

Scott Ritter: Iran Just HIT an MQ-9 & Opened Fire on an RQ-4 and F-35

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#Nima

Hi everybody, today is Wednesday, May 27, 2026, and our dear friend, our brother, Scott Ritter, is here with us. Welcome back, Scott.

#Scott

Thanks for having me.

#Nima

Let me start, Scott, with the confrontation between Iran and the United States. Finally, everybody was talking about negotiations, the talks, the messages between the two sides. We had the Iranian team in Qatar talking with the Qatari government. So, in the last two or three days, we had some sort of confrontation. One of them was that American fighter jets hit two of these speedboats in the Persian Gulf. The outcome was the killing of four sailors. And on the other hand, the Iranians hit an MQ-9 drone. Then they fired on an RQ-9 and an F-35. There are footages of those attacks, those, you know, shootings on the MQ-9 and the F-35. They have published some footage of that.

But when you look at the situation between Iran and the United States, there are no real negotiations going on, I would say, because the two sides are talking to each other via Pakistan or the Qatari government, something like that. But maybe, I don't know if there is any phone call behind the scenes. I cannot confirm that because I have seen no news in the Persian media talking about that. That's why I assume they're only sending messages back and forth through the Pakistani government. What is your understanding of what's going on?

#Scott

That's my understanding. It's a negotiation. It's just not your classic negotiation. How else do you expect the United States and Iran to speak to each other today? You know, Donald Trump is an insane individual, literally demonstrably suffering from narcissistic personality disorder, the most

malignant variety. We don't have a president; we have a cult of personality. This is all about Donald and how things impact him. Then you have an Iranian government. It's all about Iran and about geopolitical reality, and they live in the real world. So anytime you blend the real world with a fantasy world, you're going to have a gap between the two. And that gap is going to be impossible to bridge directly. So you need dream interpreters, I guess. And that's where Pakistan and Qatar fall into place.

Their job is to try to cobble together some sort of understanding between these two entities that can bring about a shared objective. But the problem is, there is no shared objective. Donald Trump's objectives are purely political in nature, how they impact him here at home. Iran's objectives are purely selfish in nature, to be honest. They have every right to be selfish, but it's about how this benefits Iran. Iran, which is the aggrieved party. Iran, which was attacked — a surprise attack, an act of perfidy by the United States and Israel on February 28th. And, you know, never the two shall meet again. I mean, even if a temporary agreement is reached, understand that even some of the text that the Iranian media has been publishing talks about issues being pushed off.

Anytime you get Donald Trump to push something out, it just means that you're given a window of opportunity to vacillate, change his mind, interfere, disrupt. And the actions that you speak of are, you know, I think part and parcel of what's going to be the new reality. I think both parties understand there needs to be freedom, or relative freedom, of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz. What the United States will get out of it is the flow of energy, which will alleviate a global economic crisis. What Iran will get out of it is the fact that they're going to be allowed to collect an environmental tax, or whatever they want to call it. And I think that's pretty much the only agreement we're going to get, which is an agreement which I don't know if it will ever be manifested in writing, because I don't think Donald Trump is agreement-capable.

He can't afford to be seen as losing this war. And yet he lost this war. And so I think that's where we're at right now. All parties are focused on how to keep shipping flowing through the Strait of Hormuz. What happened with the downing is a clash designed for the United States to imprint itself, to say we're still here, we're relevant, we're somehow large and in charge. But at some point in time, we're going to have to stand down and allow traffic to go through. But that doesn't mean there's going to be an agreement on some of the more difficult things — the nuclear program, ballistic missiles, Lebanon, ceasefires, all that. It's hard to say where we're going. It's impossible. Because again, I've said this before.

You've heard me say it, and I'll say it again. You can't expect people like me, you, and others to get into the mind of a madman, literally an insane individual. Donald Trump is mentally ill, suffers from mental illness, and therefore he cannot be predicted. You cannot apply normal, you know, cause-effect rationality to what he does. His social media posts are all over the place. The only consistency appears to be his ability to manipulate the markets in a way that is beneficial to insiders who are aware of what he's going to post, when he's going to post it. Otherwise, nothing he's doing is to the benefit of the United States. That's a statement of fact.

