

Col. Larry Wilkerson: Iran ROCKS Two U.S. Destroyers – 30 Refueling Jets Airborne!

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#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today is Tuesday, May 5th, 2026, and our dear friend, Col. Larry Wilkerson, is here with us.

#Larry

I had to think about who I was, didn't you?

#Nima

I was trying to say something there, then I... Larry, welcome back. Let's start with what happened yesterday, because of this Operation Freedom being announced by Donald Trump and trying to do something in the Strait of Hormuz. And here is what Pete Hegseth said describing what happened, some part of what happened.

#Speaker 03

Commercial ships, along with American destroyers, have already safely transited the Strait, showing the lane is clear. We know the Iranians are embarrassed by this fact. They said they control the Strait. They do not. So American ships, led the way—commercial and military—shouldering the initial risk from the front, as Americans always do. And right now, hundreds more ships from nations around the world are lining up to transit.

#Larry

Yeah. Which way? In or out? I mean, there's about 2,000 that are waiting to go in. So I'm curious as to which way he's talking about. And I'm also curious, Nima, I've been here before. We did this, as I've said many times, we did this back in the closing year of the Iran-Iraq War, when Iran had a lot less capability than they do now. We had a lot more capability than we do now. And it's really extremely difficult to do it. It even was extremely difficult to do it in 1988–89. And the reason it's

difficult is the geography, the size of the passages, the density of the water. You know, I could name all manner of maritime features that make it extremely difficult to operate there. But it's a situation where, for example, we probably had three times as many ships then, maybe even more than that.

If I went back and looked, I'd probably see we had even more than that. Not only that, we had ships which were more fit for escort duty. The ships we have there now, like, for example, I heard someone talking about Canberra being there. Canberra is an LCS. It's basically an anti-mine ship converted from being the boondoggle it was, a close combat ashore ship. And so that's not a ship you want escorting either, unless what your purpose is to go ahead or behind or in the middle and clear mines. You're not looking for that ship to be an escort. You're looking for that ship to be the mine clearer. So I don't know what we're talking about.

We simply don't have enough ships to do what Hegseth insinuated in that little piece you played there, where he says we're prepared to escort people through. Well, there are 2,000 ships out there that are going north. How many are there to go south the other way? And I don't know, but I suspect it's a considerable number. So how are we going to escort these ships and make sure they're safe? How are we going to make sure there's a cordon sanitaire, if you will, around the axis of movement? And I would even say you'd almost have to do it per six or seven ships, almost like a convoy, in order to be effective.

And you'd have to do it with at least 30 or 40 ships. Hell, that's the whole total we've got, including carriers. So how are they going to do this? I mean, it sounds to me like—I don't know if you saw that article in *The Atlantic* a couple of days ago, at least that's when I read it—it says essentially that Vance has been very skeptical of what the Joint Chiefs and the military in general, and Hegseth in particular, are telling Trump. I don't know the accuracy of the piece or not, but it sounds like it might be pretty accurate. And it might be a leak.

I don't know. Maybe it's a leak because they want to forge some way to say that someone in the administration, at least, was telling the president the truth. On the other hand, maybe it's just made-up stuff. But I can see Vance being this way because Vance seems to be the one member of the administration who questions, with some skepticism and forethought, some of the braggadocio that's coming out of the Pentagon and particularly out of the president himself. So I would say he's right if he's questioning this operation, if that's what we want to call it, because it's nonsense. There's no way you can do this and do it effectively. So what does that mean, Nima?

That means that ships, both freighters and tankers, are going to, if they do bite, they're going to take us at our word and they're going to start moving in quantity, because it isn't going to make any sense if they move one at a time. I mean, you're going to escort one ship at a time with 2,000 of them waiting outside to go? You're going to make the situation worse than it already is. So you've got to start moving them fairly rapidly, and you've got to start moving them both north and south,

both channels. That makes it even more difficult. For example, with far less capability on Iran's part, far more capability on our part, in 1988, as I recall, in Operation Earnest Will, we essentially moved one at a time.

We didn't have a whole lot to move. We didn't have 2,000 ships standing off the strait waiting to go. And having been there for, what now, 60 days? So this is just logistically crazy. I don't understand what they're doing. And they're telling the American people, because I'm hearing it here, that this is Operation, what is it, Freedom Wheel or whatever the hell they're calling it, and that we're going to escort these ships and make sure that they're sound and safe as they move through. Well, it only takes one, and they'll stop. They'll stop, and they won't insure, and they won't ship. I mean, that's all it takes. We saw that with Bridgerton in Operation Earnest Will.

