

Col. Larry Wilkerson: Israel's WORST Defeat Yet, it's OVER

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#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today's Tuesday, May 19th, 2026, and our dear friend Col. Larry Wilkerson is here with us. Welcome back, Larry.

#Lawrence

Good to be with you, Nima.

#Nima

Larry, let me start with what Donald Trump said about the attack on Iran. He said that he canceled that because, you know, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, the GCC countries were asking him about it. You know, they were concerned about the situation with the new round of war and how devastating that could be for these countries. Here is what Donald Trump said.

#Trump

Getting ready to do a very major attack tomorrow. I was asked by Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, and some others if we could put it off for two or three days, a short period of time, because they think that they are getting very close to making a deal. And if we can do that where there's no nuclear weapon going into the hands of Iran, I think, and if they're satisfied, we will probably be satisfied also.

#Nima

Yeah. What has happened, Larry? What is your assessment? What has happened to Donald Trump? Because I talked today with Professor Miranda. They don't know what Donald Trump is talking about. Literally, they don't know what is happening with Donald Trump. He's negotiating, he's

changing, he's sending messages to Iran, and he says that the talks are somehow improving, but on the other hand, he says that everything is going to collapse. I'm going to attack them. What is happening with Donald Trump?

#Lawrence

He's negotiating with himself, which he does a lot these days. Let me just give you something that I picked up this morning. This is from a senior—this is the way it's billed—a senior American official. That usually means a cabinet officer or just below. Quote, "We're really not making a lot of progress." This is referring to the negotiations. "We're at a very serious place today. The pressure is on them to be responsive in the right way," the senior U.S. official said. Quote again, "It's time for the Iranians to throw a bit of candy out. We need some real, sturdy, and granular conversation regarding the nuclear program. If that's not going to happen, we will have a conversation with bombs, which will be a shame." The senior U.S. official said the U.S. and Iran aren't having direct negotiations.

That's the first, I think, admission of that. On the substance of the agreement, they have not talked at all, but they've engaged in indirect talks to try to develop consensus around what these negotiations will look like. Now, let me fast forward to another comment, based on what you said about Saudi Arabia. And this is extremely, shall we say, I can't figure it out. I don't know which way it's going. I don't know whether it's about Saudi Arabia's fear of the United States or Saudi Arabia's fear of Iran or some other thing they're doing to try and stave off the conflict. But here's what Reuters reported: Pakistan deployed 8,000 troops and a squadron of fighter jets to Saudi Arabia. The deployment is being billed as for Saudi Arabia's protection.

We know they have a defensive security relationship now, so that might be part of it. It included a squadron of 16 aircraft, mostly JF-17 fighters, made jointly with China, of course. They were sent to Saudi Arabia in early April, and now they've been joined by security officials and two squadrons of drones and about 8,000 troops and a Chinese HQ-9 air defense system. Question, Nima, for you: is this to secure the Saudis against the United States reentering the country with massive force to attack Iran? Or is this to attack Iran in conjunction with the United States? In other words, to protect Saudi assets as they attack Iran and Iran responds? I have no idea. But I suspect it's to protect them against the United States. So this is getting very confusing.

#Nima

I feel the same way. I really feel the same way because I don't see Pakistan picking a fight with Iran.

#Lawrence

No.

#Nima

Because they want to defend themselves.

#Lawrence

Exact opposite.

#Nima

Exactly. They're so close, the government in Pakistan and the Iranian government. They're so close. Larry, when it comes to attacking Iran and the concept of attacking Iran, we have people like General Keith Kellogg arguing that the best option for the United States right now is to attack Iran, not negotiate with the Iranians. Here is what he said, what he suggested. He reiterated, by the way, two times — once on Newsmax, and again today on Fox News.

#Speaker 04

Believe how reasonable he's been in this whole process and how measured he's been. Look, there have been immutable principles of war, nine of them, since 500 B.C. One of them is simplicity. And I'll make this simple. What I'm saying is I think we should break negotiations off. We should seize Kharg Island for a couple of reasons. One, it controls 90% of their economy. You put the whole country at risk—their leadership. You could put a provisional government in charge, an opposition government if you want to do it.

The second thing I'd do is you go 300 miles to the east, you take Kharg Island, which is a command and control hub for the Strait. You put your Marines in there. Then the third thing you do is you line up your Avenger-class minesweepers, and you escort everybody out of the Gulf on the Omani side if you want to do it, and just clear the Straits out going forward. Look, I don't trust the Iranians, the Revolutionary Guards, at all. And we're falling right into Araghchi, their foreign minister, the playbook that he set out when he wrote the book on negotiations. This is what they do, and we shouldn't trust them. We should be very positive about what we're going to do.

#Lawrence

The man's in the past, deeply, deeply in the past. He's so deep in the past, he's growing a beard. I mean, he looks like St. Nicholas. I don't know where he's coming from. I guess he's being paid. That's all I can figure. When people were doing this on the 2003 Iraq War, I had some real skepticism about him jumping. So I went just on my own. I didn't do it for Powell. I went on my own. I wanted to see what these general officers who were advocating this 2003 invasion of Iraq—which everybody knows now, I was the source in Rob Reiner's movie **Shock and Awe**—I was against.

And I can't say anything about my boss. I'll just leave it there. When I was doing that, I went and I checked on these general officers who were on Fox, on MSNBC, on CNN, advocating for the conflict. And almost without fail, I found that they were being paid major money by the news organizations in the first place, and secondarily by military contractors who stood to make tons of money off the war. So I have no faith in these old generals out there saying things like Kellogg. Plus, in Kellogg's case, I think he's senile. And I mean that sincerely. He's senile.

#Nima

Are they not afraid of, you know, if—let's assume Donald Trump follows what he's advocating for—I don't think Donald Trump... is he going to take responsibility?

