, developing the concept,

and then learning from Ukraine with the one-way attack drones, they developed what we all know as the Shahed family of drones. This is the Shahed-136 drone. They took the technology and the advancements in this single-wing airframe, which is much easier to produce and much harder to identify, and they made this at the low cost of about $30,000 apiece. And this thing has a range of up to 1,200 miles.

#Anthony Aguilar

The Shahed. So we're talking about anything in the region. This can reach speeds of 115 miles per hour, but it can also fly very low. It's very hard to identify because it's very small. And then what the United States did over the past two years—or really this year, more specifically—was come up with their own version, the LUCAS drone. This is the U.S. LUCAS drone, which is the Low-Cost Uncrewed Combat Attack System drone. And I mean, if you can't say who copied whom here—I mean, this is the Shahed. This is the LUCAS. So the United States has now taken that lesson from Iran and said, "How do we use that?" Well, just over the last couple of days, as the United States was once again conducting strikes and one-way drone attacks on Qeshm Island, Iran got their hands on one of these that they were able to electronically jam.

So it lost communication. With these one-way drones, they can lose communication with either the system that's telling them where to go or the target whose signal they're homing in on. With victim-emission navigation, it's not someone steering it or directing it. You launch it, and what the victim or target is emitting is what attracts the drone to it. So if that signal gets turned off, or if there's a radar that electronically jams the drone and it can no longer identify where it's going, it'll often abort and just fall to the earth. Well, Iran did that with the LUCAS drone. So now Iran has this new drone that the United States hoped would give it an advantage over the Shahed series, of which Iran has many, many, many, many, many, many more than the United States has.

Iran now has this in their possession, completely intact, not damaged, not destroyed. And you can guarantee that since last Thursday, they've already been reverse-engineering that thing to figure out every aspect of it—not only how to make theirs better, but how to defeat this one in the electronic warfare space, how to defeat it electronically. Because that's the key when you're talking about some of these one-way drones: electronic defeat. So, yeah, where does that then leave the United States in terms of an operational strategy or an operational approach or a tactic? Well, had the United States seen this red wave rather than a blue wave, and, you know, people saying, "Yes, we love this war. Finish it, Donald Trump. You're the best. This was the best idea ever."

"We'll incur the costs at the pump and at the grocery store. Do it. Finish it. You're the man," which I think he kind of expected. Like, I think Donald Trump expected that: "Okay, all the Democrats are talking about how they don't like it, but the real voters are going to come out on November 3rd, and they're going to love me. They're willing to take higher prices at the pump because of this war.

They're going to love me." And that obviously was not the case. But had that been the case, I think we would have seen the plans on the table to go all in with a ground invasion, et cetera. And have no doubt.

The plans, the concepts of operations, the contingency plans for a ground invasion or an amphibious assault on the key islands in the Strait of Hormuz, including Qeshm—all of those options are on the table. Just because a military plan becomes less and less likely or less and less feasible doesn't mean that it's off the table. And I can assure you that the military has offered plans that cover the full spectrum, from a full land invasion to an amphibious assault and land invasion, a land invasion from the south and the west, airstrikes in addition to a land invasion, and airborne operations. All of these things have been planned.

But where I think the president is now going to push, because of the unpopularity of this war, is that he wants to finish it, but he can't finish it by just walking away. Because Iran is not going to surrender, and the United States is not going to surrender, and the United States is not going to hold Israel accountable to the accords of the 14-point MOU. So the United States can't walk away from this. And if the United States wants to negotiate to end this, well, the United States is going to take a loss in every aspect. Iran is going to present its maximalist demands. And then we go back to the point where the United States can't.

That's a check the United States can't cash when it comes to all these things: lifting sanctions, releasing frozen assets, administration and tolling within the Strait of Hormuz, monitoring a future nuclear program or not—whatever all that looks like. The one thing the United States can't cash the check on is Israel. So there really is no negotiation option for the United States unless the United States is willing to turn its back on and cut off Israel and accept a surrender on all other aspects: "We're lifting the sanctions. Here are all your frozen assets. You control the Strait of Hormuz."

"We won't mess with or monitor your nuclear program. Have at it. And we're turning our back on Israel." That's the only way the United States can walk out of this through a negotiation. So what does that mean militarily? I think that Donald Trump and Netanyahu are looking at a massive air campaign where the risk of sending in ground troops is still too high, but the risk of sending in multiple hundreds of aircraft—the reality of likely losing some—has sunk in with this president: there will be losses. But that's going to include deploying the Massive Ordnance Penetrator. You know, you can drop two of those from a B-2. That's the 30,000-pound bunker buster. And then there's the Massive Ordnance Air Blast, GBU-43. That's what everyone calls the "Mother of All Bombs," the MOAB. That can only be deployed from a C-130, which is a very slow-moving propeller aircraft.

