

Larry Johnson: Iran War Creates a New Middle East

Larry Johnson is a former CIA intelligence analyst who also worked at the U.S. State Department's Office of Counterterrorism. Johnson discusses how the Iran War is putting an end to the former security architecture of the Middle East. Read Larry Johnson's Sonar21: <https://sonar21.com/> Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glennDiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glennDiesen> Support the research by Prof. Glenn Diesen: PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glennDiesen> Buy me a Coffee: buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

#Glenn

Welcome back. We are joined today again by Larry Johnson, a former CIA analyst and writer at Sonar 21. I've left a link in the description.

#Larry Johnson

So it's great to see you again, Larry. Hey, always good to talk to you in person. I watch you all the time anyway, just to keep tabs on you.

#Glenn

Well, I wanted to ask where we currently are now in this era, in the Iran war, because the information war is kind of thick. It makes it very difficult to follow the situation. But from where I'm sitting, the negotiations now seem to have been quite evidently a fraud, often non-existent. The ceasefire has been repeatedly violated. The fighting has now returned over the past 48 hours in a big way. Iran looks like it will retaliate, and predictably the U.S. will scream "unprovoked."

#Larry Johnson

So where do you see all of this heading, or what is actually happening now? Yeah, no, the gulf is too wide for a negotiated settlement. And it's not so much that Iran is not willing to have good faith negotiations, but Iran has some established positions that—these are positions of principle. These are not issues where they'd like to have it, but it's not essential. For example, they want the sanctions lifted immediately. They want their assets unfrozen. They want the recognition that they

do control the Strait of Hormuz, and they're not going to give that up. And that the attacks—the Israeli attacks on the Palestinians, the Lebanese, and Hezbollah—must stop. And they're not going to back off from that.

Well, I don't see any inclination on the part of anyone in the Trump team to acquiesce to any of those. They're trying to make it all about the nukes. That's the other thing that Iran is now inflexible on. They're not going to give up their ability to enrich nuclear material. They'll do it within limits, but they're not going to be dictated to. They are a sovereign country, and they are a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the NPT. So they're going to be treated like any other country. That's sort of what they insist on. Now, from the U.S. standpoint, they constantly portray Iran as this vicious terrorist country that is hanging homosexuals every day from cranes, that is beating women up in the streets if they don't have their hair covered.

All of this is lies, but the West really believes that. And on top of it, they believe that the economy is in such terrible shape in Iran that if the United States just continues to apply this pressure, Iran's going to be forced to surrender. They'll have no out. And on top of it, the leadership is in complete disarray. They're at odds. The IRGC, the hardliners, and Pezeshkian and Araghchi are supposedly the moderates. You know, this is all crap. Apparently nobody in Washington has taken time to actually do the basic research to discover that, hey, Pezeshkian fought with the IRGC, or he was a medic for the IRGC during the war with Iraq. And Araghchi, he was in the IRGC, as was Ghalibaf. So, and the Ayatollah. So they're all in the IRGC. So come on, don't give me this.

Oh, they're really at odds with each other. That's just ridiculous. Then on the economic front, the United States pretends, oh boy, we've got the Strait blockaded, along with, you know, Iran has a blockade and we've got a blockade, and nothing Iranian is going to get out. And then you look up north — Caspian Sea open to Russia, Tashkent quite open. Pakistan has now opened, they said the other day six, now it's seven — they've opened seven land transportation routes into Iran to support Iran. And the largest, I guess the biggest deep-water port in the world that's there in Pakistan is now also receiving Iranian ships and goods. Now, here's what's really interesting that's going on: China and Russia are doing something behind the scenes. We don't have full visibility to it yet.

