

Larry Johnson & Col. Wilkerson: US Laser Destroyers Can't Stop What's Coming

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#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today is Friday, May 22nd, 2026, and our dear friends, Col. Wilkerson and Larry Johnson, are here with us. Welcome back.

#Larry

It's Larry Friday, yeah.

#Nima

Larry's the power of two.

#Lawrence

Yeah. Actually, it's the power of 40 or 50 because of us. Yeah, we're...

#Nima

Yeah, let me just ruin your happiness with Donald Trump.

#Larry

Well, that's a good start.

#Lawrence

I was just looking while I was at the webinar. I said, he's going to play that. He's going to play that because it was all over YouTube.

#Nima

Yeah. Right now, what we've learned from Iran, it seems that two teams are in Iran. One of them, a Pakistani team, went there together with the other team from Qatar. Both of them are trying to talk with the Iranians. I don't know what they have as their agenda in these sorts of talks. It seems to me that the Qatari part is somehow representing the Arab states, the GCC countries, and the Pakistani part is representing the United States. But somehow the main issues right now are still the same — the Strait of Hormuz and the Iranian nuclear program. And what would be the outcome in terms of how long it takes to negotiate on the nuclear program of Iran, and that enriched uranium that is still in Iran. We learned yesterday the Iranian supreme leader said there is no way that this enriched uranium is going to get out of Iran. And here is what Donald Trump said yesterday.

#Speaker 04

Control of the Strait of Hormuz, as you know, with our blockade. The blockade's been 100% effective. Nobody's been able to get through. It's like a steel wall. It's our Navy. We have the greatest military anywhere in the world. We wiped out their Navy. We wiped out their airport. I think they're down to about, I would say, we knocked out 85 percent of their missile capacity. It's very hard for them now to build missiles, to build drones. We have great drone technology, anti-drone technology now that, frankly, we didn't have even two months ago. We have unbelievable drone technology, both for making them and also for knocking them down. But look, we're going to either make sure they don't have a nuclear weapon, or we're going to have to do something very drastic. And the people of the country, I believe when it's put to the people of our country, they will all agree that we cannot let Iran have a nuclear weapon.

#Lawrence

Larry, go ahead. Who's the prominent gentleman to his left?

#Larry

He ate a basketball.

#Nima

Larry, go ahead. Your understanding of what's going on?

#Larry

Again, the whole nuclear issue is just an excuse. It's not the real issue because the United States' desire to destroy and eliminate the Islamic Republic predated any active nuclear program on the part of Iran. So there are talks underway. As you noted before we came on air, the Qataris are probably in town. But the more important one is Pakistan. So Pakistan's got the full backing of China. And they are, you know, what I'm told by—I've got one source with access into the Pakistani delegation—

and they're saying, hey, there's an agreement that's close. Now, I went back to my source and said, I don't see it. How is that possible? Because Iran's demand is, you know, you lift all the sanctions and you return the frozen assets, and we're going to continue to run the Strait of Hormuz.

You know, forget about the nuclear stuff. Those are Iran's core demands right now, and I don't see Donald Trump willing to accept that. I mean, it'd be great if he did. The world would be better off, and we'd be on the road to recovery. But I don't see him doing that. Now, that said, you know, Trump once again is lying. According to the IRGC, in the past 24 hours—and this was as of about, yeah, about an hour ago—35 vessels, including tankers, container ships, and other commercial vessels, have passed through the Strait of Hormuz under the coordination of the IRGC with a security escort. So it's not business as usual, but it sure looks like the Strait of Hormuz is starting to operate under the Persian Gulf Strait Authority, the PGSA, that Iran has put into place.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Lawrence

Carl, jump in.

#Nima

And your understanding of that?

#Lawrence

I agree with what Larry said. And let me heighten the remark you made, or you made, or both of you made, that anything Pakistan is doing is very much in coordination with China. I guarantee you that. So we're looking at possibly two parties providing good offices—one of them, the most powerful state in the world. Now, I keep saying that they are, and the other is an ally, if you will, while at the same time pretending still to be somewhat of an ally of the United States. So it puts them in a good offices position of some power. All that said, I can't make anything out of what's going on between the two parties. I see Trump still being bound, to a certain extent, to Netanyahu, no matter what people are reporting about animosity between them or whatever. I see him bound in that embrace and unable to escape it. So I don't see any way he's going to get out of doing what is Bibi's wet dream.

And that is to finish off Iran, to make it a Bantustan-populated entity or whatever. And that's still the predominant factor here, I think, no matter how much Trump tries to obscure it, and goes through these vacillations which are ultimately going to lead to nothing but a resumption of hostilities, if I'm reading it right, and I'm reading the force deployments and other things right too—looking more

grim and more grim day by day. Should we try to do something with military force, be it a limited action to secure uranium, as it were, or be it a more broad action to finish off Iran, including massive air power, which is really the only thing we have in our arsenal? I don't know. I can't say anymore where this guy's going. I think he desperately wants out. That's the only reality I can detect. But he's also caught.

#Larry

Yeah. And the other dimension here is the Hajj. So people I've been in contact with said it's just been, in terms of the, you know, the crisis action teams—the CATs that are up operating to, you know, run the war—that's been real, real quiet. Well, why is it quiet? You've got two to three million Muslims, Sunni and Shia, converging on Mecca, and the commemoration of the Hajj starts on Sunday the 24th and extends really through the 31st, so for another seven days. Eid, I guess, is like next Wednesday, next Thursday, one of those days. So this is a time of great importance within Islam.

And the Saudis have made it pretty clear to the United States that they're not going to allow Saudi Arabia to be used as a launching pad for any kind of U.S. military operations. In fact, I was told by someone who I think is in a position to know that the United States has moved all of its air refueling activities over to Iraq. They're not taking place over Saudi airspace. So if the Saudis persist, you know, persist in preventing the United States from conducting air operations from Saudi Arabia, uh, then Trump's options militarily shrink dramatically. Mm-hmm, they're forced into a very narrow corridor then through Iraq, which actually will create some more vulnerabilities.