#Nima

Here is what he said moments ago about the Strait of Hormuz, and his shocking comment on Omar. Here is what he said.

#Speaker 03

Iran wants control of the Strait of Hormuz. Would you accept a short-term deal that allows Iran and Oman to control the Strait, and would they have to open it immediately, or would you be open to that happening over a period of time?

#Speaker 04

No, the Strait's going to be open to everybody. And who would control it? It's international waters. Nobody's going to control it. We're going to watch over it. We'll watch over it, but nobody's going to control it. That's part of the negotiation that we have. They would like to control it. Nobody's going to control it. It's international waters, and Oman will behave just like everybody else, or we'll have to blow them up.

#Nima

It's unbelievable. Oman is a country that has nothing to do with any war, and he's threatening the government in Oman.

#Scott

Let's just hit rewind. Donald Trump is a mentally ill individual. All right. Think of the narcissism that's encompassed in everything he just said. "We will watch over it." Really? Is that your job, Donnie baby? Who appointed you to be the guardian of the Strait of Hormuz? This is his own little fantasy world. You tried that, Donald, and Iran slap-spit you. You lost. You can't open it up. You don't have any ability. You're sitting there with a Secretary of War who got his ass kicked and a Secretary of State slash National Security Advisor who gave you some of the worst advice ever. You're surrounded by losers, and you are the ultimate loser. I mean, literally, staple an L to this guy's forehead.

Don't pay attention to anything this guy says, because here's the reality of it: six hours from now, he'll post something different. In six hours from now, he'll post something different. The man is a lunatic—a raving, mad, insane individual. Do you think—I mean, you know Iran—do you think Iran has woken up? "Oh, shit, we're in trouble now. Donnie's mad at us. We better do something." You think the Omanis went, "Whoa, damn, he's going to blow us up"? He's not going to do anything

against Oman. Nothing. Nothing. These are empty threats. He's got nothing left. He already threw a Sunday punch. You know, he got into the ring with Mike Tyson, and he gave it his best shot, hit him in the jaw, and Mike Tyson went, "Let's go."

That's it. That was your best punch. You ain't going to knock Mike Tyson out. You're not going to knock Iran out. That's the reality. Many in the United States can't wake up and accept this reality. It's true. We lost the war, and we can't win this war. We're not going to reverse course. The time it would take for us to build and assemble the forces necessary to have a meaningful impact is prohibitively long. Meanwhile, all Iran has to do is squeeze the Strait of Hormuz and choke the life out of the global economy, which will bring about a general collapse, to include a collapse in the United States, which would make it impossible to generate the forces that we need to for you. Iran holds all the cards. That's the reality.

#Nima

How do you see the pressure from the Israeli government? Ben-Gvir today said Donald Trump cannot make a bad deal, and Israel is not going to accept that. We know that the Trump administration—you remember when this administration was elected—we were talking about Tulsi Gabbard, the people who were more rational in the Trump administration. Those people are gone, mostly. And we... I would say the vice president of the United States is somehow disappearing from the scene. We haven't heard that much from J.D. Vance. It's been a while. But what is happening to the Trump administration? And what do we know about the leverage the Israeli government has on the Trump administration?

#Scott

Well, you know, the Israeli government believes that it's bought and paid for the United States, and it has. Bought us, paid for it, and we're supposed to dance to their tune. That's the way the relationship works. They give you a lot of money, and then they tell you what to do when it comes to Israel, and you do it. Contractual relationship, straight up. They bought Congress, spent \$100 million last election cycle to buy Congress. They're working on buying Congress again, \$30 million to unseat Thomas Massie. They're spending more money to try and control races. And Donald Trump continues to be surrounded by people bought and paid for by Israel, especially Marco Rubio, \$200 million from Adelson's widow.

Gets you a Secretary of State. So Ben-Gvir, I think, believes what he says. He believes it. He doesn't know a damn thing about the United States of America. Because first of all, when we talk about politics, the only thing that matters is money. And of course, the Israelis have thrown a lot of money to buy American politicians. But once you put an American politician in office, they want to stay in office. Now, Israel's leveraged their ability to manipulate money to maintain control over that

process as well. If you don't do what we want, we'll primary you. We'll spend money and put somebody up against you, and then you have to run against them and all that. All right, that's good and dandy.