Now, we cleared that up, got the ship out of the way, and began movement again. And the Iranians didn't have the capacity to impact the ships that were moving through the Strait—far fewer ships. And we were really using firepower on the command and control position, which was on an oil derrick, as I recall. And when two Iranian old World War II-type destroyers sortied out, we sank one of them, and we were getting ready to put another 500-pound bomb down the stack of the second one when Ronald Reagan, the president, called us off. It's a very different situation today. So I can't figure out what they're talking about.

#Nima

Yeah. Yeah. Axios reported that a senior Trump administration official said the United States warned Iran on Sunday that it would initiate a freedom of navigation mission in the Strait of Hormuz, urging Iran not to take any disruptive action. What was the outcome? What we learned yesterday was that Iran struck three commercial vessels. And together with that Canberra that you just mentioned, they call it an American warship. They tried to, you know, warn the Canberra with two ballistic missiles, and the Canberra, you know, turned back to its first position.

#Larry

It's a very small ship, really. It's a very small ship. It was in the LCS class. You may remember that's the one that Lockheed made, and the very first one that came off the ways, as it were, broke apart and sank. And then the Navy searched desperately for a mission for this ship, of which there are quite a few already allocated and bought. And one of the missions they found was escort duty inside places like this, close to shore. And they converted several of them. I think LCS— I think Canberra is one of those. She's in a long heritage of Canberras, so I think there have been two before her, but they were different kinds of ships. She, I think, has been converted to a mine warfare ship, so that makes some sense to put her with ships that might hit mines. But she's not a protector in terms of firing missiles and all that. She has a few armaments, but not a whole lot.

#Nima

Yeah. One of these vessels was, you know, from South Korea that was hit by this attack. And the other important incident yesterday was the attack on Fujairah, in the UAE oil industry zone, which was so important. You know what the UAE is trying to do with the case of OPEC and the GCC countries. They're getting out of everything; they want to do whatever they have in their mind. They're getting closer to Israel. Even they're trying to connect. They said after this attack on Fujairah, one of the UAE officials said, Iran should remember this is going to be May 4th, going to be October 7th. As Hamas did to Israel, this is the May 4th for us. We promise that we're going to, you know, respond to what has happened.

#Larry

UAE speaks out of their pants all the time, all the time. Little Sparta. We're going to join Saudi Arabia. We're going to defeat the Houthis. We're going to knock them off their feet. We're going to defeat them. Several years later, they leave the whole conflict because they're getting licked. The UAE bats way below its mouth. Let's put it that way. Go ahead, try it, Little Sparta. Iran will wipe you out.

#Nima

Do they really believe that if something happens, Israel would help them? No.

#Larry

I think it would be really difficult for Israel to do anything much right now because Israel is hard-pressed in three or four different theaters. Certainly hard-pressed in Gaza, hard-pressed in the West Bank, actually hard-pressed in East Jerusalem now where they've gone wild, and hard-pressed to the maximum in Lebanon where they're getting defeated. And they're getting ready, I'm told, to help Hezbollah again. You can't make this stuff up. These people are insane, Nima. They're insane. And so is the UAE—insane. This is just rhetoric. This is just, oh, okay, I'm going to send a bunch of terrorists over and attack Iran. That tells you something, as Larry Johnson is always saying, and he's right. The greatest state sponsors of terrorism in the world are over there on the other side of the Gulf. And we think that calling it the Arabian Gulf now will somehow give us a greater imprimatur for this war. Jesus. You know, if I didn't think I was watching a war and people were dying, I'd think it was a cartoon show.

#Nima

Here is, Larry, what Donald Trump said moments ago before coming to us live.

#Speaker 04

It's been amazing. It's like a piece of steel. Nobody's going to challenge the blockade. And I think it's working out very well. We're going to see. I can say this: Iran wants to make a deal. They're very proud. Maybe you won't see a white flag, but essentially that's already what they are. They need to, they should wave the flag—the white flag of surrender. In hockey, they say "uncle," right? When are they going to cry uncle?

#Nima

I would love to see who's the director of Trump's brain, because that guy is doing an amazing job.

#Larry

That's all Trump has he can do now, really. That's all he has. He's desperately trying to find a way out. He makes up talks that aren't even happening. He comments on talks that aren't even happening. He makes up things the Iranians said that aren't even being said. He makes up scenarios that aren't even true, and he weaves a tapestry that is false as hell. And he thinks—and I've become convinced that in some respects his mind works this way, and it is working more viciously this way now—he convinces himself that what he's saying, repetitively, is true. And he lives on that. And what we're looking at here is a patent disaster. Just look at what he said. We're escorting ships. We're blockading. He doesn't even know what blockade means.