#Lawrence

I don't think Donald Trump is listening to any of these people. I think he's in a real quandary right now. He's caught between the insistence of Bibi Netanyahu and all the people who follow him, and at the same time, the difficult political situation he sees Bibi Netanyahu involved in in Israel right now. And the fact that they are, Nima, they are losing—truly losing badly—in Lebanon. It's as bad as July 2006. It's as bad as 1982. They are losing badly. The IDF has quit publishing its figures because Bibi Netanyahu ordered them to quit. But we know through other sources that the post-traumatic stress rate, the suicide rate, and the no-show-for-duty rate are really high. They've never had these kinds of figures before.

Here's a comment from an IDF commander in Lebanon: we go out every day on risky, pointless missions in broad daylight, and we get killed. That's a good summary of what's happening in Lebanon to the IDF right now. Now they're killing lots of civilians too. I think the report this morning was 3,000. I think it's twice that that they've killed, most of whom aren't Hezbollah. Most of them are Lebanese civilians, citizens, and they aren't protecting Hezbollah in their homes or anything else. So Trump is caught between that disaster in Israel and what he said and made a bed for himself in saying it, and what he probably feels like he should do if he has any sense at all, all of which are diametrically opposed to one another.

So he's caught in this mess and he can't get out of it. And he's trying to figure out a way to extricate himself. He's trying to figure out a way to deal with Netanyahu. He's trying to figure out a way to deal with the Arabs and others in the region. And ultimately, he's trying to figure out a way to save face with Iran because he's been beaten. It's that simple. He's been beaten. He's been beaten on the battlefield, as it were, and he's been beaten at the negotiating table. And nothing showed that more graphically than his visit to China. I don't know where we're going, Nima. I really don't. I don't know how he's going to extricate himself from this.

And look at what he's doing on the sidelines while he's doing this. He's talking about Cuba. He's talking in secret now about Greenland again. He's talking about other wars, if you will, that would be

more simple. To distract people's attention? I don't know. But I will tell you this: he's in a mess. He's in a terrible mess, and he doesn't know how to get out of it. And he doesn't have the capabilities—mentally, experientially, historically, you name your category of knowledge—to get out of it. And so we're all stuck. We're all stuck, including the Iranians, in this incredible disaster that he has brought on us.

#Nima

Larry, since you mentioned the situation between Israel and Lebanon, we've learned that in the last 24 hours, the Hezbollah FPV drones have hit Israeli Iron Dome batteries. Three of them were hit by FPV drones. I don't know how many of these batteries they have right now in Israel, but in 24 hours, three batteries being hit by FPV drones? I don't see that much capability in Israel. We had a huge explosion two days ago.

#Lawrence

Yes, I saw that. No one seems to know what it was. You know, Larry Johnson was on with me and Danny Haiphong earlier. And at first, I wasn't sure where Larry was going, but then I understood immediately once he got there. He was detailing the number of American soldiers who have committed suicide since 9/11. More Americans have committed suicide since 9/11 than were killed in Vietnam, either Iraq War, or Afghanistan. More Americans, military people, have committed suicide than died in those wars. And we were talking about what it's doing to Israel. And if you look at the size of the IDF versus the size of our components, yeah, Israel's being torn to pieces. They're being torn to pieces.

And tell me about what's going to happen if Iran decides, if we are forcing Iran to decide to attack Israel again with everything it's got. There'll be no Israel, period. And Trump's got to deal with that, too. I've got to do what Bibi wants me to do and what Miriam and all those people with money want me to do, and probably the Epstein file blackmail. I got to do what they want me to do. But at the same time, I'm going to destroy the state of Israel. Wow. Wow. That's a real choice, isn't it? Well, I think I'll go ahead and do it. You know, I don't know if he even has this in his brainpan yet. I'm not sure he's capable of making these kinds of decisions and these kinds of comparisons of what's good, bad, and indifferent. But we're stuck in a mess right now.

And as we pointed out on Danny's show this morning, we're already in a global recession. We are already in recession. Keep going, and we are headed for depression. And the country that can least withstand that over time is the empire. Because we're in such fiscal straits right now that it would just deepen so fast, so swiftly, loss of confidence would come on immediately. And you talk about having a dismembered empire, talk about having a civil war, you're looking straight in its mouth. And I don't think this president comprehends any of this. I really don't. At one time, I thought he's an

agent for something. He's working against the Epstein blackmail. He's someone's agent. He's an agent. He cannot be this stupid. And yet now I see probably enough evidence for me to determine, yes, indeed, he is this stupid. That's scary, Nima. It's scary.

#Nima

From what you've seen so far, do you think that Israel is seeking some sort of dead zone in the southern part of Lebanon? They're talking about a buffer zone, but it seems to me that they don't want anybody to be in that zone, which could happen to the northern part of Israel, by the way, as well, because they can do the same thing to Israelis. How do you find that?

#Lawrence

Well, they did it before, you know, to a certain extent. Remember when they first started firing rockets into northern Israel and everybody moved out? A lot of people left, I'm told, left Israel, period. But some went back afterwards when Netanyahu asked them to, and now they're leaving again, and I don't blame them. I think he wanted to go north of the Litani River as far as he could go and set himself up ultimately for the next target. Iran taken care of, we're going to Lebanon. But he's run into a buzzsaw again, as they did in July of '06, and as they did in 1982. It hasn't changed any. You still have the same problem. The Syrians aren't there in numbers like they were in '82. But it's a real problem, and Lebanon's not that easy a nut to crack.

And Israel is not the vaunted military that everybody thought it was. It never has been, really. Moshe Dayan made the right comment after the 1967 war: it helps to be fighting Arabs. Now, that's no derisive remark about the Arabs, but it is a remark about their ability to field militaries. I mean, go back and look at Lawrence of Arabia and the difficulty he had. Look at all the other problems that we had during World War I and World War II with the Arab armies that couldn't do anything but argue amongst themselves and really couldn't fight, which is why I always thought during that brutal war between Iran—basically Persians—and Iraq—basically Arabs—that I knew who the winner would be, ultimately, if it was a fair fight.