Most people don't want to be primaried, so they play the Israeli game because there's no downside. The American people have shown that there literally is no downside to being pro-Israel. You know, the vast majority of the people that are pro-Israel get reelected year after year after year after year. No downside. Until Israel starts a war that we lose. And there's a threat of general global economic collapse that impacts the United States. We're back to money. Remember what I told you? The only thing that counts in American politics is money. Bill Clinton, James Carville, his campaign manager back in 1992, I think, said it best. Yellow sticker on the door of the war room: "It's the economy, stupid."

That's the only thing that gets American politicians elected. No American politician gets elected on Israel. Israel is a supporting factor. Every American politician gets elected on the economy. Ultimately, it comes down to how the American people feel about their wallet and their bank account when they go to the election booth. That's it. Everything else is window dressing. If you have two sides that are playing the same economic cards, you know, then you can pick, you know, gun control, abortion, Israel, and these things to help tip it over. But the bottom line is, it's the party that the Americans feel is going to generate more money in their bank account at the end of each month. And Donald Trump's in trouble right now.

Because he's in the process of destroying the economy of an entire nation. And Israel's in trouble. Ben-Gvir may not recognize this, but Israel's being blamed, rightfully so, for getting us involved in this war. So when people say, "Donald Trump, why did this happen?" Donald Trump's going to say, "Benjamin Netanyahu made me do it." Ben-Gvir has no control over Donald Trump. None. When the day comes when Donald Trump is looking at his political legacy, which means if he screws this up—impeachment, perhaps conviction—and he's weighing that on the grand scales of life with Ben-Gvir and Israel, guess who's going to lose?

Ben-Gvir and Israel. It's the easiest thing in the world. It's the economy, stupid. The economy stinks anyway. George Herbert Walker Bush won the Gulf War. Great victorious leader. Man, he was looking good. There's no way. I mean, we won that in '91. How could he lose in '92? How could he lose in '92? Impossible to lose. "Read my lips: no new taxes." And then he put on new taxes. And that was the end of him. Winning a war didn't matter. Being the best national security president there didn't matter. It was the economy, stupid. Bill Clinton was right. It's just the way it is. You know who knows this? Ben-Gvir's boss, Benjamin Netanyahu.

He gave an interview where he said, we have to decouple ourselves from the United States financially within 10 years. Because he sees... You don't have to be a weatherman to know which way the wind blows. He sees the weather. He sees what's happening, and he sees the United States fully. Sixty percent of Americans have already become disenchanted with Israel, don't support it

fully. That number is going to get worse as the economy grows worse, and we look at who's to blame for this—Israel. And he recognizes at some point in time, America is going to cut the umbilical cord. Ben-Gvir is wrong. Israel can't dictate squat to the United States unless the United States wants to be dictated to.

Meaning that if it's good to have your money and get elected, and it doesn't cost me anything meaningful, I'll do it. But the moment it costs me, the moment I have to pay a price domestically, politically, for supporting your failed little nation, we'll cut it in a heartbeat. Cut it in a heartbeat. And so Ben-Gvir is dead wrong. Netanyahu knows the truth, that eventually America is going to cut Israel off. And if Ben-Gvir wants to play stupid games in a period of immediate political crisis for the president of the United States, who's looking at a disaster in the midterms, he'll find out the hard way that Israel has no cards in this game, none whatsoever.

#Nima

Smotrich yesterday said that Benjamin Netanyahu forced the United States into this war. And what else can the United States do for Israel, Scott? I would say this is the final goal for Israel—the United States attacking Iran. What else can they do? What do they want from the United States? I don't understand it. I don't understand when they say, "We want to continue the war." What does that mean for Israel? And how is that going to help them?

#Scott

Well, first of all, this is the last—if this was a computer game, we're at the final boss. Iran's the final boss. There is no other boss. The final boss is Iran. And you can't fight the final boss without the United States. You have to have the United States as an ally. So do you think Israel is going to admit defeat and just walk away? No. They're going to keep saying, America, you have to stay and finish the job, stay and finish the job, stay and finish the job. But they didn't do their homework right. They sold this war falsely, wrongly. I mean, they got Donald Trump to believe that if you killed Ali Khamenei, Iran would collapse and all the other problems would solve themselves, and that this would happen within a matter of days.