And it's important for people to understand that the F-35s are not based in Saudi Arabia, is my understanding. They're based in, uh, in Jordan at the Muwaffaq Al-Salti Air Base or in Israel. So the distance from there to, say, Riyadh—because the Prince Saud Air Base is just outside of Riyadh—that's about 820 miles. And the distance, if they go to Kuwait, say, Kuwait City, that's 720 miles. Well, those aircraft only have legs for 550 miles. So they're going to have to be refueled even before they get to eastern Saudi Arabia or eastern Kuwait. And then they're limited in how much farther they can fly. They certainly don't have the legs to fly deep into Iran.

So this whole—and this makes the refueling mission critical—because these air refuelers are gonna have, they're not dealing with just one plane, they're gonna have to deal with dozens. So if the Saudis pulled the plug on Project Freedom three weeks ago and told Trump, no, you're not going to use our territory to, quote, open the strait, and Trump had to, you know, oh, we're pausing Operation Freedom—they were pausing, they got the plug pulled. So it remains to be seen, going forward now, that if the Saudis, with the support of Qatar and Kuwait, tell the United States, you know what? It's been fun, nice knowing you, but we're going to take the Russians and Chinese up on their offers of the security umbrella because we're less likely to get blown up.

#Lawrence

You know, now that I thought about it—stupid me—I hadn't thought about it. But the Pakistanis were, they were very instrumental in imposing security in the past when the Saudis had a big problem at Mecca. That might explain, more so than other matters, why there are so many Pakistani forces in Saudi Arabia now. But it doesn't explain the fighters necessarily. But the Paks have been very instrumental in helping the Saudis with problems in that regard. I mean, not connected to the situation that we're looking at in the war, but connected to, you know, security in Mecca.

#Nima

General, there is a report, you know, by CNN and other outlets that says Iran is exceeding all timelines in reproducing those weapons they used during the 40 days of war. And Donald Trump, in the clip that I played for you, says that we've destroyed everything.

#Lawrence

Which, you know, is absolute hogwash. I mean, even the minor things he said about the Air Force and the Navy—it's hogwash. I mean, if you consider the ones that are destroyed and the ones they've actually destroyed in the Navy, for example, and then you consider the number that they have—because these are small boats, these aren't destroyers and cruisers—then his idea that he's wiped out the Iranian Navy is poppycock. But the idea that the Iranian Navy is powerful in a way that we would say a navy was powerful is not a true description. It's a coastal navy. It's a navy that's able to, with missiles—medium-range missiles—do some damage, perhaps. But it's not a formidable military force when put up against the United States Navy and what it can do. So those are just preposterous. And he keeps repeating them. It's almost like he's got a spool in his brain, and it just rolls out. And every time it rolls out, it gets more and more ridiculous.

#Nima

Because the concept of the Iranian Navy, Larry—I did my military service in the Navy in Iran, that's why. Oh, gosh. You know, the whole concept is defensive, it's not offensive. That's why they're behaving this way. I don't see that much, you know.

#Lawrence

Ahmadinejad told me that in New York. Basically, a coastal defense navy with a little reach, given missiles—a little reach outside the coastal area. But basically, a coastal defense navy.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Larry

I'll tell you offline my Navy joke. It's probably not appropriate for your show.

#Lawrence

I think my Navy joke today would be Admiral Bradley Cooper testifying in Congress. That deer-in-the-headlights look. He proves what we used to say in Newport at the Naval War College—that surface warriors have no brains.

#Larry

Yeah, that was pathetic because, you know, instead of answering the question, he went for obfuscation. You know, people don't know what I'm talking about. He was one of the congressmen who is a former—I think he was Army—was asking about, you know, please define the difference between obliteration and degradation. And he kept saying, well, I can't talk about the nuclear program. I've been asking about the nuclear program. Please explain to me, in your use of the English language, the difference between obliterate and degrade. I can't talk about the nuclear program. And it's like, oh, for...

#Lawrence

When you think of it, one of the guys just ripping him up was Seth Moulton from Massachusetts. Yeah, that's who I was talking about. He's a Marine. Oh, was he a Marine? Okay. Yeah, he was a Harvard graduate at the time of 9/11, and he gained some notoriety, as well he probably should have. He left Harvard and enlisted in the Marine Corps because of 9/11. Yeah.

#Nima

Larry, the United States sent two destroyers with laser weapons, and they're talking about firing drones in the region. What would be the main objective? And how capable are these laser weapons, or these destroyers that are capable of using these new sorts of laser weapons? We haven't seen much of that in this war so far.

#Larry

They may be effective at taking out a single drone. But if you get a drone swarm, they're useless. And Iran uses drone swarms, multiple drones being fired at the same time. So this is, again, I was happy to see Admiral Caudle, I think is his name. He was testifying.

#Nima

Admiral Caudle.

#Larry

Yeah, Admiral Caudle. He confirmed everything I've been saying, that, you know, we don't have the military power to send. If we send any ships into the Strait of Hormuz, they're going to be destroyed. And they're not going to be destroyed by one single weapon or one single method, because Iran's got a whole number of instruments to draw upon. I'll call it its orchestra of mayhem. They have many submarines. They have underwater drones. They have surface drones. They have surface ships, the fast boats, the Boghammers, which are equipped with anti-ship missiles. They have coastal defense cruise missiles. They have short-range ballistic missiles. And they have aerial drones. So that's a whole lot of firepower that can be brought to bear on a destroyer or any other ship. And that's why I give the Admiral great credit, man. He understands, nope, we're not walking into that because we'll get waxed.

#Nima

Yeah. Colonel, here's what he said.

#Speaker 05

With that, we have looked into that. That's a very challenging mission in that narrow strait when it's contested. And so when you're in a contested environment, to demine the Strait of Hormuz or to do escort duty is not something that's easy to do. So we're going to have to get to a place where that strait is open with a generally accepted ceasefire before that can be turned on en masse. So are you saying you can't—it's not, in your opinion, you're not able to—yeah.

#Lawrence

Yeah, keep on going, keep on going. You're not able to do what Trump is saying you're doing already. Yeah.

#Nima

So, Colonel, it means that there is no military solution to what's going on in the Strait of Hormuz. Nima, that's been true since the war started.

#Lawrence

Well, let's say it accurately.