But you get into the situation where Israel is such a central thing in all of this, as Walt and Mearsheimer and others have been saying, from the perspective of their influence in America, and we enable that, that I don't know how Trump gets out of this, because you have to come back to the ultimate arbiter of this entire conflict, Israel. And when you say Israel, you're saying Bibi Netanyahu. Now, you may have seen that I think Smotrich and Ben-Gvir have been reignited in terms of the ICC. They're looking to get them. They're actually looking to get them and to bring them to justice. This is going to just excite them even more. I think it's good. I think it's a great development.

I'd love to see some teeth put in the ICC and put in the International Court of Justice in general, and into the UN in general. But, you know, how far is that going to go? Probably nowhere, because we're

behind them. And as long as we're behind them—someone asked me this morning about international law, and I quoted Mao Zedong—and I said, international law, according to Mao, comes out of the barrel of a gun. But for a long period of time, the United States had the gun. And the gun was not always for international law, but more often than not, it was for it. And it was for it for self-interest. It was in our interest to have a law-based global community. It no longer is that way.

Now we are the criminal. We are the bandit. We are the pirate. What is the status of the high seas operation right now? Have you looked at that? In nine months, 194 people we've killed without any due process of law whatsoever. The document that the Department of Justice, I'm told, put together to justify these strikes in the Caribbean and the Pacific—the document is classified. We can't look at it. The American people can't see this document. We've killed 194 people. We don't even know their names. We don't even know their identities. That's who we are today. And Trump is in charge of this rogue state. And his latest rogue action is a war of choice against a country that is beating him, and he doesn't know what to do.

#Nima

Larry, the way I see the conflict, I don't see that much of a loss for Donald Trump himself. I see a lot for Israel. And because of Israel, Donald Trump can somehow declare that we won the war, we hit every target in Iran, we can get out of the region. But if he gets out of the region, look at Israel today.

#Lawrence

He won't.

#Nima

It was a colossal, huge loss for Israel.

#Lawrence

He won't get out of the region as long as Bibi is there.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Lawrence

I mean, I don't know if it's Epstein and blackmail or Miriam and her money, or a combination of the two, or what. But he's tied to Bibi for whatever fate Bibi reaches. And I have a feeling Bibi's fate is going to be suicide. I mean, Israeli suicide. He will be a part of that, but it'll be Israel's suicide.

#Nima

And the reason I don't believe that we're going to have any sort of agreement is that there is no way to wrap this situation up for Israel as a victory.

#Lawrence

No way.

#Nima

There is no way.

#Lawrence

Neither Iran nor Lebanon. Neither theater is going to be a victory. And, Nima, I'm not sure at the end of the day Gaza is going to be a victory.

#Nima

Just imagine what Israel was before all this madness started, before October 7th. They were normalizing their relations with Saudi Arabia, with all the GCC, together with Turkey, by the way.

#Trump

It's all about normalization.

#Nima

And Abraham Accords, where are those sort of things right now?

#Lawrence

And Bibi did it all.

#Nima

There's plenty of that.

#Lawrence

Bibi did it all. I mean, you can say that Smotrich and Ben-Gvir and even Naftali Bennett and others like them had something to do with it, and 82% of the Jewish citizens of Israel agree with what

Bibi's doing. But Bibi was the leader. Bibi, instead of ensuring a place in Israel's history that will make him the equivalent of Moses, is making sure he secures a place that will make him the equivalent of the worst Israeli, the worst Zionist Jew that ever lived. That's what he's doing. When all the smoke clears and we get out of this Holocaust overhang and all the rest of the world feels about what Hitler did and what happened to the Jews, which we all know, if we studied history closely, was part and parcel of the Zionist leadership's plans for getting Jews to leave Europe and go to the Promised Land.

You know, a heinous, absolutely pointless environment existed around the Balfour Declaration and everything that preceded it and followed it. Britain's perfidy, most of all, Albion's perfidy. I mean, God almighty, you go back and think about it, it's horrible. And we've been the aider and abettor ever since the British Empire collapsed, with them hiding in our shadows. And all of this is coming to fruition now. And there are few Americans out there in the hinterland who understand a word of what I'm saying. They're just interested in nothing but their own plight, their own situation in the country, their own jobs, and so forth, which is understandable. But at the same time, you cannot be who we are today and be as ignorant as we are today. And yet we are.

#Nima

Who's a friend of Israel in the region today?

#Lawrence

Zero. No one, in my view. Not a true friend. Not a true friend. And Bibi has said repeatedly, he has said, I do not need anyone. I do not need any country on my side. And lately, he's started talking as if he means that about the United States. I think that's all propaganda to get us to do more because we're afraid we might lose him. I still say that, you know, there's this symbiosis here. We use them as much as they use us. Donald Trump's lost track of that. He's allowing the relationship essentially to destroy us.

#Nima

I remember when he said, we don't need anybody but the United States. Our friend is the United States. But in those days, he was thinking of those beautiful big bases in the GCC countries. They're not there anymore.

#Lawrence

Yeah. Yeah. And he was thinking about all the things that were going to accrue to him once he got all the Arabs on his side. I mean, there's no way you'll ever convince me that he didn't want to conquer the whole region. I think Huckabee was right. I think Huckabee summed it up properly. He damn sure shouldn't have been doing that as a U.S. ambassador to Israel, but I think he summed it

up. They want to go from, you know, roughly Turkey over to Sudan. And Bibi wanted to be the leader who did that, or at least got it going.

#Nima

Do you think, Larry, today, looking at the situation—I know that the situation is getting so complicated right now with the GCC countries—somehow we have some sort of division between Saudi Arabia and Qatar on one side and the UAE on the other side. But after all, when it comes to the calculations of the United States, how does the United States see the situation in the Middle East with the GCC countries? Is the Trump administration going to, you know, change the tone and the atmosphere there? Because we know right now Saudi Arabia and Qatar are somehow feeling, with the case of the Strait of Hormuz, that they're more dependent on Iran. They were not that much dependent on Iran. Nobody was dependent on Iran before this war started. Right now, they are all dependent on Iran—not only with the Strait of Hormuz, with the case of the tankers, but also with the case of the internet, by the way. Every time we see something new coming up, popping up, and this is the reality of the Strait of Hormuz today.