And sure enough, on day one, we killed Ali Khamenei. Iran didn't collapse—just the opposite. And now everything Israel told the United States turns out to be a lie. And Donald Trump's paying the political price for it. That's the reality. What does Israel want? They have no plan B, because a plan B means that you don't get to beat the big boss, which means you don't get to win the game. And the game is Greater Israel. That's the name of the game—Greater Israel. If you don't beat the big boss, then you're going to have to make concessions everywhere, and you're going to have to fall into a different game called Preserving Little Israel.

But the cost you're going to pay for failing, for gambling to take on the final boss and losing, is you will probably change the demographics of the region dramatically because of the difficulty of

continuing to live in Israel. People will flee, and you're going to have a different game called a one-state solution named Palestine. So Israel, you know, they're in dire straits right now—literally dire straits. And, you know, fat genocidal maniacs like Ben Gvir and Smotrich will continue to spout crap and nonsense. And ultimately, they're going to pay the price politically. I mean, I wouldn't want to be an Israeli today. Let me put it that way. This is not going to be a good decade for them.

#Nima

Here is what Donald Trump said about the Abraham Accords.

#Speaker 04

To have the countries we were talking about—Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, and the others—we'd like to have them immediately join. And Steve Witkoff is working on that with Jared and some others. But we'd like to have them join the Abraham Accords. It'll be historic if they do it. I think they owe that to us, to be honest. I think, because that really would be a tremendous sign. And I think those countries owe it to us.

#Scott

They owe it to us because we got them involved in a war that we lost. We promised them security that we couldn't deliver. We created a situation where they are now living under the threat of national extinction because of America. They owe it to us to buy into a policy that's all about Palestinian genocide and the elimination of any possibility of a Palestinian state, shifting the blame away from Israel onto the Gulf Arab nations. That's what they owe us. Donald Trump is the most—again, he's insane. Okay? We have to stop treating him like he's a normal human being. That's an insane man there. No rational human being can make that claim. They owe it to us? They don't owe anything to you, Donald.

None. I mean, do you understand the insanity that's inherent in that statement? This man is not well. And the fact that Hegseth and Rubio sit there compliantly, you know, nodding—and they're not well either. They're facilitators of insanity. You know, there was a time when people made fun of Joe Biden for, you know, cruelty to the elderly by keeping Joe Biden in play when he's clearly out of it. Well, we have a situation now where we have people who are facilitating the mentally ill. And most people would say that's abuse. But it is abuse of a nation, abuse of the world, by this clinically insane individual who thinks that he's owed something that nobody ever bought into in a major way.

I mean, the Saudis have clearly linked the Abraham Accords to Palestinian statehood. And if you're not going to give Palestine statehood, then why do you think the Saudis are going to do something for you? He's a sick man. Donald Trump is a sick man. He's not well. And unfortunately, people aren't executing the 25th Amendment. He continues to function as the chief executive. And therefore, this sick man, you know, when he tweets or posts and when he speaks, we have to listen

to him. But try to breathe common sense and rational, you know, analytical structures into what he's saying. You can't do that. You can't do that. Nothing he says makes sense. He lives in a fantasy world.

#Nima

We know during the Biden administration, we talked a lot about the war in Ukraine. We knew who was in charge, who's doing this, who's doing that—Antony Blinken, Jake Sullivan, Victoria Nuland—all these people who were somehow in charge of some sort of policies when it came to Ukraine and foreign policy. Right now, many people are asking who's in charge in the Trump administration. Is it Donald Trump himself? Because look at Pete Hegseth today. I don't believe that this guy is making any sort of policy, but, you know, following the orders of Donald Trump.

Marco Rubio, the same. You see no sign of Marco Rubio's policies when it comes to Ukraine, when it comes to the Middle East. He's not even negotiating on either of these two fronts. And we've seen him in Armenia signing a deal. Nobody seems to understand that. But after all, you don't see Rubio participating in major issues of the foreign policy of the United States. Who's in charge? Is it the Israeli lobby, by the influence they have on Donald Trump? Is it Donald Trump himself deciding about these things? What is your assessment of that?