#Larry

There's no military solution that we're willing to pay the cost for. Yeah. There might be a military solution, but with nuclear weapons. Yeah. It'd be a Pyrrhic victory at best. Yeah.

#Lawrence

Yeah, and I hate to laugh at that because I'm hearing more and more talk about nuclear weapons. I'm hearing talk like, uh, well, we spent all this time and money, how come we can't use them? Yeah.

#Nima

But Colonel, when it comes to Israel, we know that there is a report saying that Donald Trump and Netanyahu have their own differences when it comes to the continuation of the war. And Netanyahu really wants to continue this war. He's not fighting the war, by the way. The war is... He really wants the United States and Iran to continue the war because he has something else to do in Israel and with the case of Lebanon. And because Lebanon is getting something... they're having a lot of problems with Lebanon.

#Lawrence

Just like before.

#Nima

They're just hitting Iron Dome batteries. It's so difficult for Israel to replace these batteries in the long run if time goes by and we see the same thing happening over and over. That's why he wants the United States in the region. That's why I would say they would put a lot of pressure on the Trump administration to stay there. Are you optimistic about this war, this conflict, you know, ending anytime soon? Or do you see the continuation of this conflict in some way or another? I would say not an active war, or something like the blockade that the United States tried to do with the ceasefire.

#Lawrence

If you look at Lebanon and you look back to 1982, when Ariel Sharon was the Minister of Defense and more or less was the architect of that invasion, and you look at their ignominious—and I call it ignominious—and they made it even more ignominious by slaughtering people in the camps on their withdrawal, something they still won't talk about and deny. If you look at that, and then you look at, I think it was July 2006, and the lesson they got taught by Hezbollah at that time, and then you look at today, you understand how intractable the problem is that Netanyahu has created for himself in yet another theater of war. And he hasn't finished Gaza. There's no way he's finished Gaza.

That's the biggest criticism that Naftali Bennett and others level at him, because he's got Hamas in the tunnels and he hasn't done anything. And he's so frustrated over that. And the IDF is so frustrated over that that I saw yesterday that their toll of killing people now, still in Gaza during this ceasefire—I still wonder what "ceasefire" means in Hebrew—during this ceasefire, their toll of killing people is really staggering when you look at it. And every day they engineer new ways to justify the killing of yet more Gazans. And they do that by manipulating the lines, the corridors, the escape routes all the time, 24/7. And the Palestinians are totally confused. The Gazans are totally confused about where to go and how to go. So they kill them.

When they stray the least bit, they kill them. And the West Bank—I haven't even talked about that—or East Jerusalem, he's got his hands full. Yes, he wants us to finish off the problem in Iran. Would he join us if we were to make a part of that finish, if you will, an air attack unprecedented thus far? Yes, probably he would. He'd put his aircraft into it. We'd have the IAF in there as well. And maybe he'd take a hiatus in Lebanon for that particular time. But we're only talking about 10 or 11 days, I would suspect, of around-the-clock bombings. So he could stand that. But I don't think he's going to back off ultimately in either place. I think he's in for a penny, in for a pound, and I think the pound's going to eat his ass. Yeah.

#Nima

Larry, the enriched uranium is the other problem, it seems, between Iran and the United States. I don't know how they can solve it. I see no sign that Iran would give up on the enriched uranium. Are they going to send it to the United States? Because Donald Trump is asking that they have to send the enriched uranium to the United States. The Iranian side says no, there is no way to do that. And here is what Donald Trump said yesterday.

#Speaker 04

We get the highly enriched. We will get it. We don't need it. We don't want it. We'll probably destroy it after we get it, but we're not going to let them have it.

#Nima

Yeah. How is that going to be possible? Is that going to be through negotiation? Is that going to be through talks, or is he going to get it as he did try before in the southern part of Islam?

#Larry

Well, it's possible that Iran may try to be willing to negotiate some aspects of that, but they're not going to lose control. But I return to what I said earlier: this is not the real issue. This is simply the shiny object that the magician holds up, flashing it so you focus on the object while they're doing

something with the other hand. The intent of the United States and Israel is to destroy the Islamic Republic and to find whatever excuse or reason they can to do so. The emphasis on the uranium and enrichment and nuclear, possible nuclear weapons—this is all, if you will, a Hollywood storyline. They figured out this is the narrative we need to sell people so that they'll buy our bullshit. Because, oh, we're afraid of a nuke.

We've got to stop them, when the entire premise of it is false, or it's based upon the idea that Iran wants to build a nuke. Iran has had ample opportunity throughout its history to do so. A.Q. Khan, going back in the day, he was quite willing to help. But as you know, Nima, within Shia theology—much more so than something that's not common to the Wahhabis, the Salafists, the Deobandis, you know, the extremists—is the notion that you do not kill noncombatants. You do not kill the innocent. And a nuclear weapon is exactly that. It's a weapon designed to kill the innocent, to kill the noncombatants. And that's why Iran hasn't pursued it. And in the West, we profess to be a Christian society, but we've failed to grasp that concept because we've been such a murderous lot, quite content.

You know, we don't mind killing kids. As long as we're doing it from 30,000 feet, hey, no problem. It's when you get up close and personal and you put a bullet in their head—yeah, that's a little, that's troublesome. But as long as we can kill them at a distance, no big deal. So this is, again, I think the whole uranium thing is a distraction. I don't know. You know, I think the Ayatollah Ali Khamenei would be very much entitled to say, hey, we're a sovereign country. We're signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, NPT. We have allowed IAEA inspections here. We're going to do what we are going to do as a sovereign nation in the same way that the United States and Russia and China and India and Pakistan. And if you don't like it, go pound sand.

#Lawrence

And the justification for that, Nima, has been since, I think, really since about the time we were using Israel to funnel Hawk missiles and TOW missiles into Iran in the Iran-Iraq war. The justification of that has been that the Iranian regime is poisonous. It's evil. It's venomous. And that's simply not a characterization of the Iranian regime, even in its worst theological configuration when the original Ayatollah was in charge of it. It never has been that. And we have made that into a monstrosity. And Bibi Netanyahu, of course, has helped. And now we're caught in that. We're caught in that trap that we have created something that doesn't exist and made it the object of war.