But when Araghchi was in St. Petersburg with Putin a week ago Monday, Putin used the word, talked about the security architecture of the Gulf. Then with Wang Yi, Araghchi's meeting with him two days ago, same word out of the Chinese mouth. They'll talk about the security architecture in the Gulf. Then we saw the end of Project Freedom as a result of the Saudis telling the United States, no, you're not going to use our territory or Prince Saud Air Base for that. Reportedly, the Kuwaitis did the same. Now, I confirmed that, in fact, the Saudis did pull the plug on the U.S. conducting those operations. What I did learn today from a senior general in the Pakistani ISI, he told a friend of mine that Saudi Arabia and Qatar are both going to cut ties with the United States, or at least get the United States out of there in terms of a military presence.

If that is true, if that comes to pass, that is, I think, what both China and Russia are talking about with restructuring the security architecture. In other words, Saudi Arabia and Qatar in particular, but also Bahrain and Kuwait, will no longer be reliant on the United States having a military presence there to, quote, protect them and extort them, because that's really what's been going on. It's been a form of extortion. Instead, they'll be brought into a more, let's call it, cooperative, collaborative relationship with China and Russia. They've already seen that the U.S. air defense systems that were promised to protect them were terrible. They didn't do it.

But Russia has combat-proven, effective air defense systems that these countries might be interested in. But neither China nor Russia are going to force these countries to buy Chinese bonds or to be basically economically blackmailed. So... that's what's going on behind the scenes right now. I think that in part explains why we've not seen a broader military retaliation by Iran so far, because of what China and Russia are doing with the Saudis, with the Qataris, and with Oman. I'm not sure—UAE may be unsalvageable. They may have gone beyond the bonds. In any event, until that security architecture is in place, I think the United States is going to renew the attack on Iran. It appears that they're just going to wait until after Trump's trip to China, if that comes off.

#Glenn

What you said about the Non-Proliferation Treaty is very important, though, because I think everyone is quite familiar with it—that the reason why it's against international law to acquire nuclear weapons for a non-nuclear weapons state is because they have signed under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. But by committing to not acquiring nuclear weapons, by signing this treaty, they also have the guaranteed right to have a civilian nuclear program. But the U.S. is quite explicit now, though—they don't want Iran to even have a civilian one. So in this regard, it's the United States that's in breach of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. That being said, the Non-Proliferation Treaty, both Article 1 and 2, is about not stationing nuclear weapons in non-nuclear weapons states.

So NATO already breached this a long time ago. But putting this aside, I also thought what you were saying about this new chatter coming out of Russia and China about a security architecture for the Middle East also seems quite important, because this is also the case when you hear talks about the proxy war in Ukraine, where there is also a new security architecture. It makes sense after the Cold War and the hegemonic era, or unipolar era, if you're going to have a system based on global primacy. A hegemonic system will be dependent on dividing regions into allies and adversaries—one being dependent, the other one being balanced.

But overall, this hegemonic system—this is essentially what set us up for all of these wars in the Middle East. How can it be that Iran is completely excluded from security arrangements? Security arrangements are essentially an alliance system against Iran. But if you can't include Iran, which is the largest country in population and territory there, if you don't look further east, how is it supposed to be stable and provide peace? But we don't pretend to—and it's the same in Europe. We

organized Europe under the EU and NATO, where everyone is supposed to be part of it, except for the largest country in Europe in terms of territory, population, economy, and military.

It just makes sense that this is a bloc system which pushes zero-sum security. So as the unipolar era comes to an end, it makes sense that peace will now require a more inclusive security architecture, which also recognizes the security interests of opponents. But I don't see this in the discourse, though, and I think this is the problem. Much like refusing any diplomacy with the Russians, the security architecture they see is, well, if they can't get a deal, then they will take the territories they need to be safe. And the same with the Iranians. If they can't get the peace they want through diplomacy, they'll take Hormuz, as you suggested.