Blockade doesn't mean to escort ships. Blockade means you are keeping the enemy's ships in port. Or if they come out of port, you're destroying them. Well, he's already destroyed the Iranian Navy. What else is he going to do? He's already destroyed the Iranian Air Force. What else is he going to do? The only thing he hasn't destroyed is that which is going to bring pee upon his butt, and that's the ballistic missiles, and pee upon the UAE and everyone else's too if Iran decides to unleash another wave. So I don't even know if he knows the terms he's using. Who's he blockading? He's not blockading the Strait of Hormuz because that's not his purpose. His express purpose is to allow ships to get through the Strait in both directions, north and south.

Now, the Strait happens to be fairly narrow, so it's pretty inconceivable that if there are hostilities of any sort, mines suspected and so forth, then any more than one ship is going to go. Maybe two ships, if one's going north, one's going south in the inward channel and the outward channel. Then you could say two are going through. If you're blockading, you're saying nothing's going through. If you're escorting, you're saying those that you escort will get through. So why the confusion in terms? You're not effecting a blockade if you're escorting. We never used that term in 1988. Never used that term. We said we were escorting reflagged ships, Kuwaiti ships, and we did one at a time. And when we escorted them, we risked our warships. One of them actually hit a mine and almost sank.

Another one got hit, as I recall, by Saddam Hussein, who sent not one but two Exocet missiles out there and hit them, supposedly in error. So I don't understand. He's not even using the right terminology. He's expressing something that doesn't exist — a blockade escort, right? An escort blockade. You're either escorting the ships through the strait or you're blockading the strait. If you're blockading the strait, there are no ships getting through because your blockade keeps them from getting through. Now, if he's trying to say, "I'm blockading and escorting, and what I'm blockading is the Iranian ability to impact the ships that are being escorted," that's a different matter altogether. That's sort of a combination of the two, but I don't see that happening. And if I do see that happening, I think what I'm going to see is some ships getting hit and some ships maybe getting sunk.

#Nima

Not only blockade. Larry, you mentioned blockade, but something different, worse than that. We did ceasefire. Hack said they would ask, what type of ceasefire do we have right now? You're fighting each other. You're hitting, you're shooting at each other. What is that? Is that in place?

#Larry

It's clear that Donald Trump has the same interpretation of ceasefire as Bibi Netanyahu. They're cut from the same cloth. They don't know what the word means. Now, I know Netanyahu knows what the word means. And what it means for Bibi Netanyahu, Nima, is that under a ceasefire, I can kill more people more efficiently. That's what it means. And that's what he's doing in Lebanon right now. He's not doing that in Gaza. And Naftali Bennett and others are angry at him for not doing it because the IDF won't go down in those tunnels. And that's where Hamas is now. They're in those tunnels. And the IDF has told him pointedly, we're not going down in those tunnels. So Bennett and others are really angry with him because he's not finished. In their view, he's not finished eliminating Hamas in Gaza.

#Nima

Looking at the situation and the way we've learned that more than 30 refueling jets are in the region, and the activities you're seeing right now, what's happening is they're moving the fighter jets, refueling tankers, and the weapons getting to the region. I think putting all of that together, it seems like a 10-day, 12-day war. They're preparing for something like that, not more than that. What is your estimation of that? If they're preparing for a new round of war, how long does it take, in your opinion?

#Larry

I think J.D. Vance, if that Atlantic piece is accurate or even partly accurate, J.D. Vance is right to be concerned because one of J.D. Vance's deep concerns, according to this article, is that we are using munitions that we would best keep at hand for other threats that are more important than Iran, that are real threats. So I don't know how to parse this. I know Larry Johnson was saying he thinks they're going to mount another major assault, Israel and the United States. That could very well be, but I'm not sure that I believe that because, one, the markets aren't right, and Trump never attacks unless the markets are positioned for his buddies to make lots of money.

And secondly, and probably more importantly, I really don't see the constellation of forces and the disposition of those forces on either side, Israel or the United States, that would make it a very effective attack. Now, they could just go ahead and attack anyway. I think they've proven time and time again that air power, and air power alone, is not going to do very much. I don't think they're crazy enough to put land power in there of any size. Maybe they might put some special forces in there. They'll get their ass handed to them just like before. So I'm not sure I agree with Larry that we're looking at an imminent attack. I could be wrong. I mean, this administration is stupid enough to prove me wrong, but I don't think we are.

I think we're looking at a lot of hullabaloo, a lot of threat, and Donald Trump being very desperate to get enough threat ginned up to where he really does get some kind of concession out of the Iranians. To this point, I can see nothing, absolutely nothing, in the way of a concession that he's gotten out of the Iranians that would stick and that would satisfy them in terms of what he would give them back for that concession. Because you know what they want. And what they want, I think, is not transferable—especially things like, we must get you out of the region, we must have both primary and secondary sanctions lifted. I don't think they're going to give up those things. They'll give up their lives before they give up those things.