It's insane, but that's what we're doing. And I would tell you the same thing on a much lesser scale with what we're doing to Raul Castro in Cuba right now. We're going to snatch him. We're going to snatch him and bring him back, just like we did Venezuela's leader, Nicolás Maduro. That's what we're going to do, and Trump's going to use that as a deflection, again, from the real issues in the world. Look at our power. We did this to a little island south of Florida, and it solved the problem we've had for 50 years. What a joke. Yeah, we grabbed a 94-year-old man. Yeah. Jesus. Jeez, I mean, it's... And the Supreme Court blessed that.

It went along with blessing, I think, a lower court decision, but nonetheless blessed it, and publicly blessed it, that people 60 years later, most of the people are dead, but their offspring are still alive, can now sue. And they can sue for their properties that they lost in the revolution, most of which were owned by Batista, Meyer Lansky, or Lucky Luciano. This is a story of sordidness of deep proportions. Don't forget Meyer Lansky. Yep. The head man. Yeah. You know, they used to take a million dollars, a million dollars in currency, in sacks, in an armored car or two, to Batista's hacienda every month and give it to him. That was their pay for owning his island. Yeah. And we blessed it all.

#Nima

Larry, the problem of Donald Trump in the Middle East is that Netanyahu wants to continue the war. The GCC countries are somehow feeling the pain, and they have been suffering a lot during the war and right now because they're not able to sell their oil, gas, everything they have. And so the economy is suffering. That's one of the main reasons that Donald Trump tries to do something. I don't know if the Arab states were supporting the war, the continuation of the war. I think this story could have been different from what we're hearing right now. We are hearing right now.

And you see the two sides: one of them wants to continue the war, and one of them wants to put an end to the war because they're not making money. Who's going to win, and how is it going to be possible for Donald Trump to find a solution to stay in the middle? I'm not talking about to the right or to the left, and not losing, because it's so important for Donald Trump, for his personality, not to lose and to come out and declare victory. Ambassador Chas Freeman today said the only solution for Donald Trump would be Congress—Congress putting an end to the war and Donald Trump saying, it has nothing to do with me, Congress just forced me.

#Larry

No, no, actually I think Chas is exactly right. But it all hinges upon—you know, I wrote a piece a couple of days back saying that the Saudis hold the keys, and they do. At the outset, while they were publicly saying that they sort of supported Iran, privately they were telling the United States, yeah, come in, finish them off, let's get rid of this. Because they were being told, yeah, we're going to take out the Islamic Republic, there's nothing, we're going to hit them, decapitate them, they're going to collapse, people are going to rise up, problem solved. And the Saudis bought into that, as did the Qataris and the Kuwaitis. And then what happened? It failed. Not only did it fail, but all of a sudden they found themselves in the crosshairs because they provided direct material support.

They were facilitators. They were accomplices to mass murder. And they ended up paying a terrible price. Of all the five nations—Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates—Qatar paid the heaviest price because they had the most damage to their infrastructure. And I think their ability to produce helium has been severely curtailed, if not destroyed, for a year or two. You know, they provided roughly 44% of the world's supply of helium. They're also a big supplier of liquid

natural gas. That facility, accounting for like 10% of the world's supply, that facility's been damaged. The Saudis didn't suffer as much damage. Their ability to pump oil was not eliminated. It suffered some damage.

The biggest was they couldn't export it out of the Persian Gulf. So in the aftermath of the failure of the decapitation strikes to cause this much-expected uprising and overthrow of the Iranian government, the Saudis then began to reassess, as did Qatar and Kuwait. And it was at this point that China and Russia entered—you know, they hadn't been out of the picture, but they became more engaged, and the diplomatic communications were increasing. And they're basically offering to set up a new, what is called, security architecture that will bring in also Turkey and get Turkey, the Saudis, the Iranians, the rest of the Gulfies involved—all sort of responsible for their own security, no longer relying upon the United States.

Because, you know, the United States made a promise: hey, we got your back, we'll protect you. And it turned out when nut-cutting time came, they couldn't do it. Failed. And in fact, not only did they fail, but they left these countries exposed, and they suffered significant damage. And they're smart enough to recognize they may not like Iran, but they also realize they're in no position to fight Iran. They don't have the military strength or power. And they've now seen that the United States does not either, or that the only way the United States can continue to attack Iran is to use these countries as launching pads. And they're saying, no, I don't think so. So that dynamic that's at play right now, I think, will determine how far, you know, if this continues.

I can make a case that despite Trump's bombast and his desire—wants to do it—that despite pressure from Israel, the actual ability to do it is constrained because the Saudis, Kuwaitis, and Qataris will say, nope, no more. You're not using our airspace. That puts the United States in a bind. Then it's got to figure out how to just go through Iraq and ignore Iraq's protests. And then I can see them coming to some sort of negotiated agreement. We're already seeing the traffic starting to pick up now. Iran has effected a complete shutdown, so exports are starting to come out, which will mitigate some of the global pain. But this is very much in play right now, and the United States doesn't have control over the process.

#Lawrence

The only thing I would add to that, Nima, and I know Larry didn't probably mean to eliminate Bahrain from his considerations before—they've been just about destroyed. Yeah. You know, I was thinking about that the whole time Larry was talking there. Uh, I do think sometimes, on the move, they had a choice in the GCC countries. It was different in each one of them, but nonetheless, some commonality to it. And that was, once the first round was finished—which Iran, I think, can be said to have won—they had a choice. They could fall back on what they knew, what they had been accustomed to for years, particularly Saudi Arabia, and they could push diplomatically and behind

the scenes and every other way they have, threatening even, possibly in terms of Riyadh, the United States to go for it, finish them off, go for it, do what you got to do, because that's what you've been telling us you can do.

And we want you to do it now. And all of them collectively said, become real helpmates, if you will, in that effort. They didn't. So that means that there is significant doubt, and it's growing every day in each one of those capitals as to the previous relationships that they had for so long. And I think that doubt is being erased, and it's going to be us and us alone now. Maybe Jordan, maybe Iraq by force, and that remains to be seen what the Iraqi military does about it. As Larry says, the distances are becoming forbidding. And others are weighing in too, like Pakistan with China behind it, like Erdogan. The decisions have been made, I think, now.