If they control Hormuz, they can pressure the Gulf states into abandoning the American bases, abandoning the petrodollar. They can achieve a lot of these goals. But if we sit down at the table and address their actual security, there might be a common meeting ground, but that doesn't appear to happen. But more specifically, where do you see the fighting happening now? Because I was looking at some reports, mostly on Telegram, but essentially it's explosions in Iran, the UAE. I hear hits on American warships. Again, I'm not sure what is confirmed and what's not confirmed at this point in time.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, so at this point, it's a little bit of tit for tat. Iran retains control over the Strait of Hormuz, while the U.S. keeps claiming that its ships are sailing up, you know, sailing back and forth. I don't conceive of an admiral being that stupid as to try to put a destroyer into the Persian Gulf itself, because then it can get bottled up and has nowhere to go. Which is, you know, that's like Iran allowing, yeah, hey, we'll let you pass, once you pass, boom, you're in a locked room, essentially. So... again, I think Iran has been counseled by Russia and China and through Pakistan to just, you know, try not to respond yet.

Because Iran achieved a de facto elimination of the United States from the region by attacking those various bases, the 15 bases. And in most of them, the U.S. has had to withdraw its personnel. And in several of them, the key radars that function have been destroyed. Excuse me. So that doesn't work when we're talking about security architecture. So the old security architecture was the presence of these U.S. bases. We got U.S. bases. They were the tripwire that if you're attacked, we got your back. But it also came with conditions. While we're here, why don't you buy some of our weapons? And, hey, we got some T-bills. You need to buy some T-bills.

So all of a sudden, all these countries, you know, they're up to their eyeballs in buying up U.S. debt. And they're having to buy U.S. weapons systems because that's, you know, that's part of the security architecture there. Now that has broken apart. The Gulf countries are starting to sell off their T-bills. They're not lining up to buy more. They're selling them off. They're moving into gold and silver. The more I've delved into sort of the economic foundation of the Persian Gulf, the two

critical countries are Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Because when you go through the numbers, I've got updated numbers for who produces what. So 32% of the world's oil comes out of the Middle East, Persian Gulf region. 32%.

And that means Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, UAE, Kuwait. The LNG—20% of the world's LNG comes out of there, and that's mainly Qatar. So Qatar plays an important role. On the urea front for fertilizer, 36%. On sulfur, which helps produce phosphate fertilizer. It does metal ore processing. It does petroleum refining and also cleaning of semiconductor wafers for computers. 44% of that comes out of there. And Qatar is a big supplier of that. Helium, 33%. Again, Qatar. It is the second largest producer of helium in the world after the United States. So when you put all this together, whatever the Saudis and Qataris decide to do, it's going to have a major international economic impact.

In fact, that's one of the things that we still haven't come fully to grips with—how bad the damage is. We're now on day 70 of this war, and these resources have been cut off. I described it like, imagine you've got a water tank, and then this water tank goes out and is connected to the watering troughs for livestock. So, you know, the faucet's turned on, it's constantly running, keeping the levels up. The water drains out through a pipe down lower in the tank, and the cows and bulls and horses and sheep, they come up and drink. All of a sudden, that faucet gets turned off. There's still water in the tank, but as that water falls, the animals are still able to drink, but it keeps falling and falling until the point where there's no more water coming out.

And all of a sudden, that livestock that needed to drink, they're not getting a drink anymore. That's where we are right now with what's happened with oil. When, on the 78th day, they turned off the faucet in the Persian Gulf, the oil was still in tankers moving out across the ocean. But now those tankers have been emptied. And we're just like in this example where the water tank that was full, then three-quarters full, then half full—it's now empty. And once that's empty, all of a sudden you've got to come up with some alternatives, or there may not be alternatives. So the economic impact that's going to strike the world out of this is—I don't think anybody's really sat down and put, you know, pencil to paper to figure the math out on it—but it's going to be bad.

#Glenn

Yeah, I've also been a bit confused over some of the news reports. For example, when the US and other countries begin to dig into the strategic reserves, start to release the strategic reserves of oil, somehow this shows decisiveness. It's putting more oil in the market, so suddenly the prices drop. Yeah. I would think it should have the opposite effect. That is, once you dig into the strategic reserves, if there's no plan B, essentially what happens when those are over, this should be a lack of confidence. I mean, the way, in my opinion, strategic reserves should work—well, for example, what you see in China, they have a lot of storage space.