#Nima

I think there is a reason behind that. That's why Iran put those points out. The first point and the second point, they're talking about ending the war on all fronts, and together with the United States getting out of the— they know that wouldn't happen. And they know that sanctions are not going to be lifted. That's why they're putting them out there. Because basically, we're getting to the point that we were before this war started, and nobody's doing anything for the other side. But this time around, we have the Strait of Hormuz totally under the control of the Iranians.

#Larry

And we have that, I think, very, very precedent-setting interview, if you will, with Vladimir Putin. We have a trip coming up by Donald Trump to the number one power in the world, which I think he's going to cancel. I don't think he's going. And we have a whole different situation in terms of the stacked allies against us in this conflict, from the day we started it to the present time. I think it's

very obvious that Russia is an ally of Iran that will do whatever it has to do to keep them from going down. And it's probably as obvious that China is angry and willing to do a lot in that regard itself. I don't know to what extent totally they will go—more satellites overhead, more, uh, diplomatic support, I don't know—but I think Xi Jinping is, and this is something I would not have said six or seven months ago, maybe not even six weeks ago.

Xi Jinping is mad. He's angry. He's angry with the United States of America. Not a good place to be if you're us. Someone said to me, we need to get our primacy back. I said, this was yesterday, I said, dude, our primacy went a long time ago. We are not prime in the world anymore. China is the number one power in the world, period, bar none. No discussion about it. Come on over, let's talk about the dimensions of state power. China is the number one power in the world. The only dimension in which they're not globally powerful, the hegemon if you will—and they don't like that term—is financial, and Xi Jinping has just declared he's going to take over that one. And there's no question in my mind he's going to be successful. Then there will be no sanctions, primary or secondary.

There will be no banking system. There will be no SWIFT system. Eventually, there will probably be no oil consortium that consists of anything other than China, Russia, and the assets appertaining thereto. You can take ours all day long. That fracked oil, \$50, \$60 to get out of the ground—got to have the prices like now in order to make any money off of it and get it out of the ground, which Donald Trump is eating up. He loves it. The Permian Basin in Texas loves it because now their oil is viable on the world market. You get oil back down to where people can live with it again, where it's somewhere below \$50 a barrel, and you can't frack. It's uneconomical to do it. You can do it, but you're going to lose a fortune.

#Nima

Yeah. Today we've learned that Iranian Foreign Minister Araghchi is on his way to China. And just considering what has happened so far—Iran going to Islamabad, Moscow, then Moscow—right now he's heading to China. Yesterday we learned that China said to the refineries in China that you don't need to be worried about American sanctions to work with Iran. You can work with Iran, just ignoring the U.S. sanctions.

#Larry

We're going to support you. He's moving his timetable forward. He's not going to do these things except on a scheduled calendar. And now he's moving these things forward because he sees the need to do it. He was essentially going to let the renminbi, over time—say a decade or so—work its way into 60, 70% of the world's GDP. He's already halfway there because that GDP is in Asia. And then present the world with a fait accompli: you cannot deal in the oil markets, you cannot deal

anywhere—commodity markets, whatever—you can't deal anywhere without the renminbi. You no longer need the dollar. The dollar is not the base currency. It's not the transactional currency. It's not the reserve currency. It's the renminbi. Got that, people? He's moved his timetable up, I think.

One of the things he would tell Trump, probably if Trump made the trip, is just that. I'm sure Putin knows it. I'm sure they've coordinated on it. I'm sure they've worked out a way that the ruble's probably going to be right in there for quite a while, if not in tandem with the renminbi, until they fall apart, which is, I think, inevitable. But it won't be until the empire's diminished considerably in its ability to sanction, which Xi Jinping abhors. He hates sanctions. He's even said he hates them. And I don't blame him. Here we sit with 2 billion people under sanctions. And if you read that study, we have killed 38 million people, half of whom are women and children, over the past years—really since about 2000, about the time of 9/11. With our sanctions, we have killed 38 million people.

#Nima

Larry, my understanding about sanctions is it doesn't matter who it is. Is it a Republican or a Democrat in Washington? It doesn't matter, because the establishment is just addicted to these sanctions and tariffs. And they're going to go ahead and continue these sanctions until the day there is no effect, no influence coming out of them. And they would ask these countries who were under these sanctions for such a long time, we're going to lift these sanctions. And in those days, they're going to say, we don't need it anymore.

#Larry

Exactly. Exactly. Exactly. And what it's going to do to us, of course, is it's going to cause us to have to deal directly with our colossal debt, now approaching \$40 trillion in aggregate. We're going to have to deal with that without being able to have others buy our debt, buy our currency, have to function in our currency, giving us the leverage to deal with that debt, even if it gets to the gargantuan totals it is now. Once that's relieved, once that pressure is off, our debt is going to go in terms of our ability to deal with it, and this way in terms of its increase. I mean, you talk about not being able to buy a loaf of bread in Weimar, Germany.