And so for Trump not to understand that, for Hegseth not to understand, for Kaine not to understand that, for the whole American military establishment not to understand that this is a very different situation, one which they didn't calculate on, and put pressure on Trump as they can, and if they will, to get this ended and to do something like Ambassador Freeman was suggesting. You know, Thune was the one, as I understand it, who pulled the legislation and stopped the movement to use the War Powers Resolution to put at least some constraints on Trump. And he did it because he knew he was going to lose the vote, which means some Republicans were going to vote too. Maybe Freeman's on to something. Let's get Trump out of this. Let's give him an avenue that's not quite so bad as otherwise and get him out of this. Because he, as I said, I think I'm right, he's desperate to get out of this thing.

#Larry

Well, actually, you've seen that the Senate did pass a resolution, and now it's in the House. And it's Mike Johnson who's holding it up because he knows if it comes to the floor, it's going to pass, and then Trump's going to be cornered.

#Lawrence

Oh, did the Senate pass it? Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Well, Thune made a decision. Yeah. Okay. Johnson is a different animal. Yeah. Johnson is motivated by Jesus — his version of Jesus. He tries to hide it. He comes out every now and then and exposes it, like on the mall with Rubio and the rest of them who paid for it.

#Nima

But the Israeli version of Jesus, not the... Oh, yes, very much so. Very much so.

#Lawrence

What I call the dominionist sect of evangelicals' version of Jesus: we will conquer all, and Jesus will be our warrior. He's right there with Hegseth. He just hides it better. He's a mealy-mouthed guy. Hegseth is right in your face.

#Nima

I think, Larry, the point that Carl just mentioned about Turkey — because Bloomberg reported that in March, Turkey sharply reduced its investment in U.S. Treasury bonds from \$16 billion to \$1.8 billion. It's a huge sort of reduction.

#Lawrence

There was an article the other day in the Wall Street Journal about the bond—what do they call it—the bidding session or whatever we conduct periodically. Right. No one wanted to buy.

#Larry

Yeah, the auctions, the Treasury auctions.

#Lawrence

Yeah, no one wanted to buy.

#Larry

Well, yeah, this, I mean, when you're having, when Turkey's having a cash crunch, it needs to raise dollars. And the way you raise those dollars is you sell the Treasuries. And that, I was, before you came on, Colonel, I was talking to Nima about the Munk Debate that took place on Wednesday between Mearsheimer, Stephen Walt on the one hand, and Victoria Nuland and Mike Pompeo on the other hand. And, you know, God, what a couple—Pompeo and Nuland, a couple of cretins.

#Lawrence

I was going to say, there must have been blood on the floor after that.

#Larry

Well, but here was Pompeo touting, oh, you know, the U.S. Treasury, it's so strong. And it's like, you moron, are you even watching the news? China's been dumping Treasuries. Japan is dumping Treasuries. Now Turkey's dumping Treasuries. It used to be that in the face of what was considered an international crisis, they would flock to get Treasuries and the safety of the United States dollar. That ain't the case anymore. And in fact, increasingly, a number of countries are turning to the Chinese, to the yuan, not to the dollar. So we're witnessing a sea change. And that is one of them.

That is probably going to be the biggest consequence of the United States initiating this war on Iran — they will have accelerated the collapse of the Western financial system.

And people say, oh, you're crazy. Look, the stock market's up over 50,000 today. The market is not behaving normally. That is an irrational market. What was exposed in the course of this war is the global— we did not know how dependent the global economy was on five commodities that flow out of the Persian Gulf. And, you know, everybody assumed oil, but they didn't really focus on liquid natural gas, and they certainly didn't have a clue about urea, sulfur, and helium. At least I know I didn't, and I venture to say, you know, 99.9% of Americans did not. But now, all of a sudden, we now hear about that intellectually, but we don't yet actually see the consequences in terms of products that are no longer available on the shelves at Walmart and at Costco and at major dealers.

At your car dealership, when you go in to get your oil changed, they may not be able to change your oil because they're out. So we haven't seen the full economic ramifications of this. But that is, you know, that's where this battle is really going to impact the world — not, you know, in terms of, it's not just that Iran now controls the Strait of Hormuz. It goes beyond that. This is a direct challenge to the U.S.-dominated, you know, the hegemony of the petrodollar and the fact that in the past we've relied upon other countries to buy our U.S. Treasury bills so we can go on a spending spree.

#Lawrence

And Nima, then you think about this quote from Donald Trump: "I don't think about Americans' financial situation, not even a little bit." That's a direct quote from Donald.

#Larry

Yeah.

#Nima

Colonel, Eurasia is reshaping, or I would say shaping, its security architecture. She is going to go to North Korea. What would that be? It's gonna be North Korea, China, Russia, Iran, and it seems Pakistan is gonna be part of that. I don't know about Turkey, but it seems there are some sort of attempts at the new security architecture of Eurasia, as they call it. And these countries are gonna come together.

#Lawrence

Well, the one that you just led with is a stunning development, and it's been building, but it nonetheless is a stunning development because one of the reasons we were able to host the six-party talks in Beijing for so long and worked with the Chinese more than we worked with others, with the possible exception of the Russians — the Japanese were just sort of there to listen — on

the DPRK's nuclear situation was because the Chinese were deadly, deadly opposed to the DPRK having a nuclear weapon. Because they envisioned the peninsula at some time in the future being reunified, and they weren't even thinking remotely about the North being the reunifier. They were thinking about Seoul, of course, and they had plans for a buffer zone that they would immediately create were it to happen precipitously.

30 to 40 kilometers, they would push Chinese forces across the Yalu and elsewhere into North Korea, and they would present that as a *fait accompli*, and it would extend their safety zone, if you will, because they didn't like the idea of 50 million plus Koreans beavered away the same way the South beavered away, especially with the raw materials the North would offer them, and presenting an even more pregnant threat, if you would, to China, particularly if we were still on the peninsula. All of a sudden, that's changed, and it changed with Russia, too. Russia was a part of this, too. Russia was a part of the Six-Party Talks, but not quite as forward-leaning as China.