#Lawrence

Here's the newest one. Iran has officially announced the establishment of a new body named the Persian Gulf Strait Affairs Authority, PGSA, tasked with overseeing affairs related to the Strait of Hormuz. The announcement was made through the authority's official account on the social media platform. And then it gives the actual statement, quote, "In the name of God, the official X account of the Persian Gulf Strait Authority, PGSA, is now live. Follow us for real-time updates on the Strait of Hormuz." Fait accompli. You're right. What are we going to do? Oh, let's go blockade again. Let's do Operation Freedom again. We've got to clear this strait again. Those nasty Persians are claiming they own it. Let's go do it again. God, I hope we don't use ground forces, Nima.

I don't care how small a complement or how large a complement. First thing, we don't have a large complement. Most ground forces we could probably put together would—maybe we could put 400,000 on the ground, maybe—but how are you going to put them on the ground? Where are you going to land? How are you going to get them in? They're not all paratroopers. Very few of them are paratroopers. How are you going to get them in? Where are you going to land them? Where are you going to land them initially? Where are you going to get them ready? Where are you going to do all the things you did in the first and the second Gulf Wars? We spent, what, on Desert Shield? We spent six months getting ready. You just can't make this stuff up, Nima. This guy does not understand what he's doing, nor does Hegseth.

And I'm increasingly of a mind this General Kane doesn't either. And I'm almost positive Admiral Brad Cooper doesn't have a clue. So these are the people we've got out there. And Larry was telling me this morning, we've appointed a two-star general to be the land forces component commander. Well, we have not done anything in the modern age without the land force component commander

being at least a three-star and maybe a four-star on some occasions. So we're putting a two-star in charge of the land component of this force that's going to attack Iran? What does that tell you? That tells you there ain't going to be many troops in the land force component. So what are we doing? We're going to land a special team that will go in and get the uranium. That's what I've been told. Okay.

What are you going to do when they're all captured? What are you going to do when they're all dead or captured? What are you going to do when they don't get the uranium? What are you going to do when you can't extract them? People should be asking these questions. People should be going to debates about these issues. I don't hear anything but a nine-hour prayer meeting in the Pentagon. If we pray to God, if we pray to God and to Jesus really hard, maybe we'll beat those heathens in the Persian Gulf. I can just hear Hegseth saying that. If we pray to God, if we pray to Jesus, we'll be successful. This is who's running us now. And look at it. Look at the invective that Trump is now indicating without any cover at all with regard to Tom Massie. I mean, he has declared war on Tom Massie.

#Nima

Yeah. \$30 million in the primary.

#Lawrence

Unbelievable. Unbelievable. And you can bet that there's probably a lot more dark money around the edges of that. A lot more than \$30 million, probably \$40 million total.

#Nima

It's so amazing how much they spent to destroy or remove someone like Thomas Massie.

#Lawrence

It must make him really, really think twice about what he told Chas Freeman a few years ago. He said he'd be happy to go home anytime they wanted him to go home. He'd be happy to go home. It must make him think, wow, I'm more important than I thought I was.

#Nima

Larry, what does it mean if he prevails, if he comes out of it somehow victorious, or if he can beat his opponent? How do you feel about that?

#Lawrence

Massie?

#Nima

I'm talking about Massie prevailing.

#Lawrence

Well, I think it says two things that are powerful. One, American democracy is over. And we've been building toward that ever since Justice Powell produced that memo that said corporations should be people. And we built the case before Citizens United, and then with Citizens United, we reaffirmed it. And Roberts got the court and decided that, oh, I think I should be able to do anything I want to with politics. That's what he just did with Virginia. We voted in Virginia. I voted in Virginia. He just supported the Virginia Supreme Court in its decision to say my vote was meaningless. My going to the ballot box down here at the Pimmit Hills Library, my vote on that occasion and 51% of the rest of Virginia's votes were negated by the Supreme Court of the United States. Democracy's over. There's no democracy here. And that's what Trump defeating Massie will say. Now, conversely, if Massie wins, it won't say democracy is alive and well. It'll just say it's on life support.

#Nima

But it means a lot to many people.

#Lawrence

And I know Tom a little bit from the meetings that Chas and I had with him. I'd hate to see him go home. He has his problems. He has his foibles. He has his wrinkles, just like anybody. But basically, his heart and his mind are in the right place in terms of representing the people he represents in Kentucky and doing it in a fair and honest way, which is rare, rare, especially in the House of Representatives. It's rare.

#Nima

Larry, Vladimir Putin is in China. Wang Yi met him. Yeah, tomorrow, exactly. You have the foreign minister of China welcoming Vladimir Putin, which wasn't the case, by the way, for Donald Trump. And he was so much... I think it's a colossal, sort of huge, big message for Donald Trump that this is the difference between Russia and China when comparing China and the United States. But looking at the situation, Larry, we have some sort of rumors that behind the scenes they may be trying to make a new sort of arrangement for the region. I'm talking about the Middle East, together with Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, because they were talking about a non-aggression pact. Saudi Arabia was talking about it. And how do you see China and Russia playing some sort of role in that?

#Lawrence

I think China and Russia have an interest in what I used to call—and we had an interest in it too at the time. In fact, the last time I was in government, we were still talking about it—a zone where not only, for example, one aspect of it was a weapons-free zone, a nuclear weapons-free zone. It would be the first really substantial nuclear weapons-free zone in the world, and it would be coordinated with the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the treaty against nuclear weapons in that regard. And it would become a harbinger of what other regions could do. But at the same time, we talked about the possibility of creating, not only in Southwest Asia but also on the rim of Africa—we call it MENA, the Middle East and North Africa—creating a place where armies, militaries, forces really didn't have any place, that it was about economic development.