When the prices are very high, then they tap into the strategic reserves. So they essentially put a ceiling on the prices because they can't go further up. If we go this far, then we're going to go into

our strategic reserve. Okay, this is where the price stops. When it drops low, that's when they refill a lot of these reserves. But essentially, there's a plan, and this is a way of stabilizing the prices. But just digging into strategic reserves when there's no political solution—as, you know, to use your analogy, there's no plan to turn on the faucet again—you know, this should be all red flags going up. Instead, we see the markets coming.

I mean, but again, I'm not sure how many times Trump has said now that, oh, well, the war is pretty much coming to an end, it's over, the Iranians are talking, they're desperate for a deal. He's playing the same nonsense, made-up arguments the whole time. He's still able to talk down the markets, even when the Iranians, you know, rebut and say, well, this is just nonsense, we're not even talking to the Americans, what deal is he talking about? And still, Trump is able to talk down the markets—well, to talk up the markets and talk down the oil prices. It's deceptive, but kind of impressive at the same time, I think.

#Larry Johnson

Well, yeah, you know, the college economics classes I took, you know, and I did work on a PhD field in international economics, so I got a little past basic economics. But the idea was that these markets—and essentially that if you've got a large supply of something and the demand for it is fixed, then the price of it is going to fall as that supply increases. And so it's a dynamic interaction between supply and demand. And so what we're looking at, though, right now is we've got a dramatic fall in supply. We've got at least steady demand, and now that demand has started to fall because of the fall in the supply. Like Lufthansa, the German airline, they've canceled 20,000 flights. Why? Well, they can't guarantee that they're going to have the fuel to do it, so they're reacting to that supply.

But the bottom line with all of this is the reduced supply means all these prices should be higher. And as you pointed out, many countries, and the U.S. and Japan in particular, tried to mitigate the price rise that should have happened by flooding the market with oil reserves. But now they're out. So that's why I say we're now in the next phase of this, where the price is going to continue to increase, and increase higher dramatically, simply because there are no more reserves to dampen it down. The only thing that would potentially help drop the price of oil is if the demand crashed. But if the demand crashes, that's a bad sign. That means some very, very bad things are going on in your economy, not good things.

So all of this economic drama that will hit has been largely excluded from the analysis about what's going on with Iran. And, in fact, it's fueled – this is one of the problems with Trump and his team – they have been told – I don't know if it was the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, the FDD, or if it was the CIA, maybe a combination of those two – have convinced Donald Trump, Glenn Diesen, Marco Rubio, Pete Hegseth, that Iran is in such desperate economic shape that if we continue this

pressure, this economic pressure, you know, we don't let them, they have to store all this oil in tanks, and then they're not going to be able to pump any more out of the ground, and their oil pumping system will collapse forever, that the soldiers aren't getting paid, that they have no money.

So it's a desperate situation. They really believe all this crap, ignoring the fact that Pakistan's got seven lines, seven transportation routes open into Iran. Turkmenistan is, you know, that's where the railroad from China passes through that's bringing goods in and out of Iran. And then Iran's access to Russia through the Caspian Sea. So, in fact, if anything, the Iranian economy right now is doing better than it did a year ago simply because the price of oil has quadrupled compared to what they were getting paid. And when I say quadrupled, the actual price that people are paying for the oil as it comes off the ship is \$150, \$160. Ignore what it says on oil futures markets.

Those things are completely manipulated now, I am convinced. So Iran's actually in a better situation. But the West still believes, oh my God, all we've got to do is hang on, keep pushing, because they're going to crack any minute now. And connected to that is this belief that there's a great split in the leadership. And, you know, nobody – again, the media will not allow anybody to come on the corporate media to explain the alternative, that the narrative that the Iranians are at odds and at each other's throats is just not true.