They've totally reconciled with the DPRK. You can say it's the exigencies of reality and power, especially in Northeast Asia, and now writ large across the globe because of our mistakes. But we're forcing all these alliances between what are, in my view, really disparate characters, and characters that carry their own baggage vis-à-vis the superpower or peer power that's doing it with them. We force them into the same game, into the same bag, even to the point where the DPRK has now offered soldiers to all manner of other people that might have problems. This is a boon for them. They've got global recognition, if you will, that's outside the fact they're a nuclear power. And we've done all this. We are creating our own grave.

#Larry

Hey, let me just add one other interesting twist with the whole North Korea angle. Iran made the threat the other day, and you can correct me, Nima, if I got this wrong. But they said basically if the United States renewed its attack, Iran was prepared to hit Washington, D.C. and New York in retaliation. And most people said, oh, that's nonsense, they don't have a missile capable of that. Guess who does? North Korea. North Korea has things I call like the Kwangsong missile, and it has a range of roughly 15,000 kilometers, or 9,300 miles. The distance from Tehran to Washington, D.C. is 6,300 miles.

In fact, what this is saying is that if North Korea shared or provided that missile to Iran, Iran could hit any target in the continental United States, excluding Alaska and Hawaii. It could hit Los Angeles, San Francisco, you know, anywhere. And so that would be... And it's not far-fetched to say that there is that kind of cooperation because the North Koreans have become more active in their foreign policy. They've reportedly deployed 20,000 to 30,000 troops now to Belarus to potentially support Russian efforts to retake Kyiv. But I'm also sure that they are in touch with Iran as far as resisting this kind of, you know, U.S. imperialism. So that's just, you know, one other thing to file away, is they could have some options.

#Lawrence

And just to put some steel to that, as it were, we monitored one of the last, shall we say, really sophisticated ballistic missile tests of North Korea to the height of its telemetry. And the analysis afterwards showed just what Larry said. It showed that they finally had a ballistic missile, which they had been striving for for a long time, that, married up with their nuclear warhead, could arrive in Washington, D.C. That's from Korea, shot from Korea. Yeah, yeah.

#Nima

Larry, Vladimir Putin vowed to—he vows to respond to what Kyiv did to this college dormitory. They attacked, you know, civilians in Russia. So he has to. There is a lot of pressure on Vladimir Putin to respond to that. And Rubio yesterday said there is no talk going on between the United States and Russia. Everything is on pause. How do you see the situation? How do you see the way that Russia would respond to these sorts of attacks, considering Donald Trump on one side saying that he's going to withdraw troops from Germany, and on the other hand, he said just yesterday he's going to send 5,000 troops to Poland?

#Lawrence

What a formidable force going to Poland!

#Larry

That's just a speed bump. Yeah, look, I personally don't understand why the SBU, why the Ministry of Defense in Kyiv, why they're still standing. You know, Russia should use the Iskander and take them out, eliminate them. Maybe they'll do it now. There has, you know, the rhetoric from the Russian side has been recently expressed by Ambassador Polyansky and then Sergei Ryabkov, the deputy foreign minister. They've been quite clear that they're going to attack Europe. They are going to retaliate against Europe, and particularly the Baltic states, allowing their territory to be used to launch drones against Russia.

They are going to escalate this war. It's going to go outside the boundaries of Ukraine. It is going to involve Europe. This thing will escalate. And this latest attack, again, this attack on civilians and children in particular, it's reprehensible. There is absolutely no justification for it whatsoever. And so I don't think they're just going to do some sort of symbolic retaliation. I think it will be very significant, and it will mark an escalation in the process.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Lawrence

We are going to rue the day that we allowed Gaza to lead the world in discounting international law and war crimes. We are going to rue the day because we're creating a world where everything goes, and everyone is picking up on the precedent, and everyone is going to augment it, I think. And we're going to wind up with a truly Hobbesian world where everyone's hurling missiles at everyone else. Yeah. You may have seen that Lithuania made an absolute—you know, they said, "We'll take your nuclear weapons to us."

#Nima

Latvia.

#Lawrence

Yeah. I think it was Lithuania. At least that's what I got yesterday from a source that monitors those states in particular. And Larry probably gets these emails from Mike Krupa, too. Yeah, yeah, yeah. The Polish situation is pregnant with problems, too.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Lawrence

You've got one side of Poland that has some common sense with respect to both Germany and Moscow. And then you've got the other side of Poland that, you know, "Oh, send more, send more, 5,000. Oh, wonderful, wonderful."

#Nima

You're talking about Dvorksy and these people.

#Lawrence

Yeah, it's barely a reinforced brigade. It could stand up against a Russian element for about ten minutes.

#Larry

Yeah.

#Lawrence

Yeah.

#Nima

Larry, do you think the situation will escalate in Ukraine?

#Larry

Oh, yes. Yeah, I do. But the one that has the ability to escalate is Russia, not Ukraine. You know, what we're seeing from Ukraine are desperate acts. So, hey, just a reminder, I'm going to have to bail out of here in about a minute.

#Lawrence

They're proving what they are, Nima. They are truly proving what they are — the ones with Zelensky and around Zelensky. They are freaking Nazis.

#Nima

Okay. Larry, thank you. But I'm going to continue with Col. Wilkerson because I have something else with Col. Wilkerson to do.

#Larry

I don't blame you. You stay with the best anyway. All right, guys, we'll see you later. I will see you on Monday, and hopefully the world doesn't explode in the process. Awesome. I'll join that prayer. Bye-bye.

#Nima

Bye-bye. Colonel, what I want to talk about is the situation with Netanyahu. He recently, yesterday, published a video. Netanyahu claims that Israel made the United States, the U.S. civilization, possible. Here is what he said.

#Speaker 06

We are fighting today the battle that the Maccabees fought. They fought for the survival of the Jewish people and the Jewish faith, against an enemy that wanted to extinguish us, wipe us out from the face of the earth. We were fighting our battle, but we were also fighting the battle of civilization, because our civilization is based on the Judeo-Christian tradition. And if the Maccabees had failed, there'd be no Judaism, there would be no Judeo-Christian civilization. There would be no Maccabees. There would be no United States. There wouldn't be the civilization of freedom, the

respect for our common traditions, our common values. All of that would not have happened if it weren't for those five brave brothers. They actually made the whole difference. So that spirit animates these brave soldiers that are here today and their comrades.