So that needs an escort, and it flies slowly. Everything that's escorting it can be stealth, but the C-130 isn't. So there's a risk there. But I think that Donald Trump is looking to deploy massive amounts of munitions: guided and unguided bombs, Massive Ordnance Air Blast bombs, the 20 Massive Ordnance Penetrators that we have left, on specific targets, perhaps Pickaxe Mountain. This massive air campaign would hit nuclear facilities, cities, urban areas, water purification facilities,

power generation facilities, oil facilities—all of these facilities. Just this massive wave, this massive attack, with Donald Trump thinking that it would then bring Iran to want to negotiate on his terms.

That's not going to be successful. But when you look at what options this president has left, you know, we shouldn't have started this war in the first place. We should have taken the 14-point MOU back in April as a way out of this, rather than throwing it in the garbage and saying no. Because now it's quite difficult to go back to that agreement without total capitulation to what Iran wants, because we're the ones who threw it away. We're the ones who said no. So there are very few options for this president.

Short of the president rebuking Israel, saying no to Israel, no longer providing support to Israel, cutting ourselves off from Israel, and turning our back on Israel in terms of their ambitions—to distance ourselves, in the eyes of Iran, from supporting Israel—and the United States being willing to leave all of its bases and hand everything else over to Iran, that's the only means for a negotiation or a peace treaty at this point. So I very much think we're going to see escalation, and it's going to be a massive-scale air campaign against Iran. But it will very likely not succeed. In fact, it will not succeed.

#Glenn

I think that's a miscalculation on Trump's part: the assumption that, you know, the harder we hit the Iranians, the more willing they will be to make concessions at the negotiating table. I think the opposite is probably true. That is, the more they are attacked, the longer the war goes on, the more the diplomatic options start to disappear, and the more they will harden their position. Yeah. But again, we focus a lot on what the U.S. and Israel can do against Iran. Another miscalculation in this whole war has been underestimating Iran's ability to retaliate. And again, Iran, as you have outlined, you know, exploits this asymmetrical warfare.

It doesn't need to have the biggest army to win. But what do you think they might do this time around? Because what I hear from Iranians is that they're not going to go through round four, round five. That is, if the U.S., Israel, or both go back to war, then it's going to be either all-out war or peace, but not this in-between situation we're in now, where we're not in all-out war, but there's no peace either. This is not a great place to be. It kind of normalizes the idea of a naval blockade, for example—a peaceful naval blockade. I mean, this is not a great position for the Iranians.

#Anthony Aguilar

So how do you think the Iranians might retaliate if the U.S. or Israel goes all out? Well, I think if Donald Trump could have it completely his way, without the pressure from Israel at this point, he would prefer to just leave things as they are. Ignore the problem. Head in the sand. Keep the naval blockade in position and just hope that Iran stays quiet, and hope that he can continue to pretend like we're negotiating and that we're winning. I think that's what Donald Trump would want. Israel is

not going to allow that. Israel is going to attack and strike. So the United States will be persuaded to go along with them of our own accord.

And then you have Iran. Iran's not going to tolerate having this persistent, consistent, and never-ending blockade of its strategic waterway. So to do nothing and just let things stagnate is not feasible. It's not a realistic option. It's not reality. So, going into what that looks like in terms of conflict and what Iran can do, I think that Iran is also in a position where it doesn't want to isolate itself from, push away, or make enemies of its regional neighbors—the Gulf nations, the regional nations. They don't want to make enemies out of everyone.

So Iran's response is not going to be, nor should it be, this massive response to everything in the region. But I think that Iran is going to focus on U.S. naval assets. In Israel, I think that they'll strike Tel Aviv. They'll strike Nevatim Air Base, where Israel launches its F-35s. They'll hit Ovda Air Base, where the CIA and Mossad operate within Israel. But potentially, depending on the escalation and how this goes, and what Israel does in striking targets in Iran, you know, the Dimona nuclear facility could be on the table, along with water purification facilities in Israel—basically wiping out Israeli infrastructure.

Iran has the ability to do that. And then, in terms of these bases that do house massive numbers of U.S. troops, take Kuwait, for example. Camp Arifjan and Camp Buehring in Kuwait are essentially little Americas. There are no Kuwaitis who work there. There's no Kuwaiti governance over them. They're basically these little Americas. They're these massive U.S. bases. In fact, you know, U.S. Army Central—not Central Command, but U.S. Army Central—has its forward headquarters at Camp Arifjan. And that assignment is a two-year assignment where service members bring their families. I mean, it's not Kuwait. It's a little America.