#Scott

Well, it's not the Israelis. The Israeli lobby got us involved in this war, but we lost the war, and Israel no longer has a vote. I mean, let's just be clear about it. Israel has no vote. They can scream, they can shout, but they're irrelevant. This is about domestic American politics. That's what drives Donald Trump. If he can't sell it to a domestic American audience, he pays a political price. So let's forget about Israel. I mean, again, let's talk, you know, Hegseth. Hegseth promoted a war that can't be won. He should be paying the price.

Hegseth is sitting there listening to Donald Trump. You know, NATO didn't come to our assistance, so we're going to start drawing down in NATO. And we're going to do—Hegseth's like, okay. And we also are facing a monetary shortfall. We're out of money. We don't have any money left. We're putting a heavy brigade out of Texas onto ships, sending them off to Poland to do this nine-month rotation. It's going to cost us an arm and a leg. And Trump's unhappy with Europe. We're canceling it. Pete Hegseth, we're canceling the 4,200 troops heading to Poland.

#Speaker 04

We're canceling it.

#Scott

Not going to happen. The heavy brigade isn't going. It's done. And everybody's like, wow, look at the United States actually taking, you know, action based upon statements made by the president. Then the president comes out and goes, nah, we're transferring 5,000 troops to Poland. Now, imagine being the Poles going, what the hell is going on here? Imagine being the average American who doesn't know anything about anything, because the average American is going, 4,200, 5,000, I mean, it's a write-off, right? No, the Poles know the truth. So those 4,200 guys, part of that rotational brigade, are part of a negotiated systemic approach to America providing military assistance to a larger NATO deterrence posture in the region.

So every nine months, we rotate in a heavy armored brigade. And we have status of forces agreements built to do just that, that are very comprehensive because we have to bring our ships into Hamburg. We have to offload the materiel, then get it to Poland. So we've negotiated ways to make this happen—customs-free transfer, the whole thing. Then they get in there, and we have status of forces agreements on where they stay, how they operate. This brigade doesn't stay as a brigade. We send it off to train in the north. We send it down to train in the south. We move it all over Europe. And then nine months later, it rotates out.

Another brigade rotates in, and we keep a heavy brigade there. You know, that was the idea. The 5,000 troops that Trump's talking about is a brigade, a Stryker brigade, I believe, that's based in Germany. It's a Stryker brigade. It's light armor. It ain't a heavy armor brigade, but it's 5,000 troops. There is no status of forces agreement with Poland to do that. You can't just make it interchangeable. We're talking not temporary rotation, we're talking about permanent relocation, which means now we need the kind of status of forces agreement that we have with Germany, negotiated over the long term. What happens to the families that live there?

Do we now build base housing? Who's going to pay for the base housing? We're talking about billions of dollars of infrastructure that they have to put in before you can begin to think about transferring these 5,000 people. And more importantly, Congress has to approve all this, and Congress hasn't been consulted on this whatsoever. Even Trump loyalists are saying, we never heard about this before. It ain't going to happen. So what Poland's seeing, the reality from the Polish perspective is, we ain't getting 4,200 troops, and those 5,000 troops ain't ever going to show up here, so we're getting nothing. Nothing. That's the reality of Trump policymaking.

This is the insanity of the system. It's just crazy stuff. Look at Mike Pompeo. He was Secretary of State and National Security Advisor. I mean, he's supposed to be Henry Kissinger-like. He received a phone call from Lavrov, and Pompeo said, I don't really like Lavrov. He said, you're going to take it. Okay, I'm taking it. Then Lavrov says, this is what's going to happen to Kiev. This message needs to get to the president. Pompeo says, well, you can't talk to me that way. You're not allowed to threaten people. Pompeo says, I'll get it to the president. Because this is the reality. Donald Trump has literally neutered his cabinet. Cut their balls right off. Sorry for the language, but that's what neutering is.