It was about social development. It was about democracy. It wasn't about warfare. And that's why we were so deadly opposed in the Pentagon, at least when I was there, to creating Africa Command, because that militarized that portion of the world. And we'd already militarized the Middle East, you know, with Israel in particular, we'd militarized it. What is Israel but a military state? That's what it's been since 1948. And it's proving it now in spades. So they're operating on the same sheet of music we were operating on 30 years ago, 40 years ago, when we thought that that was a region that was ripe to be an example of a nuclear weapons-free zone slash war-free zone. And that encompassed some really bloody places like the Congo, like Sudan, gone. But maybe China and Russia and others are going to bring it back. It'd be a wonderful development as far as I'm concerned.

#Nima

I think, Larry, one of the discussions between Donald Trump and Xi, which we didn't hear about that much, was denuclearizing the Middle East. It's not only about Iran, it's about Israel. Right, of course it is. If you want to do something with Iran, you have to think of Israel.

#Lawrence

Of course you do. The Omani foreign minister said it right. The problem in the region is not Iran, the problem is Israel. It is the promise of truth. At the same time you're talking about that, though, look at this—Russia's strategic nuclear exercise, what they're doing. They're putting everything in the field, everything. They're going to exercise the entire nuclear components. The Duma just passed legislation authorizing Putin to go to war with whomever he thought he needed to go to war with. Take that, all you critics saying that somebody in Russia objects to what Putin is doing. He's putting this exercise together with every element of the Russian nuclear forces, and they're going to be exercising for several days.

And at the same time, Lithuania has just announced that it would support American nuclear weapons on its territory and is asking us to consider that. I think Putin's made a decision, and he's looking at a war with NATO. And he knows damn well that the war is very likely to go nuclear. These

are developments along that line of crisis that I keep talking about that are going to haunt us, going to haunt us big time. And Trump's paying no attention to this at all right now. I can't see that Hegseth and Kaine are paying any attention to it either. Trump thinks all he's got to do is pick up the telephone and Putin will back off on anything that he might want to do. I got news for Trump. Putin's a lot smarter than he is.

#Nima

You hear Financial Times reporting that she told Donald Trump—that Financial Times reported she told Donald Trump—that Putin regrets his invasion of Ukraine. It's so amazing. You know how Financial Times got that?

#Lawrence

Usually the pink-papered newspaper has more sense than that. You know, then Powell would come into my office and he would say, what are you doing reading the pink newspaper again? I'd say, this is the only newspaper I read, Mr. Secretary. It's the only one that has a financial page that I pay any attention to. Wall Street Journal? No, I read the Financial Times. Oh, okay. So I developed all these relationships with the editorial staff at the FT, Ed Luce and others. Ed at that time was the editor for the Financial Times in Washington. And I got to know some of their economists and others pretty well.

But usually it's a pretty good newspaper, but I don't like any of them anymore. I mean, all of them seem to be now under the sway of some ulterior power. In other words, they're not doing what they're supposed to be doing—acting objectively and reporting the news in the best way they can. Even the FT now. I haven't bought an FT in six months. I used to buy one down at the CVS every Sunday at least and go through the Sunday edition. I don't anymore. I don't buy any media anymore. I don't look at the Washington Post, New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, USA Today. I don't look at any of them. I listen to you.

#Nima

Larry, I remember you once said that even if the United States decides to put nukes, or lets Poland invite the United States into their country to put nukes there, it's going to be huge.

#Lawrence

Destabilizing.

#Nima

Destabilizing for the whole region. You're talking about these little states being... I don't know what would happen with that. Did Donald Trump talk about it when he was in China, in your opinion?

#Lawrence

Kane is over there right now. Apparently, if the news is right—Reuters, I think it was—if it's right, he has told the Poles either the 4,000 or 5,000 troops that were coming aren't coming, or they're still thinking about it, something like that. So someone is having some second thoughts in Poland, I would suspect, because the Poles are about 50-50 right now. About 50% are sane people who understand they have to live with Germany and they have to live with Moscow. That "have to" is life-threatening if you don't do it. They understand that. And the other half are crazy nuts who want to go to war with Russia and maybe take Germany on too if Germany objects.

So Poland's having a real fight within its own political structure to try and figure out which way it wants to go. And we weren't helping by saying things like, well, if Merkel wants to send 5,000 American troops home or we want to bring them home—I guess that's who initiated it, Trump or Hegseth—Poland will take them. Well, what kind of comment is that to Germany? You know, Poland, you have two problems. You've had two problems throughout the last few years: Germany on one side and Russia on the other side. And in the Molotov-Ribbentrop compact, you had a problem with both of them. So you don't want to have that problem.

And yet we're over there apparently stirring it up again. I have no idea what they're going to do with Lithuania now that Lithuania has said they want nuclear weapons on their soil. There are people in the Pentagon who will bite that in a nanosecond. That's what Putin did the special military operation for, because he knew damn well eventually we were going to put something in the eastern extremities of Ukraine. First, it would be missile systems that looked like they were conventional, but they would be dual-purpose. And he knew they were dual-purpose. You know, all you got to do is switch the missile, put a warhead on there that's nuclear.

#Nima

The head of the Iranian parliament, Larijani, the guy who was negotiating with the United States in Islamabad as the head of the Iranian delegation—his name is Qalibaf. Qalibaf, yeah. Right now, he's the head of Iranian affairs with China. He's going to negotiate and talk with China. This is huge when it comes to Iranian income.

#Lawrence

Is this a new position? Was he moved from—no, no.

#Nima

He has the same position as the head of parliament. Head of parliament. At the same time, the head of Chinese affairs, the talks between Iran. This is the second time we've had these sorts of things in Iran. Because first, I remember Larijani, who was assassinated during this war, one of the main negotiators. Putin said that he was so upset with his assassination.

#Lawrence

Been around for a long time.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Lawrence

Yeah, I remember his name all the way back to the Iran–Iraq War.