#Glenn

Yeah, no, it's – no, I think that has quite conclusively been disproven. But when we look at how this war will affect the wider region, that is, the Gulf states, for example, accommodating the U.S. bases, again, this seems like one of the key objectives, as mentioned before, of Iran's holding on to the Strait of Hormuz. That is, simply, if they can put up a toll, it's nice to get reparations. But if they can, as you already suggested, have a higher toll on countries that put sanctions on Iran or that threaten Iran by hosting U.S. bases, suddenly you will have very strong systemic incentives for countries to begin to adjust in a way which benefits Iranian security.

So if I was an advisor to the Iranian government, I would say, by love of God, if you want security, both economic and military, don't give up on the Strait of Hormuz. Whatever security architecture you think you're going to be able to negotiate with the Americans, they will not give it to you. The Strait of Hormuz is what you need. But I guess the willingness of the Gulf states to align, or fall in line, if you will, with what the Iranians want doesn't only depend on this. It also, I guess, depends on the extent to which the Americans can provide security, but also on what has actually happened with the bases.

I think this is important as well because, you know, Trump made plenty of statements that maybe one or two missiles got through. But I saw the Wall Street Journal, I think it was one or two days ago. It had a report where there has been extensive damage to the U.S. bases in the region, well beyond what had been reported before. That is in the media. If people listened to you and me talk, they would have known that this was fake, that the destruction was much, much greater. But how

extensive exactly is it at this point? Because I thought it was interesting, you know, the Wall Street Journal begins to accept reality, though.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, no, I think it was pretty extensive. The one that didn't really get hit much is Al Dhafra in the UAE. That will be one of the first to go if the conflict re-engages at full force. But we know that billion-dollar, at least two-billion, radar systems that cost a billion dollars plus apiece were destroyed. And that destruction led to basically, for a couple of days anyway, blinding Israel and U.S. forces in Jordan from being able to see new missile launches coming out of Iran. So they compensated for that by bringing in the AWACS. So AWACS became these airborne radar platforms that were trying to help identify where potential missile threats were coming from. But the point is, Fifth Fleet headquarters in Bahrain, it's dead.

They're not going back there. The Combined Air Operations Center in Al Udeid, I think they've closed down that shop. I don't know where they moved to. So the reality of whether they'll be bringing U.S. personnel back to those bases is questionable. It looks like the damage done in some of the areas is so extensive that it makes it too costly for the United States to necessarily want to come back in, or they'll try to shift the cost to the host nation to rebuild it. And that's where, according to this Pakistani general who's part of ISI, the intelligence service, both Saudi Arabia and Qatar are realizing the time to cut ties with the United States over this whole issue has come.

#Glenn

Yeah, well, that was another thing. We saw the Saudis and others—I forgot who—they cut, as you said before, the access to the airspace for a while. But that appeared to last for like 24 or 48 hours before they began to loosen up again. Do we know anything about exactly what happened there? Because obviously they are getting a bit anxious about the U.S. presence. Or was it that the U.S. was essentially agreeing to a ceasefire, not retaliate against the Iranians? It isn't clear to me why they agreed to this and also why they walked away from it so shortly thereafter.

#Larry Johnson

All I knew that I could confirm was when I heard the NBC report, and the essence of that was that Saudi Arabia had blocked further flights in support of Project Freedom, and that Trump had got on the phone with Mohammed bin Salman, pressing him to reverse himself, and he said no. I was able to confirm that all of that was true because people who were involved on the U.S. military side of the house, planning air operations, etc., were scrambling around trying to figure out alternatives on that day. So it did happen.

I have not yet confirmed that the base fully reopened. And if it did, I suspect it probably reopened under some restrictions that the Saudis have imposed. Because, again, they're talking to the

Chinese, they're talking to the Pakistanis, they're talking to the Russians. You know, and I think they recognize they've got to have some other options here because the United States is not as powerful as it once seemed to be. And remember, they promised, oh yeah, we got your back, we'll protect you, here are these Patriot missiles. They didn't work. They failed.