If Iran were to hit some of those bases, I think there'd be communication with those nations, their neighbors, beforehand, to be like, hey, we are striking back because they are hitting us, and they're doing it from your bases. So we're not going after you. We're going after them. You know, bases like those in Kuwait, Arifjan and Buehring. The bases in Jordan, where the United States maintains and launches many of its F-35s and its fuel tankers. In Saudi Arabia, the United States has over 3,000 U. S. troops across three different bases. So I think Iran would hit all of those bases with precision, with precision, with prudence, but still hit those with the communication of, hey, we're specifically attacking these American bases.

We will limit it to that and that only. But when it comes to Israel and U.S. assets outside of those land bases, whether it be naval assets at sea, then I think Iran is going to go massively all out against that. And the thing is, in these periods when we're not shooting at each other, Iran is just massively producing drones, interceptors, missiles, launchers. I mean, they're just cranking it out. And Iran's advantage is that they don't have to get it there. It's already there. So what the United States produces, we have to get it there. Well, Iran produces it, and it's there. That's part of the advantage of being on the defensive.

#Glenn

That's a good point. I keep thinking that if success in Venezuela fueled Trump's hubris to invade Iran, I wonder how much his spectacular comeback to get a second term in office fueled his arrogance. It was quite amazing to see his comeback. I can imagine why he believed that he couldn't be defeated at the ballot box. I mean, it's an interesting political story. I think he squandered it all away. Yeah, he found something that the voters wanted: America First, an end to the endless wars, fiscal discipline—all these things that put the republic before the empire. I mean, he seemed to have this recipe for what the people wanted. He got elected. But I'm wondering now, though, what might be his approach? Do you think the thinking here is that he can prove the voters wrong by going all out in a big war to defeat Iran, show that it could be done, and, if it doesn't work, then possibly step down?

#Anthony Aguilar

Yeah, so if you think about it politically, in terms of the war with Iran and U.S. politics, Donald Trump is in a position now where he feels, "Well, maybe I have nothing to lose. If I go all in and we win, we get the surrender we want. We win, whatever the cost may be, but we win. Well, then I'm the president that finally took on Iran. I'm the president that made America safe. I told everybody it was going to happen, and maybe it didn't happen in a few weeks, but we did it in less than a year. And look, I did it. I'm great. You know, so all those haters and doubters—well, I showed you." And then that changes, you know, because we still have the 2028 elections and the general election coming up, where that is certainly going to have an impact.

But if he goes all in and it's a disaster, and he's already losing the way he is, well, he's already taken the brunt of that from these midterms. I mean, almost every seat that was up for election flipped to blue or stayed blue. I mean, as Ron DeSantis said, it was an annihilation. Ron DeSantis, you know, the governor of Florida, called these midterms a political annihilation in a press conference. So if you're Donald Trump at this point, you're like, "OK, I go all in to hope to win and prove everybody wrong. But if I don't, well, I've already borne the consequences. It's not on me now." And he's going to blame everybody else anyway.

I mean, we're already going to see it. You know, I don't feel bad for Pete Hegseth. He deserves every bit of it. And I don't feel bad for Admiral Brad Cooper. He's a warmongering yes-man, a sycophant who I think pulled us into this war by encouraging Donald Trump to go ahead with it. But then you've got Dan Caine, who I somewhat feel sorry for because I have known him for a long time. And I think, you know, he's a weak leader. He's a weak officer, and he goes along with things. He goes with the flow. And this time he went with the flow, you know, upriver without a paddle. And he's going to get blamed for this. Donald Trump is going to pin the blame for why we're losing on Hegseth and Dan Caine and Admiral Brad Cooper.

Not him. Well, he's already alluded to this. You know, "If it was my plan, we would have won this. The generals and Pete, you know, this was their idea and the way they wanted to do this. I would have done it differently. But, you know, I can't. It's not my fault." He's already doing that. So, you know, in the coming days, I think we're going to see a lot of the finger-pointing come out from Donald Trump. But Donald Trump is kind of giving this aura of, "Well, I'm going to go at it my way. I'm going to go at it my way now, what I said we were going to do, and all these generals talked me out of it. Now we're going to do it my way."

And we're going to see all that rhetoric of annihilation and bombing everything come out. And I think that's Donald Trump's strategy. Israel is certainly welcoming that strategy and going along with it, and having the United States go along with them in doing it. And that's going to bring massive repercussions from Iran in the region. I think Donald Trump once again has critically underestimated Iran's resolve, Iran's capability, Iran's ability to use the capability they have, and the support that Iran has from other world actors—China, Russia. You know, you can't dismiss what China is providing for Iran. And they may not be providing weapons systems and weapons on a massive scale.

Missiles and launchers and torpedoes and jets and all that. But what China is providing is critical in terms of that intelligence, that signals intelligence, the imagery, the satellite tracking, the satellite imagery of U.S. bases and U.S. assets. That is critical in the targeting process, in knowing where to hit with precision and consequence. And Iran is demonstrating the ability to do that to the point where even U.S. intelligence has been shocked: "Oh my God, how did they know to hit that?" Right? They wiped out the CIA bases. They wiped out the military headquarters. They've done all this, right? So if you're on the U.S. side, you're looking at this from the intelligence perspective, you're like, "How did they know?"