#Nima

He was very wise, you know... By the way, I remember him being head of the parliament and the main negotiator, the head of Iranian talks with China. Right now, it's Qalibaf. This is a huge sign for Iranians. Many people would know how important China is becoming for Iran. And I would say they have two projects, two important projects. One of them is the north-south corridor from Russia to India.

#Lawrence

Right.

#Nima

Going through Iran. The other one is the Belt and Road Initiative.

#Lawrence

Right.

#Nima

I would say in this meeting between Putin and Xi, they would talk about it. And they want a better Middle East. They want to have some sort of, you know, calmness in the Middle East, I would say. Because if that's not the case, that's going to be totally against their projects. They don't want this sort of chaos in the Middle East.

#Lawrence

That's the beauty, in my eyes, of the Chinese approach—indeed, of BRICS' approach—compared to ours. You can sum it up in the title of the BRICS conference that's coming up in India, because Modi is the president of the conference that's coming up in September. That title, which is Innovation, Resilience, Development, and Cooperation, personifies China's approach, whereas ours is personified by sanctions and military force. Who do you think the world's going to sign up with? Especially when 60% of the world's GDP or more is in Asia, and 65% of its population is in Asia.

#Lawrence

Mostly in two countries, India and China, but the others aren't pikers. Vietnam's got a pretty sizable population—Malaysia, Indonesia. You put all those countries together and you've got probably 60% of the world. And that's the 60% that's up and coming, not the Western Hemisphere—Brazil excepted. I always have to except Brazil, and one of my friends in Canada told me the other day, "Except us too, because we're up and coming." I said, "I don't know. Let's talk about that," because I see a lot of nasty stuff going on in Canada right now that doesn't look like it's for the 21st century either.

#Nima

Do you think that Donald Trump would be able to make a deal with Russia, with Iran, or with China? What would be his achievement, by the way?

#Lawrence

Zero. Zero, except maybe the destruction and dismemberment of the United States of America. Donald Trump is going to have a legacy, I think, that's going to rival Bibi Netanyahu's—surpass it, really—because the damage he does is going to be done to 340 million people who were arguably one of the top powers in the world, if not the top power. He's done damage to it that's irreparable. Bibi's just destroyed a little pipsqueak called Israel.

#Nima

Today he was talking about the case of Iran. He's so optimistic. We had J.D. Vance today, you know—J.D.

#Lawrence

Vance didn't know how to wear the right socks, didn't you hear?

#Nima

Trump criticizing his socks. Yeah.

#Lawrence

You got the wrong socks on, J.D. J.D., get your socks changed.

#Nima

This guy—you can't make this guy up. I mean, you know what's so strange to me, Larry? Because when we talk about Russia and the talks between Kirill Dmitriev and Steve Whitcomb and Jared Kushner, we cannot know that much about it. But with the case of Iran, I think it's totally obvious. I follow Iran in the media, and I see no sign of having any sort of agreement with the United States. But today, J.D. Vance was so optimistic about "we are on the right path, we are achieving, we are progressing, we are doing this and that." Who's going to buy this? Who's going to buy these sorts of lies?

#Lawrence

It's all fabricated. But look at what they've gotten away with to this point. Almost two years. And add the other four, you've got almost six years. They lie all the time. And especially the head man—he lies all the time. He's made a practice out of lying that leads one to believe that if you really care about accuracy and some sort of truth in telling, you can't figure him out. You can't ever parse him properly because he lies constantly. You remember the scene in—you remember Tennessee Williams' **Cat on a Hot Tin Roof**, and Big Daddy played by Burl Ives and then later by James Earl Jones? And he says, "I smell mendacity in this room. Mendacity." Well, Trump—mendacity should be hung on a banner over the White House.

#Nima

Last night I talked with Paul Craig Roberts. He said he doesn't remember any other president in United States history who does his business while he's president of the United States. He's making money.

#Lawrence

Hand over foot. Billions. Do you know the little thing that they were selling that I think Jared Kushner was in charge of—the cell phone, the little cell phone that was a golden cell phone—and they sold a bunch of them, several million dollars' worth of it? They haven't delivered a single phone. Not a single phone. Anybody picking up on that? Anybody writing about that? Anybody accusing them of being grifters par excellence? Well, I think that was in the **Washington Post** on A27 or something like that. But I mean, this is what they are.

They are, as Harry Truman said, I like the way Jesse James robbed trains. He went to the train, pulled out his gun, and said, give me all your loot, and rode off into the sunset with the loot. The Vanderbilts built the railroads and then robbed them blind, and went away with millions and millions of dollars and left the railroads in chaos. I like Jesse James's approach. Well, Donald Trump is the Vanderbilts writ large. He's president of the United States, and he's doing that. He's taking the nation for a ride for profit, and he's president.

#Nima

How long does it take for the United States to put Israel back in the same situation they were in before this war started? I'm talking about all those radars, all those protections for Israel, all those cruise missiles, interceptors, THAAD system, Patriot system they had before this war started. Is that going to happen again anytime soon?

#Lawrence

It would take a decade, and I don't think it's going to happen anytime soon. I don't say that loosely. It would take at least a decade. I don't think it's going to happen anytime soon because I don't think there's any Jewish state named Israel that's going to be there. There may be a single state there that is struggling mightily to accommodate a very diverse population of Arabs, Christians, Jews—you name it—that will flock into that area. I don't think they'll come in too quickly, though, because I think it's going to be a rebuilding situation for Israel.

And if they've developed that kind of government, and in that regard, this simulation that I told you about once that we were doing every other Sunday, the Israeli-Palestinian Confederation, Joseph Azevar project, he's just, I think, just gotten the money he needs to run the election. It's going to be an internet election to elect the IPC parliament that will sit over all the governments, whatever they might be by the time we get to it— Hamas, Palestinian Authority, Israel, whatever.