#Glenn

Well, again, going back to when you see the wider changes in the international system, if you want to see gradually where countries have to shift, they're going to have to start to diversify their security partners. So you can't only look to one actor. I mean, the U.S. will remain an important, if not the most important, security actor in the international system, but it's not possible to solely link security to the U.S. And again, another thing, as I began saying, was I think they also have to shift away from the alliance systems to pursue more inclusive security arrangements, where instead of seeking security against non-members, they have to have security with other members, which would then be adversaries. You know, security architecture is not only with the people you agree with, but also your opponents.

But of all the Gulf states, though, how do you make sense of the United Arab Emirates? Because they tend to stand out. I mean, if you look at the Saudis, Qataris... well, especially Oman, who is more accommodating to Iran, you see the United Arab Emirates, they seem prepared to go all the way—and against Iran, that is. And they also seem to bear the brunt of, well, let's call it Iran's fury when they retaliate.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, this is, I liken it to going back to World War II. Let's say it's August 1944, so the United States and the Brits and Canadians have retaken Paris. The general running the Italian operation, they've entered Rome. And so Spain says, hey, I think this is a good time for me to join with the Nazi Axis. So you're signing up with Germany and Italy at a time when they are in retreat. And that's exactly what the UAE is doing right now. It's not Iran, it's not Israel that's so powerful, or the United States that's so powerful. They've just demonstrated with all of their might and power they've been unable to defeat Iran. And so the UAE is now going to go toe-to-toe with Iran?

It is—I think it's in part just a sense of their economic desperation, the growing concern there. But I think there's also some blackmail factors with the whole Epstein file, because there were prominent Emiratis that were implicated in those files and doing all sorts of sordid activities. But it is certainly curious because they were the one Gulf state outside of Oman, but Oman was never being punished the way that Kuwait, Bahrain, the Saudis, and Qataris were. But the UAE had the port of Fujairah that gave them access to the Gulf of Oman so that they could get a million barrels of oil out a day, perhaps. But that's now come to an end. So they picked a fight that they're not going to be very pleased with.

#Glenn

Yeah, well, Bahrain makes sense. I mean, they're hosting America's Fifth Fleet. They have this Shia majority, which is being oppressed. I mean, you can see why Iran would go there. But it's the United Arab Emirates, though. This is an interesting case also in terms of their motivations, exactly what strategy they're pursuing, because it seems as if they're gambling a lot on the position they've taken there. I just wanted to also ask about what's happening within the United States, because it's not just the different states competing against each other, but within the U.S. we see Trump seems to be in a difficult spot.

This war is not popular with the public, but it's also a good opportunity for the political opposition in the U.S. to go after him. I mean, if it had been a success against Iran, they would have celebrated in the streets. But when it goes bad, it's an opportunity to go after Trump, it appears. But more specifically, what is his main problem now domestically? I heard that Congress now has to approve the war. Is this why he keeps calling the war a skirmish or a scuffle or whatever words he's using now?

#Larry Johnson

Well, no, he declared. So under the War Powers Act, you had 60 days, and then Congress had to act to say, OK, you can keep going or you've got to bring them home. Well, he declared victory — hey, the war is over on day 60, Epic Fury, we won, it's over, it's a great victory. And then on Monday, he announced — the following Monday — he then announced Project Freedom. This is entirely new. This has nothing to do with Epic Fury. And that lasted for about 36 hours. So I think the plan now is to provoke an attack by Iran by using the Strait of Hormuz.

So even though Iran is engaged in self-defense as it sees it, it will be sold to the American public as an illegal act of piracy on the part of Iran. And they've attacked us, so we've got to retaliate. We've been attacked now. Let's call this, instead of Gulf of Tonkin, Gulf of Persian II. This is like Gulf of Tonkin. They will stage something to justify ramping up an attack on Iran as if Iran was the violator and the one that caused this. And so that then starts a new 60-day clock because that will be a new war.