We're gonna be in that kind of boat if we don't stop this and get a hold on it, and this is all the Congress. You know, you can say Donald Trump should be doing something about this, and I will, but I don't expect him to do anything. Our Congress is so guilty in this, and I don't let anybody out of this guilt. They've all been watching this. They've all been signing the checks. They've all been robbing the Treasury year after year after year. And, you know, my father used to say, beware of the Republicans because they'll kill you. Beware of the Democrats because they'll steal you blind. Well, now both parties will kill you and steal you blind. That's where the American taxpayer is today.

Caught between absolutely ineffective parties in terms of fiscal probity. The House of Representatives is supposed to be the place that deals with appropriations. Johnson wouldn't have a

clue how to do this, even if he wanted to do it. So we're in trouble. And I keep telling people this, you know, watch out. When we collapse, we're going to collapse with a loud, loud bang, and people's lives are going to be ruined. It's not going to just be \$8 a gallon at the pump. It's going to be, you can't afford anything. You can't even afford to eat. You can't afford to have a roof over your head. You certainly can't afford all those things you've been thinking about, like a college education for your children and so forth.

That's where we're headed. And we're doing it to ourselves. There's no reason whatsoever that we couldn't have worked this out where the collapse, if you will, is so soft and gentle that we wouldn't even know it was happening, by and large, and we could walk our way through it and walk our way out of it. I'm not saying we'll ever be the number one power in the world again. China's got that berth sewed up right now. But she's going to find that's not all it's cracked up to be. She's going to find that's a tough, tough row to hoe. So it would be better, far better, if China—there was some sort of consortium put together, as I've said so many times, with Beijing, with Moscow, with Tokyo, perhaps.

I would even bring Canada and Brazil into it. Anybody else that wanted to actually come into it with the right faith and manage things like nuclear weapons and the climate crisis, because we're going to destroy ourselves with both if we don't do something about it. And the only way we're going to do anything about it is together. How the hell are we going to deal with these problems if we're all fighting each other? If we're in wars like we're in right now—wars of choice, wars that don't need to be, wars that we started, wars that we set up, wars that our little puppy, pipsqueak Israel helped us to get into. We have to stop this.

#Nima

Larry, I really believe that there would be no agreement between the two parties in the Persian Gulf because neither of these two parties is able to afford the points that the opposite side is putting on the table. The Iranian side or the American side—Iran cannot afford what the Trump administration is asking for, and I would say the Trump administration cannot afford that as well. And what is the outcome of this war? One of them is, you know, this new... Here is what the Iranians put out just one hour ago.

And they announced the new Persian Gulf Strait Authority. They have an email there, and whoever wants to pass through the Strait of Hormuz has to email them, do the paperwork, and whatever they have there—pay the toll for passing through the Strait of Hormuz. The other point is the case of the American bases in GCC countries. And these are the physical or somehow sensible results of this, you know, war of choice of Donald Trump so far. What else—what is your understanding of the outcome of this war so far?

#Larry

Disaster for both sides. Disaster for both sides. Iran, because it's lost so many people, lost so many cultural facilities, lost so many educational facilities, medical facilities—war crimes all. And us, because we don't know what we're doing, and we're frittering away what little power we have left in several dimensions. And there is no end to it, as you just pointed out. So what we're going to do is we're going to be beggared, both of us, one on each side of the canal, one on each side of the strait, if you will, with our Saudi allies behind us, essentially as beggared as we are, and staring at each other with this kind of thousand-mile stare.

No one's going to win this war. No one is going to win this war. I would say that Haaretz was right when it said all Iran has to do to win is not lose. So if that's a victory, Pyrrhic though it might be, then Iran will have the victory. But it will be Pyrrhic. That is to say, they won't like it very much because it's going to be just so bloody. And Donald Trump seems like he's intent on making it bloody to the very end, and destroying his own country in the process.

#Nima

I would say the third outcome, Larry, would be this deep and huge division that is happening among GCC countries. Yeah. It's so serious, and nobody's talking about it.

#Larry

But that's a... I don't want to sound flippant, but that's secondary, I think, to a country like Iran, which outweighs all those countries combined. And I mean that. I sincerely mean that. It outweighs all those countries combined. And the United States, which is, you know, getting ready to celebrate its 250th anniversary and committing suicide. It really is tragic. It's not like out of Hitler in Germany and Tojo in Japan and Churchill in Britain and Roosevelt in America and Stalin even in Russia. It's very different. It's very different. And it's not like it hasn't happened before. There were empires in the past that I won't say everybody loved, but they were better than others.