I'm beginning to think that it's time, if we have any country left at all, its time may have come, and that may be a viable solution—that you would have a state over the others, and that state would be determinant of how the others ultimately evolved. It's one solution, and it's a solution that's been worked on assiduously by Joseph and a whole bunch of other people for a long time. And now he's collected enough money for the election. It's not a cheap election, even though it's on the internet. It's still not a cheap election. It's quite expensive to do this on the internet. Might be a propitious time to be doing this, because this is not going to survive the way it is.

It just isn't. There's no way it can. And that's who has to go. He has to go. He has to either die, be put in jail, or walk out the door and never be heard from again. And every person associated with him should go before the court if they've been indicted, and they should be dealt with accordingly. And all those that remain whom the court might indict following the initial indictments and evidence gathered ought to go, to at least establish a little bit of accountability over this heinous genocidal

state that we have more or less authorized. And if you want to come in and get a few people from the great empire, please feel free to do so. Don't think you will, but.

#Nima

The problem for Israel, when Benjamin Netanyahu leaves his position, is that no one in Israel will be able to manipulate the United States the way Benjamin Netanyahu was manipulating it for such a long time.

#Lawrence

I think either way you believe, either way, that Israel is our tool, or as Lindsey Graham said, if they weren't there, we'd have to invent them. Or they make us their tool. Either way. Don't care. Either way. Toast. Done. It's gone. This is what's giving these people so much pain. This is why they're deploying so much money against Massey. That's just a little example. But it's why they're doing things like this guy saying, the ambassador to the United States from Israel, saying that J Street is a sore in the Israeli community or in the Jewish community in America. I'm sorry, dude. You're a sore in the American community and the Jewish community in America. You're a sore. And Mike Huckabee is a sore in Jerusalem. We need to get rid of both of you.

#Nima

Where do you see, Larry, the UAE as time goes by with this conflict in the Middle East? Disappearing?

#Lawrence

Disappearing? That's another thing they need to do. I mean, really. We talked about this in 1990, 91, 92. There needs to be some get-together in that area. There needs to be some democracy there. There needs to be some determining of leadership through other than wealth and emirship. I don't know how you affect it and how you would draw up the map afterwards, but some of these states don't make any sense. They don't make any economic sense. They don't make any demographic sense. They are emirs on top of slaves or near slaves. And it is, after all, the first quarter past the 21st century. That's a passé governance system. It needs to go. Why not take this propitious moment and say goodbye to it?

#Nima

Israel would be more than happy to destroy them.

#Lawrence

Well, Israel's no democracy. Israel's no liberal democracy. It's an apartheid state, so it's no exemplar. It's no example. Are there any examples? Oh, wow. There is one. It's across the Persian Gulf. It's headquartered in Tehran. There is a democracy in the region, of course. In many respects, probably, you could argue it's as much a democracy as we are, especially today with all our criminal activities and everything. Yeah, let's have some more democracy like Iran has.

#Lawrence

I think, Larry, you know, the Wahhabists and others on the other side of the Gulf, they hate that. They hate Iran's success, such as it is, with elections and things like that.

#Nima

You're totally right, Larry. Thomas Massie, in one hour people are going to vote, and we're going to see what the result will be. I think many people want to see what will happen with this primary.

#Lawrence

Yeah. I think I'm going to fly a drone up there, pick up a ballot box, bring it down here, stuff it, and send it back. Kentucky, Kentucky, Kentucky. You're not from Kentucky. Oh, yes, I am.

#Nima

It's not only for Israel. It's going to be hugely influential for Donald Trump himself because he went after Thomas Massie. J.D. Vance was talking against him. Pete Hegseth was doing everything to help his opponent in Kentucky. This is just amazing, what happened.

#Lawrence

You know, it's not got as much publicity, Nima, but it's happening elsewhere too. He's taken up a cudgel in Texas for Paxton, who is a criminal. He was impeached. He should have been removed from office. He's a criminal. And he's taken up against him, against Cornyn, against John Cornyn. Now, I don't have any love for Cornyn. Cornyn is a guy that literally threw me out of his office because he didn't think climate change was a national security issue. Put a Navy lieutenant commander with me for me to brief on the climate.

I said to the lieutenant commander, how'd you get this job? He said, well, I was detailed to Congress, and they put me in his office, and he made me his environmental officer. I said, that shows how much he thinks about the environment. The lieutenant commander kind of looked at me like, that's not very kind of you to say that. I said, I have no reflection on you, but he doesn't care about the environment. But I'd take him to Paxton. Paxton's a criminal, and Trump has thrown his full weight behind him against his own Republican stalwart, John Cornyn.

#Nima

The guy who's running, Larry, against Thomas Massie is talking about sending American soldiers to fight Iran in the Middle East on the ground.

#Lawrence

Go with them. Lead. Lead the foremost squad. We'll put you in charge of it, dude.

#Nima

Just a single candidate is not going to change everything in the United States, but it's a huge sign if he prevails.

#Lawrence

It's a sign like I saw yesterday in the—what's the name of the poll that the New York Times does? I can't remember the name of it, but they had put the graph in there, and they had three components to the graph. One was his approval rating, and one was his disapproval rating. And then it showed you the different places where it originated—Republican, Democrat, and so forth. And you're looking at it, and you're saying, wow, look at that red line. It's just going disapproval.

#Lawrence

Going to hit the zero point.

#Nima

Donald Trump is losing everything in the United States. I don't know who's going to be able to help him, but the situation—the economy—is not working. Many people, independents among Republicans and Democrats, everything is just going down.

#Lawrence

Well, the stunning thing on the Siena poll—I think it's called the Siena poll—the stunning thing here was when you parsed it, you were looking at about 91% of Democrats who had a disapproval of Donald Trump, who disapproved of Donald Trump. And then you had a fairly high percentage of non-affiliated. But then you looked at 71% of Republicans still supporting him. Now, that means 29%, almost a third, are not. But how in the world did we get 70% of the Republican Party to be stark raving mad? That took some doing. Can't answer my own question. I don't know.