How did they know when and where to hit, and how? It's because of what China is providing. So we should not underestimate what these global actors are also providing to Iran and in the region. When it comes down to taking sides, the United States has demonstrated that we are not a good ally in the region when it comes to choosing between Israel and our allies. We will defend and protect Israel and leave everybody else high and dry, including our own service members.

You know, we moved so much of our interdiction assets to protect Israel that we left even our own service members exposed at some of these critical bases in the region that got hammered by Iranian missiles. And a lot of service members lost their lives because of it. So if you're a country in the region—Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar—you're looking at this and saying, "What does the future hold? Well, the United States is not going to be here to help us. And Iran isn't going anywhere. And they're our neighbor." So more and more, that side is being pushed toward ending things through a treaty or a diplomatic solution and siding with Iran.

#Glenn

Yeah, no, there may be a big mess out of this. I did have one last thought. I read earlier that, well, again, the media speculates a lot, but not only may heads begin to roll in terms of getting rid of Hegseth, but Marco Rubio might resign himself because I assume he has some aspirations to run for president in two years.

#Anthony Aguilar

Well, yeah. I mean, this is not going to be two fun years, I guess. J.D. Vance obviously has aspirations to be president, but he's in a position where, if he stays, he could become president if Donald Trump resigns. You know, J.D. Vance is playing the short game and the long game. And, you know, he was the first one to come out almost immediately, like his comments were prepared. In fact, they likely were. His post on X was very scripted and manicured. It was very long, you know, a very long post, almost like it had been prepared in advance—which it was.

Immediately distancing himself from the thing that led to the overwhelming Republican defeat. Yeah, you know, maybe the war wasn't a good idea. And distancing himself from that, knowing that he's in a position where, "If I stay, I might be able to backfill this clown when he resigns. Therefore, I'm president, and I can run two more times. I can show everybody, 'Look at the change I'll make in the last year and a half of this term.' But I'm also going to distance myself from this in case Donald Trump doesn't resign and this goes the distance."

"I was the first one. I was there early, at ground level, to say this was wrong right after the elections." Well, Marco Rubio kind of missed the mark. He hesitated. No one's heard from him at all. So now he's part of that blame when Donald Trump's going to go around and say, "Okay, who do I blame?" Well, J.D. Vance kind of threw up the blame deflector, right? "Not me. Can't get me. I'm deflecting. I'm deflecting. You know, can't stick that on me." Well, Marco Rubio is now stuck. It's like musical chairs, and there are no chairs left.

Right. Well, J.D. Vance got his chair, and Marco Rubio is kind of like, "Oh." So, yeah, I think we could see Marco Rubio resign to salvage any political future he may have by distancing himself from this president and this administration. I think we're going to see Hegseth either resign or be fired by Trump. I don't think Trump's going to let him resign. At any indication that Hegseth is going to say, "Hey, I resign," Trump's going to say, "Well, I'm firing you, and I'm going to make it public," because Trump wants to blame somebody. If everybody starts resigning, well, then everybody's pointing the finger at Trump. And he's the guy saying he's not going to let that happen. He's going to start firing people at any indication that they're going to resign. I think Marco Rubio may get away with resigning, but that's going to then, you know, alert the president to, "Oh, my ship is sinking."

Then he's going to start to fire people. I think Dan Caine, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, is going to be fired. I think Pete Hegseth is going to be fired. I think Admiral Brad Cooper is going to be forced to resign, or replaced and then resign, or fired. Donald Trump is going to start blaming. Look at what Donald Trump did in the first administration, when he was the 45th president. Every person

around him, he blamed or fired. Yes, including those in uniform. When he first came into office this term, one of the first people he fired was the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Air Force General C.Q. Brown. Fired him. You know, “You were a Biden selection. You know, you're not in line with my policy. I fire you.”

So does this president have it in him to fire some of these military leaders? Absolutely. Absolutely. So I think Hegseth, Dan Caine, and Admiral Brad Cooper—I think their heads are going to roll, to then bring in someone new to say, “Now we're going to get it done.” But then others are going to distance themselves. But yeah, I think, unfortunately for Marco Rubio, J.D. Vance jumped on the “save myself” square before Marco Rubio could, in terms of blaming it on this war and then saying this war was a bad idea. Right. But I also think J.D. Vance is in a position where, if he goes, he may miss this opportunity. If he stays, there's a high likelihood that Trump resigns, and then he gets to be the president. So I think that's where J.D. Vance's sights are set.

#Glenn

Colonel Aguilar, thank you so much for your excellent analysis. This makes a lot of sense. So thank you so much.

#Anthony Aguilar

Talk to you soon. Appreciate it.