And when they disappeared, there were people who lamented their disappearing who were not necessarily subjects of the empire. They were others who dealt with that empire. Cyrus the Great, for example, and what the Persian Empire represented at that time. There were people who were really sorry to see that calmness, that security, that economic success, such as it was in those days, go away, and to see leaders come and take the helm who were anything but. Same thing happened in the Mughal Empire. There have been empires that went out with a bang and suicidally, and then there have been empires that just sort of faded away. And they faded away principally because they could not pass on the baton of leadership to anyone competent enough to maintain the empire in a reasonable fashion.

Do we see something like that happening right here, right now? And I would say Iran's got a problem there too, to a certain extent. Iran's got to find new leadership also. And I don't think it's necessarily going to come from the war party, as it were. I don't mean the IRGC—it might well come

from the IRGC—but I think the new leadership for Iran, and I'm talking about Iran in the 21st century writ positively, if that's possible. I mean, we're all going down if we don't do something about nuclear weapons and the climate. But that Iran has to be led by a younger leadership, a leadership that's sitting in the wings right now, if you will, and wants what Iran wanted at the turn of the 20th century: a real democracy.

#Speaker 05

Yeah.

#Nima

Larry, today they were asked about—I don't know if you heard about—kamikaze dolphins on CNN. They were asked about kamikaze dolphins. Here's what General McCain said.

#Speaker 03

Deny whether we have kamikaze dolphins. Yeah, let me just correct that. Deny whether we have kamikaze dolphins, but I can confirm we don't.

#Speaker 06

For Secretary Hagel, are there still concerns about mines in the Strait? And can you kind of clarify these reports of kamikaze dolphins that we've heard about?

#Speaker 07

I haven't heard the kamikaze dolphin thing. It's like sharks with laser beams, right?

#Larry

Contrast that, Nima, with a piece I saw on YouTube just serendipitously. There's this sailor—I don't know who he is. He looks like he might be Greek or Turkish—but there's this sailor at the back of a fishing boat, and they've snagged, in a very long drift net, which is often the case, a baby dolphin. And he pulls the net up, and he sees the baby dolphin. These nets are expensive, and you almost have to do it by hand when you mend them. So he pulls the net up, and he snips the net, and he begins to extract a little baby dolphin, which is cute as hell. It's only about yag big, you know. And he gets the baby dolphin out, and he wets it and everything and makes sure it's okay. And then he very tenderly lowers it back into the ocean. But he kisses it before he puts it back in the ocean. That's the way you treat dolphins—not strapping explosives on them and blowing them up.

#Nima

You know what is amazing, Larry? That Pete Hegseth doesn't, you know, miss a single opportunity to bluff.

#Larry

No. Pete Hegseth.

#Nima

He doesn't have it, but I cannot confirm if I have it.

#Larry

I need some of his booze. At night, I need some of his booze, which puts you totally out of things, I think. I mean, geez. I always thought—I'm going to tell you the truth here—I always thought that using dolphins in a manner that was suicidal for them, you know, strapping explosives on them or whatever, is the very depth of depravity, human depravity. Dolphins, in my estimation—and I've had a lot of interplay with dolphins in the ocean—are smarter than we are. Far smarter than we are. Dolphins could teach us a few things about life. So what do we do? We strap explosives on them and send them out to kill a ship or whatever. I mean, that's a perfect example of what Pete Hegseth stands for. Not that he started it, but it's a perfect example of what Pete Hegseth stands for.

#Speaker 05

Kill them all. No quarter. War crimes? War.

#Larry

Don't tell me about war crimes. There'll be no Nuremberg tribunal for me.

#Nima

Larry, basically looking at the behavior of Iran right now, they're basically saying, "Leave us alone. Get out of here. We don't want you here anymore." But it doesn't seem that would be the case, you know, because yesterday Donald Trump had an interview in which he reiterated the same policies that he had before this war started. And here is what he said.

#Speaker 05

If they had guns, which they don't have—if they had guns, you know, guns were sent and other people took those guns. If they had guns, they would fight back. I'm convinced of that. But, you know, you can't have an unarmed population against people with AK-47s and stand there, even if you have 250,000 people. So, you know, you started off by asking me, would I like to see them?

And I'm very torn on it because they lost 42,000 people in the first two weeks. I don't really want to see that. They have to have guns. And I think they're getting some guns. As soon as they have guns, they'll fight just as well.

#Larry

He's being lied to. He's being lied to by the people around this situation who've been lying about it ever since 1978, and probably before that. But they have been lying about the Iranian people. They've been lying about the situation in Iran on the ground year after year after year. There are people who send money to the Mujahideen-e-Khalq, the M.E.K. There are people who send money to the Pahlavi family. There are people who think they know more about Iran—and some of them are Iranian Americans—than people living in Iran.