#Glenn

That's interesting. It's only about branding, essentially, but yeah, no, it's—well, I can imagine that it would work, though. I mean, it's hard, though, to sell it as something completely different. But that would make sense, though, to assess the statements of Marco Rubio, because he made the comment that Operation Epic Fury is concluded. You know, we had victory. We achieved all our objectives. And then Trump announces the start of Operation Freedom. So it could just be a rebranding in order to get around the legal hurdle, I guess.

#Larry Johnson

That's exactly what it is. That's a good way to describe it. Because the fundamental issues haven't been settled. Whatever the objectives were, there were no objectives relevant to Iran's military position or economic position. I've said in a sarcastic way that one of the U.S. objectives was to further deplete its stock of critical weapons so that they would be able to justify going back to Congress, asking for more billions of dollars to flood that money into the corporations—Raytheon, Lockheed Martin—that would make these weapons. A very cynical approach.

#Glenn

Now, as I said in the beginning, when Iran retaliates, I think it's quite predictable. The keywords “unprovoked” will emerge, in which Iran has, for no good reason, attacked. So I guess this is coming next. Well, my last question was just about China and Russia, which you referred to before. What do you see being, I guess, their involvement now that we're going into a new rebranded Iran war? Because I would assume that they both have an interest, on one hand, in expelling the U.S. from the region. And if they can drain some of their weaponry inventory, then, of course, that would make sense. On the other hand, it seems like the overarching objective for both the Chinese and the Russians will be to put an end to this war because this is extremely destabilizing.

#Larry Johnson

Well, actually, I would argue for Russia, it's been pretty beneficial. Their oil revenues are way up, so they've benefited from it. But I think Putin does recognize this is bad because it's going to destabilize not just Europe and the West, but it's going to destabilize some countries in the Global South by virtue of the shortage of fuel and food, for starters. So they want to bring an end to it. And that's where I think they are now working energetically behind the scenes with Iran, with the Gulf Arabs, particularly with the Saudis and with the Qataris, to get the commodity markets open and flowing again out of the Persian Gulf. But at the same time, they're going to support Iran's demand that the sanctions be lifted.

And that brings us back to when Trump meets Xi in Beijing later this week, that one of his demands will be, you've got to stop the sanction routine. You know, lift the sanctions on us, lift the sanctions on Russia. But Iran said, hey, you're going to lift the sanctions on us right away. Because when they signed the JCPOA, the Iranians really thought that they would get some immediate sanction relief, and it never came. Because the United States got with Great Britain and kept finding ways to drag their feet and just not fulfill the obligations. So I think that's one of the long game plays here, to basically make it impossible for the United States, going forward, to impose sanctions that would hurt any of those countries economically.

#Glenn

Well, that's an old game in diplomacy, though. If you don't think the other side will abide by agreements, you want to break it into many smaller games. And I think if you see from the Iranian perspective, at every turn, they never got what they wanted in the negotiations. As I said, the JCPOA — not only did the U.S. walk away from it unilaterally, but even when it was in force, only the Iranians abided by it. They accepted these intrusive inspections by the IAEA, and yet they never got the other side to fulfill their side of the agreement. And of course, now you have more reasons why they shouldn't trust negotiations. I think, again, without any trust in diplomacy, they will, I think, look for the hard option in terms of ensuring their security. So that's bad news. That means the Strait of Hormuz is in Iranian control. I mean, bad news for the U.S., I guess, political West. Maybe good news for Iran.

#Larry Johnson

Wasn't it Ghalibov the other day who said, hey, the "trust me, bro" phase of U.S. negotiations is over now? I love that. Yeah, he tweeted that out.

#Glenn

The "trust me, bro" phase. Yeah. It feels like they have their finger on the pulse of their audiences. But no, it's very deceptive. And I think they can only play this game so many times in terms of arguing that, yeah, trust me, the Iranians, you know, they're exhausted, they're divided, they're begging for a deal. And yeah, it's...

#Larry Johnson

Anything but. Anything but.

#Glenn

Well, Larry, it's always a great pleasure. So thank you very much, my friend, and have a great day. All right, Glenn Diesen.

#Larry Johnson

Hey, take care. Bye bye.