#Lawrence

That's a condensation of history that is frankly absurd. And it's the kind of thing, I have to say, that in particular ultra-Zionists, and even those I would call Zionist-period Jews, propagate. It's a repudiation of the true history of the world and the human race, but it's a repudiation that's propagandistic, that's utilitarian for that race. And it is utilitarian and pregnant with dangerous possibilities for what the world really should be, because it should not be this Zionist conception of humanity. I mean, it's just in every respect possible, besides being a historical collection of lies, dangerous. That any breed, any peoples on this earth, any religion on this earth would claim that sort of "I am Adam, I am Eve" position and pretend it's real history is not only absurd, it's dangerous. And Netanyahu is the incarnation on earth today of that danger.

#Nima

Carl, did you watch the video that Ben Gvir published about the people?

#Lawrence

This is a man who was indicted in an Israeli court, as I understand it, and even was sentenced and went to jail, whom Netanyahu resurrected and brought out because he needed him and his people to form the coalition that would keep Netanyahu in power. Ben Gvir is a reprehensible, animal-like example, and Randy Fine is too, in New York, of what Netanyahu was just asserting is the master race. What's the difference between Hitler and Netanyahu in terms of what Netanyahu just said? We are the master race.

You vassals out there, like you Americans, wouldn't be here if this master race wasn't here securing everything for you. That's what he's saying. I mean, there's no difference between him and Adolf Hitler. I've said that all along. He and Hitler think alike, act alike, look alike. We've seen this before. We've seen this before. To a certain extent, we saw it in Italy with Mussolini. And we'll see it again. I'm sure that we could characterize some of the characters in the past who raped and slaughtered their way to power in the same vein. I'm not sure we'd call them the Maccabees, though.

#Nima

There were some repercussions in Israel. The Israeli foreign minister and other officials condemned what Ben Gvir did, not because of what he did, but because of the publication of the video.

#Lawrence

Right.

#Nima

He published that video showing what they're doing there. Right.

#Lawrence

Because it did damage to them. It did damage to their image in the world.

#Larry

Yeah.

#Lawrence

There are people in Europe. I love Spain. Spain jumped right on it. But there are people in Europe talking about canceling contracts. Yeah.

#Nima

But they don't care, Larry. In my opinion, they don't care about anybody. That's why Ben Gvir is treating people this way.

#Lawrence

If you go back and you look at Netanyahu's pronouncements, I can't recall exactly when it was, but it strikes me that it was several years ago, maybe even as many as four or five. One time he was pontificating like he was doing there, and he essentially said, I don't care anymore. I do not care about world opinion. I do not care about other countries' opinions, including my allies. I do not care. Israel is doing what Israel must do—words to that effect. And that's a statement of truth, I think, with regard to his beliefs. He doesn't care. This thing we were talking about this morning, this new memorandum of understanding we're contemplating to take the place of the old one.

It would be effective in 2018, and it would change all of the arms sales and national security dealings between Israel and the United States. And it opens up—first of all, it opens up a real vulnerability for our defense contractors because Israel has a direct line into their technological developments and such. Like, for example, we're saying we're going to give Australia, with regard to nuclear submarines—we'll never give them that. But it also hides everything with regard to arms sales, in essence, so that there's no visibility. The only visibility will be the defense committees of Congress, who don't give a damn anyway.

The responsible committees, the foreign affairs committees and such that implement the Leahy Law, for example, and other things like that, will not be there anymore. These arms sales will essentially take place in the dark. And the defense contractors will be in that dark with them, with the Israelis. This is a very insidious development. And I hope to heck the Congress grows up and gains some smarts and doesn't pass this kind of MOU. Not only that, the way the money passes back and forth has changed. It's changed in fundamental ways, if I'm listening to the briefing correctly. So these are things that Israel is under the covers trying to do right now.

And that speech there by Netanyahu was part and parcel of it because they don't want anybody supervising their arms sales and their machinations, national security-wise, with the United States. They don't want the United States Congress overlooking it. They don't want somebody like Josh Paul standing up and saying the Leahy Law, this, that, and the other. You know, you can't do this. They can't kill civilians indiscriminately with our weapons and not be reprimanded for it and not have the weapon sales cut off. No. No one would do anything about it. So Josh Paul left. He's right. And this will make it worse if we pass this new memorandum of understanding.

#Nima

Yeah. The bad news for Benjamin Netanyahu is that whatever happens in the Middle East, his worst enemy, Iran, is getting stronger.

#Lawrence

You got it. That may be not just the bait and waft for Netanyahu. It may be the thing that breaks his back and kills him.

#Nima

Yeah. Not only that, all these Arab states, GCC countries, who were supposed to have a better relationship with Israel, are leaning toward Tehran and new security arrangements.

#Lawrence

Yes. Isn't it odd how divine providence works sometimes to change the direction of the world? Yes. To quote some of them, Huckabee. Oh, Huckabee. Your God is failing, Huckabee. The real divine providence in the world is mad, angry, and is changing the whole warp and woof of global relations.

#Nima

Colonel, when it comes to Lebanon, do you think that we're going to have a new round of talks between Washington and the government in Lebanon? And how is that going to help the situation with the ceasefire, the not-so-called ceasefire? Because what's going on, considering the numbers—I'

ve mentioned that before—Hezbollah is hitting Iron Dome batteries. They're hitting each and every one. When you hit an Iron Dome battery, it seems that you can hit everything in Israel. That's why there has to be some sort of strategy on the part of the Israelis, or maybe the Trump administration helping them. What would that be? The continuation of the war as time goes by? Because they're talking about the southern part of Lebanon, making a dead zone—a zone without anybody living there. And the same is applicable to the northern part of Israel. And how is that going to, you know, the dynamic of these sort of two mindsets fighting each other, going to play out for Benjamin Netanyahu?