And generally speaking, they're the same kind of people that we have in our country who are so satiated with their own importance, and in many cases, their own wealth. I've met many of them, and they think that's what would make the country better for their return. Were they to return? It's sick. It really is sick. And Trump's listening to these people just like he listens to Laura Loomer and others like her. He's listening to these people. Either that, or he is the dumbest son of a bitch on the face of the earth.

#Larry

I'm not going to tell him that AKs aren't their favorite weapon.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Larry

He's got that in his head, you know, it's AKs. All those people out there who are nasty people, all those people who are black and brown and mulatto, all of them have AKs. That's the way he thinks about it. That's their weapon, AKs. It's a very good weapon. Actually, it's a Kalashnikov, and all Kalashnikovs are pretty decent. It's a very good weapon. I carried one in Vietnam. I didn't carry my .38 Special. I carried an AK-47 and about 60 rounds of ammunition.

#Nima

Larry, do you think that Europe would assume a better role in what's going on in today's world? Basically...

#Larry

Europe's as broken as we are. Cast your eye upon it from the top to the bottom, from the left to the right or right to the left, east, west, west, east, north, south, south, north. They're as bad as we are. Individually, they may be worse. I don't know what's going to happen, Nima. The Western world is reacting to this inexorable shift of power away from it and to the East with the emotions of a two-year-old and with the cerebral power of a four-year-old. No, I can't say that. That's an insult to four-year-olds.

#Nima

I really hope, Larry, that something good would come out of these wars, this war in the Middle East for the Palestinians, because you mentioned the case of Lebanon.

#Larry

We've forgotten about them, haven't we? Yeah, totally forgotten about them. Do you know the people who haven't forgotten about them? They live in Tehran.

#Speaker 05

Yeah.

#Larry

Isn't that something? Isn't that something? I read today that they think there are 28,000 right now, mostly women and children, beneath the concrete that they're going to plow to build the first buildings in the glorious new Gaza. I think that's a joke. I don't think it's 28,000. Now, maybe they were talking about that particular spot. I think it's more like 200,000. And I do think that's what Kushner and Witkoff and Trump and Tony Blair and others associated with this new Gaza are going to do. They're going to give the Israelis the contracts, maybe bring in some outside contractors, and they're going to take bulldozers and just push it all up into a pile, press it down, concrete over it, and that's going to be the floor of the new city. And all those dead people are going to be underneath that and will never have an accounting. There'll never be a Nuremberg tribunal. There'll never be any accounting whatsoever of the atrocities perpetrated by the Israelis on another people. Genocide.

#Nima

Larry, do you feel that the continuation of the war between Lebanon and Israel would somehow reduce the situation, or reduce the, you know, the harshness of what's going on in Gaza when it comes to that? Because not only in Gaza, in the West Bank the situation is even somehow worse.

#Larry

Yeah, because in the West Bank, there's a lot of people alive. Yeah. I think I heard that the president said last night, the president of Lebanon said last night, that until Israel honors the ceasefire, we're not stopping, we're not honoring it either. So I don't know what that means. I suspect it means every Lebanese with a weapon is going to take it up and go out and fight the Israelis. I wish that were the case. But he said, I'm not in this anymore if Israel is going to keep on doing what it's doing. There's no ceasefire in Lebanon.

#Nima

No. No. And I think they thought that with the fall of Assad, there would be no connection between Iran and Lebanon. But when you see how Hezbollah is fighting back, you feel, no, the connection is there.

#Larry

Very much still there. And I think I told you, I said it on one podcast, and the other person knew the area well, so he kind of laughed. But one Lebanese guy called me and said, I wish the Syrians would come back. It was safer when the Syrians were here.

#Nima

Yeah. It's... Here is, Larry, what is happening with the Israelis, basically with Ben-Gvir.

#Speaker 09

The cake for Itamar Ben-Gvir's 50th birthday. It says, "Congratulations, Minister Ben-Gvir, sometimes dreams come true." Israel's far-right Minister of National Security has worn the image of the noose with pride, the symbol of a new law that mandates the death penalty for Palestinians convicted of killing Israelis. It makes hanging the default method of execution. The law effectively establishes the death penalty as a punishment exclusively for Palestinians convicted of nationalistic crimes, but not for Jewish Israelis convicted of nationalistic murders of Palestinians.

#Larry

Yeah, this is codification of their war criminal status. I mean, you couldn't—if I were a judge like Robert Jackson, you know, Nuremberg Tribunal or any of those people, I'd be salivating at the prospect of sitting on a tribunal over these people. You don't need to go searching for evidence. It's on TV, it's on podcasts, it's on camera. These people are war criminals. They are war criminals exactly the way Adolf Hitler's people were war criminals. From Himmler—you name the German—they are war criminals. In fact, the case is so crystal clear, so clarion in its nature, I would lust to be the judge were I a lawyer. And yet, look what the world's doing. Look what the world's doing. It's essentially—did you see Parliament the other day, where you actually had—the British Parliament.