You know, he's emasculated them. None of these people play the role of a traditional cabinet. The only person who tried to, Tulsi Gabbard, had to resign. Now, ostensibly for the health of her husband, and I'm not denigrating that. It's real. But, you know, people have managed with sick relatives to stay in office when they're feeling rough. But Trump was unhappy with her because she dared contradict him on some big-ticket items like Iran and its nuclear program. And she was disinclined to participate in broader discussions about Ukraine, about the war in Iran, etc. So she resigned. You can't cut off her balls because she doesn't have any. And yet, as a woman, she has bigger balls than everybody else in the cabinet.

She's more of a man than half the men there because at least she stood up for something and had integrity, and ultimately, confronted with the failure of the president to live up to his duties and responsibilities as commander in chief, she did the honorable thing and resigned, you know. All of these cabinet members need to resign or invoke the 25th Amendment and get rid of this crazy man, but they're not going to do that. Who's in charge? I'd like to say Donald Trump, except he's insane. So nobody's in charge. Literally nobody's in charge. You can't say Donald Trump because he changes every six seconds. That's what happens when you have an insane man, a schizophrenic narcissist, who you can literally get to make a decision simply by threatening his ego. Do you understand how dangerous this is? How easily manipulated this man is?

#Nima

What is your understanding, Scott, of the battlefield between Israel and Lebanon, basically in the southern part of Lebanon? Because it shows we are witnessing various footages coming out of the southern part. They're hitting Israeli soldiers' communication systems, you know, Iron Dome batteries, they're hitting everything. They tried to do something about, you know, some sort of protection for the equipment they have in the southern part of Lebanon. It seems that that has failed.

Just keeping their soldiers in a safe place in the southern part of Lebanon is becoming one of the greatest challenges that the IDF is facing right now. And what is your understanding of that? Because yesterday they said the yellow line, and we're going to cross the yellow line they drew in the southern part of Lebanon. And it doesn't seem that they're going to be able to, you know, hit these FPV drones because they're getting out of hand for Israel. They don't know how to deal with that. What is your understanding of Israel and their policies in the southern part of Lebanon?

#Scott

Well, I mean, Israel wants to defeat Hezbollah. That's a strategic objective. They've been working on that on a number of fronts. But ultimately, to defeat Hezbollah, you have to win on the battlefield. And Israel right now is stymied on the yellow line. They are stuck there. Every time their forces attempt to push through it, they get beat hands down by Hezbollah. I mean, the Radwan forces are better than the Israeli Defense Forces when it comes to a stand-up fight. Israel is trying to mass

forces and do a breakthrough. But the problem with massing forces is mass requires sustainability. You have to bring logistics in to create the potential of the mass to move forward.

Then you have to sustain it with continuous logistics provisions. And that means all you have to do is take a look at where the yellow line is and draw a line back to Israel where the logistics bases are, and they have to get equipment from there, material from there, push it forward through occupied Lebanon. And again, look at the map. It's difficult terrain. It's got limited lines of communication that are predictable. They create funnels. And yet, what Hezbollah is doing right now is employing FPV drones not only to beat down the Israelis on the front lines, but more importantly, to control up to 20, 30, 40 kilometers deep.

You have FPV drones right now operating inside Israel, you know, taking targets out, but more importantly, interdicting the sustainability, which means you can't do an offense. I can't run an offensive operation with sputtering logistics, because when I commit, I'm committing. I'm telling you to push forward, and there must be reinforcing capability, supporting capability, sustaining pressure on the enemy. The moment you stop sustaining pressure on the enemy, the enemy is up and they're able to counterattack, pinch off, counterstrike, disrupt, and your offensive sputters out.

Welcome to the reality of modern war. And so what Hezbollah is doing right now is, as Israel tries to push forward, they're breaking up the sustainability with these FPV attacks—hitting logistics, hitting resupply, hitting force structure—and Israel doesn't have a solution to it. Hezbollah is just learning how to do this, first of all. They have some, but it's not like an overwhelming number. They haven't come in with a drone swarm yet. They're just learning how to do this. And you saw early on with some of the videos how they're tentative. They come in a little hesitant in what they're doing, etc.