#Nima

Larry, before wrapping up, what is your understanding of what is happening in San Diego? The shooting at the mosque, and they said—they came out and said, "I don't want to comment." But what do you make of it, you know, attacking people in the mosque? And this is...

#Lawrence

The sad thing, Nima, is that we will never know the truth, probably, like so many things now, because we are taking every event like that and turning it into something that's propagandistic and that we can use. And when I say we, sometimes it's the country doing it, or a majority of the country. But more often than not, it's the administration doing it because it wants to use every single incident of blood for its own favor. And so it's going to turn it into something that it isn't in order to do that. And it doesn't care. It doesn't care. Anything to reinforce that point—that white male is the preferred candidate, white women can be here, everyone else must leave. And oh, by the way, all you oppressed whites in South Africa, you can come here and we will welcome you with open arms. That's the disgusting signal that we're sending to the world.

#Lawrence

And every event like you're talking about gets interpreted that way. So you never know the truth. You know, high-volume ones like Charlie Kirk—we'll never know the truth about Charlie Kirk. Maybe 30, 40 years from now we will. But in the meantime, it's going to be used by everybody, including people like his wife, like Candace Owens and others. It's going to be used for their benefit.

#Nima

By the way, he was supporting Thomas Massie when he was alive.

#Lawrence

I know, I know. They don't want to make that point too clarion. Yeah. I don't know how you could not support Tom, the way he presents himself. I mean, he's got some foibles, but at that time he spent probably an hour and a half with Chaz and me in the Senate—or no, in the House. And where were we? We were in a briefing that the House had allowed us to give them, and he lingered. And he stayed around for about an hour and just talked honestly about what he thought of the Congress. I think it's fair to say Chaz and I were stunned.

#Nima

I really believe, Larry, that what Charlie Kirk created with those campaigns and with the case of Israel and Zionism is alive. That's not going to die. He created a wave among young people in America that is going to change a lot. They're going to change a lot of things in the United States, in my opinion.

#Lawrence

What he has done. That's why we're seeing this money being deployed. You know, the up-in-your-face things like Tom Massie, but this ambassador saying that about J Street—a lot of young people in J Street, a lot of young Jews in J Street, but also a lot of young non-Jews. And their approach basically is a softer approach, a softer sell of Israel. And I have to say that since Jeremy has sort of turned a little bit, he's been taking on Netanyahu's Israel pretty forthrightly. So that's a happy medium, if you will. It takes us back to the days when, as my rabbi in New York says, we live very happily in New York, and we don't like this business of making anti-Semites all over the place by the way you act. I think Jews have a comfortable life in America. They have a comfortable life in Iran. They have a comfortable life in other places. So why mess with that? And that's what Netanyahu is doing. He's making people hate Jews.

#Nima

Exactly. I think for Iranians, Larry, it's not something strange because when you say, I'm Iranian, you can be Zoroastrian, you can be Jewish, you can be Christian, you can be Muslim, Sunni, Shia. You have all of these differences in Iran. That's why you don't recognize yourself by your religion.

#Lawrence

Which is what we boast of ourselves. We boast all the time—well, we used to, I don't know, maybe we don't anymore—but when I was growing up, we boasted being, I'm not French Canadian, I'm not French German, I'm not German American, I'm an American. Oh, I came from Germany. Oh, my religion is Lutheran, you know, whatever. But that wasn't your first remark. Your first remark was you were American. Trump wants to make it, I'm a white male American, and I believe women are for having babies. I wrote a letter to the editor. I haven't written a letter to the editor in a century.

And I quoted the Treaty of Tripoli, the Treaty of Tripoli in 1797. You know, in our system, a treaty once ratified by the Senate is law. This treaty was ratified unanimously by the Senate of the United States of America in 1797. It's a treaty with Tripoli. And it says in there, under no account is ours a Christian nation. And yet we have people now parading around in the Pentagon and elsewhere claiming that the founders wanted America to be a Christian nation and formed it thusly. Pete Hegseth at the top of the list. Well, tell me about that treaty in 1797 that was unanimously approved by the Senate of the United States and told, and this is in the treaty too, the Muslim man, the Muslim man.

That's what we called Muslims at that time. The Muslim man has no worries because we are not a Christian nation. And what they were saying, in essence, is we are a nation of all peoples, all religions, or no religion. Look at what we've done with this group in the Pentagon—nine hours of prayer meeting the other day. Nine hours with Franklin Graham and all the usual characters

preaching, with J.D. Vance, with Marco Rubio, with Pete Hegseth. This is unconscionable. It's not us. And yet it is us. That's the sad thing about it. It is us because we let it happen.

#Nima

When I look, Larry, at Iran, look at Brazil—here in Brazil we have the same. And I don't see Israel surviving because they want all Jewish people. That's not going to happen. You cannot make a country by a single religion and say everyone Jewish is going to be here and outside of that.

#Lawrence

It's apartheid, by definition.

#Nima

It's not going to happen. It's not a real thing to happen. That's why this is not the reality. Look at the countries today. All the countries have all these differences. But Israel wants something else. That's not going to happen. That is the main reason they're going to fail.

#Lawrence

Yep, you're right. And they're trying to make it happen by force, and it's not going to happen.

#Nima

Thank you so much, Larry, for being with us today.

#Lawrence

Thank you.

#Nima

Great pleasure, as always.

#Lawrence

Take care of yourself. See you on Friday.

#Nima

See you on Friday, exactly.

#Lawrence

With the laughing boy.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Lawrence

We had a good discussion with Danny this morning. He just went off on the—I didn't blame him—but he went off on the deaths since 9/11 by suicide. He's right, too, you know. And I just picked up on it and said, you know how many homeless veterans we have in this country now? 145,000. And it's not moving much. I mean, you know, it just keeps on going and keeps on going. So we really care about our veterans, don't we?

#Nima

Yeah.

#Lawrence

Well, anyway, take care. See you on Friday. Yep. Bye-bye.