#Lawrence

I'll go back to 1982 again and say that the only way you're going to rectify that situation without making some real diplomatic concessions to Beirut—I mean real ones, not the usual ones we do, bend one arm behind their back, bend the other arm up over their head and say, "You will do what we tell you to do"—the only way is if we enter again the conflict in a significant way and offer forces for protecting and pursuing more formidable objectives with regard to Lebanon that nonetheless don't turn Lebanon over to Israel as the end product. The last time we tried that in 1982, we kind of got our ass handed to us, too. We got 243, as I recall, Marines killed in the barracks.

You may recall that—a couple of sailors in there too, I think. And we wound up, after relocating Arafat, ignominiously withdrawing ourselves, even though we had New Jersey slinging 16-inch shells into the Druze, into the mountains and other things going on. And you had Syrian forces in Lebanon. I heard a comment the other day that was really kind of stunning. A Lebanese said to me, it was better when we had the Syrians with us. Yeah, well, they weren't saying that then, but they're saying that now because they've looked at and identified and seen in their face the real enemy. The real enemy, as the Foreign Minister of Oman said, the real enemy in the region is Israel.

And they're seeing that right in their face now. To hell with the United States. We are in a pickle, and you've put us in this pickle to a certain extent because you're supporting that bastard who's attacking us in the south. I don't know where you go from there. Trump's got his hands full helping Israel to the point where you do what we did in '82 and come in and try to rescue them. And indeed, we did rescue them. We got them out. But we didn't do too well in Lebanon as we tried to linger and make the peace, or keep the peace, as it were. So I don't know where we're going with this, but it's not any good place. And what is Turkey going to do? Türkiye—I can't get used to saying that.

What are they going to do with all this happening just a short distance from them? I'm very surprised that Erdogan hasn't done something to this point, something that would be a lesson teacher to Bibi Netanyahu. I'm really surprised. There's got to be a lot of economic business going on behind the scenes that dissuades Erdogan from doing this. It was like Larry was saying about the bond sales and the bond purchases and Turkey needing this and needing that. Well, there are a lot

of things behind the scenes that you just don't know are going on that may be deterrents. But sooner or later, the geostrategic, geopolitical—call it what you will—the war situation has got to get on the Turks' mind.

You know, they just released a figure on their missile too. India had just released the Agni-5, I think it's called, with a 7,000-mile maximum range and a MIRV warhead on it, and, um, Pakistan, take note. But Pakistan is not that far away. Why do you need 7,000 kilometers? Oh, well, there are other people, there are other people too. Now Turkey's got a ballistic missile that it just fanfared and marched through the street. And this is a dangerous world we're allowing to develop. Very dangerous world. We're headed for testing these weapons. Putin may be just on the verge of doing it—maybe non-nuclear, but certainly with a missile that could be nuclear—to Kyiv.

#Nima

Just imagine, Larry, Pakistan, Turkey, Iran, and Israel come and say, "These are all our enemies. Let's take them out."

#Lawrence

Are you... Well, to a certain extent, the world is doing as it did roughly in 1913, 1914. It's lining up and choosing sides. And that tells you that... if it's lining up and choosing sides, there's some forecasting going on about the future. I tried to think the other day about how a global conflict might unfold or break out in some place like Kaliningrad or in some place like Poland, where the Ukraine conflict could get out of hand suddenly. And it's not hard to imagine it becoming a global conflict rather rapidly.

#Nima

Exactly.

#Lawrence

And it's not too hard to imagine it becoming nuclear rather rapidly. I mean, we have nine states with nuclear weapons in the world today, and a couple of them worry me very much—worry me. One of them is Israel, of course. So we have a regime without any treaties, a regime without anything to hold us back other than the old aspect that nuclear weapons are a deterrent. But it's becoming a case where nuclear weapons may be an incentive if you're really pissed off, like I suspect Moscow is right now, and you're convinced, as I think Putin is, that eventually you're going to have to go to war with NATO anyway. So why not start it and make the first stage a resounding victory for yourself and a message to the rest of the world? I don't know. Nuclear weapons are not the deterrent they once were, though, I don't think.

#Nima

They have a rationale. I hope that they're not going to go that far with nuclear weapons.

#Lawrence

Well, you also fold that into the idea that some of these people who are behind the scenes want to decrease the surplus population in the world, and what better method to do it if you can control it to a certain extent and you can direct it at those countries that you want to be eliminated? Yeah.

#Nima

Thank you. Thank you, Larry, for being with us today. It's a great pleasure.

#Lawrence

Sorry to be so pessimistic. I'm becoming Mr. Cassandra.

#Nima

Nothing is optimistic right now if you look at what's going on everywhere. Cuba is coming up, by the way. We didn't talk about Cuba. Cuba is coming up. Well, yeah.

#Lawrence

It's going to be a disaster, and I just know he's going to do it. I just know he's going to do it.

#Nima

The president of Cuba today said it's going to be a bloodbath if the United States tries to do something to Cuba.

#Lawrence

Yeah, I don't suspect that they'll just stand there and take it. And an operation like the one conducted in Venezuela would be doable in Cuba. But what will be the aftermath of it? And how would you deal with that aftermath? I wouldn't be surprised if the Cubans got in their boats and came to Miami. It's only 90 miles. It's a situation that's pregnant with possibilities, all of which are bad, especially with Trump in the chair. He might do it just to offset, he thinks, some of the negativism associated with his war in Iran by a spectacular victory over Cuba. What a spectacular victory that would be. And like you said, I think they'll fight to the last person there.

#Nima

I don't see Venezuela being a victory or any sort of success.

#Lawrence

You know, they just finally, yesterday, they finally—I think ExxonMobil, Exxon—I think they finally settled on a deal with Venezuela, finally. I don't know what the parameters of it are, but I can just imagine if it's Exxon. Maybe that's better than Chevron. Chevron is predatory to the max. Exxon at least seems to have a sense of diplomacy about the way it does its business. So maybe that's a good deal for Venezuela. I don't know. I haven't seen the deal, so I don't know what it pertains to.

#Nima

Yeah, thank you, Larry. See you soon. We're going to talk about it. Let's see what happens. Yeah.

#Lawrence

Let's hope. Let's hope and pray.

#Nima

Yeah, exactly.

#Lawrence

Take care.

#Nima

Take care.

#Lawrence

Bye-bye. Bye-bye.