I've been in that room. I've been in that room. House of Commons, up in the Visitors Gallery. Oh God, I hate to tell you I was a guest of Tony Blair. But I'm up there in that thing, and I'm watching the Speaker, because the Speaker really controls that House. What's happening? You get this woman who stands up and she says that Starmer is a liar. That's bad language. That's bad juju. So the Speaker tells her, "You retract that or I will remove you from this House." She refuses to retract it. He removes her from the House. Up pops another member and says, "Starmer's a liar." He says, "Retract that or I'll remove you from the House." And he will not retract it. So he's removed from the House. What are they going to do?

Depopulate the British Parliament? Because they got some people who were finally fed up with Israel, fed up with Starmer, fed up with the support of Israel, fed up with the people Starmer associated with and moved into positions of power, mainly to satisfy Israel. Depopulate the House of Commons, okay? I'd love to see that happen because it'd be the first really visible, meaningful protest of this genocidal occurrence all across Israel that I've seen. And yet nothing's happening. Not really. I mean, isolated things like that, but really nothing's happening. We're just letting these people get away with everything. As if when it's all over, we can all go back to tea and feel good about ourselves. I got news for people: your conscience is going to hang on you until you die.

#Nima

I think we can confirm that Israel doesn't want the United States to leave this war or get out of this war against Iran. And they're doing everything.

#Larry

And they're alone. Yeah, they're alone.

#Nima

It's not just about Netanyahu, Larry. It's not just about Netanyahu with his trial. It's about all of them. You know, Naftali Bennett just yesterday said that if they leave the situation the way it is right now, they're going to get a new 9/11. And here is what he said.

#Larry

I heard him. I heard him. Yeah.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Speaker 10

The reality is that Israel is a democracy. It's the best ally America can have. And NATO's not helping. Imagine for a moment we don't exist, and you've got the Middle East festering with jihadists and Al-Qaeda types and ISIS and Hezbollah. We know what will happen. They're going to hit the Twin Towers, 9/11. You were in New York when that happened.

#Larry

Yeah, he was in New York. He probably had something to do with it. No, no. You wouldn't believe the emails I get. You wouldn't believe the people who are telling me about how the Israelis were complicit in 9/11, how the Saudis were complicit in 9/11. Hell, the BBC is getting ready to do a documentary on Saudi complicity. We're doing an interview next week. Naftali Bennett is an example of Ben-Gvir. And Ben-Gvir is an example of Smotrich. And Smotrich and Ben-Gvir and Naftali Bennett and Lapid are examples of Bibi Netanyahu. And need I say it, they are examples of about 85% of Israeli Jews. And we are tied to them with a bond that we seem to be incapable of severing. It's a bond of death. Remember the tale about Lot and his wife and Sodom and Gomorrah. And God says, don't look back. And Lot's wife looks back and she's turned to a pillar of salt. We're all going to be turned to pillars of salt.

#Larry

Yeah, yeah. You can't get too worked up about this because it is disgusting. It's the most disgusting thing that's happening on the face of the earth. And we're instrumental. We're the expediter. We're the provider of the bullets. We're the people making it possible. We should disappear, Nima, just for that crime alone.

#Nima

I think every day they're looking at us and saying that they come with a new story, but the outcome is, look at what has happened with Charlie Kirk. Look at what is happening in the Middle East. Those kids were killed in Iran, and that school—it's all about one thing. I think everybody can recognize what's going on now. It's unbelievable, so, you know, I don't know what we can do.

#Larry

No, I think a lot of people feel—a lot of people who have a good heart and a good mind and some compassion, some human compassion—a lot of people feel like their hands are tied because there's nothing they can do. They can't even, in this country for example, they can't even get rid of the malignancy that's sitting in the White House. They can't get rid of the malignancy that's sitting as the Speaker of the House of Representatives. They can't do anything about this group of people who are taking their money, their hard-earned money, and spending it on killing people.

#Nima

Larry, thank you for being with us today. Unfortunately, every time we talk, it's about war, it's about destruction, death, and we're trying to do our best to talk—at least talk about it—to clarify some sort of problems, issues with these wars. But the decision makers are not here. They're in Washington, basically. And their role is much, much more important than what we're doing here. But this is all we can do. And I hope maybe someday sanity comes to Washington.

#Larry

We are here as on a darkling plain, swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight, where ignorant armies clash by night.

#Nima

Thank you, Larry. Great pleasure, as always. See you Friday.

#Larry

Yeah. We'll see if L.J. was right. I hope he's not.

#Nima

Yeah, exactly.

#Larry

I fear he is. Take care.

#Nima

I hope he's not.

#Larry

Yeah, I hope he's not too. Bye-bye. See you. Bye-bye.