They're getting better. They're more and more decisive. I will tell you that if this was Russian drone operators or even Ukrainian drone operators operating with the resources available to either Russia or Ukraine, the IDF would be wiped off the battlefield, eliminated in totality, because it doesn't know how to operate in this environment. And Hezbollah is getting better and better and better and better, and the Israelis don't have a solution. Maybe they will get a solution at some point in time. Solutions are there, but it requires force structure.

You have to develop your own UAV branch, and you have to train them, equip them, have doctrine, have tactics, and make sure everybody's trained up on it. Israel hasn't even gotten off the ground. Hezbollah now has taken some important steps. But now imagine if you're in the United States or any NATO country and you want to take on the Russians. You don't stand a chance. None. You'll never get out of the forward operating positions. You'll be dead before you know it because Russia is drone dominant. Ukraine has drone capabilities that the West doesn't have. Israel has nothing to counter the Hezbollah drone superiority that they enjoy at this point in time.

#Nima

Scott, one of the main reasons we're not talking about the war in Ukraine is because Donald Trump has created huge chaos in the Middle East, which has influenced the global economy. And everyone, every one of us — I'm here in Brazil — my economy has been hit by the crisis in the Persian Gulf with the Strait of Hormuz. We know what has happened to our economy and how prices are increasing here in Brazil, for example. So that's why many people want to know what's going on in the Middle East.

That's a huge problem, in my opinion, when you look at what's going on in Ukraine, because the escalation is going on and on with the drone attacks, Ukrainian drone attacks on civilians in Russia, which somehow is escalating. Who's providing these drones? We know the Europeans are doing that. Ukrainians themselves are producing some of them. And the outcome of this drone production is new escalation. That's why Russia used again a Russian missile in Ukraine. How dangerous is the situation getting on the battlefield in Ukraine between Russia and Ukraine?

#Scott

Well, on the battlefield, first of all, you have to separate the two. There's a battlefield reality, and then there's this other reality taking place. The Ukrainian long-range drone operations are having some impact on Russia, but it's primarily psychological — psychological warfare, mental warfare, people would call it — trying to instill notions of impotence, to sow disillusionment with Vladimir Putin, etc. It's not playing to the liberal elites of Russia. They don't exist anymore. They're not politically empowered. They're playing to the true patriots, the people that want to win this war, who are now getting the feeling that Russia can't win this war, that Putin won't win this war, doesn't know how to win this war. That's what these long-range drone attacks are doing.

So they're not having a militarily significant impact. They're having a mentally significant impact, therefore a politically significant impact. And they crossed the red line. They struck a girls' school. You know, at the girls'—that is, a teachers' school—primarily girls died. I think three guys died as well. But they're students, teenage students. Had they done this a month ago or two months ago? Remember, the Ukrainians went into Kursk and slaughtered, butchered hundreds of Russian elderly, innocent civilians whose only crime was they couldn't evacuate a village long enough. So when the Nazis came in—literal Nazis came in—they raped them, they murdered them, they dismembered their bodies, they left their bodies to rot.

And the Russians have documented everything because these idiot Nazis went in there and they filmed the rapes, they filmed the murders on their cell phones, and then they went out and got killed by the Russians, who captured the cell phones and can document the crimes. But that didn't get Russia to change the paradigm. Putin has been running a very well-balanced war that he's winning, by the way. I don't care what pro-Ukrainian social media says. The facts are the facts. Putin has stabilized Russia's economic situation, flipped the script, has a growing economy that's completely

mobilized when it comes to the defense industry, churning out the weapons necessary. And he has a sound, stable geopolitical base through diplomacy to have China and others together on pursuing a multipolar world and got China to recognize that Ukraine is to Russia as Taiwan is to China.

Therefore, China will never walk away from Russia on this issue. This is all a victory that could only happen if Putin was very pragmatic and patient on the battlefield. He didn't want to get sucked into overreacting in a way that undid the diplomatic support, disrupted the economic development or recovery, and weakened him overall. You could win on the battlefield but lose strategically. Putin has been slowing it down on the battlefield, winning strategically. But the problem is that this attack at the school, at this point in time, was the straw that broke the camel's back. It just turned out to be the story that the Russian people were no longer willing to stomach. And this had political ramifications, and Vladimir Putin's government is now taking decisive action.

Let me explain what has just happened. Ukraine lost the war. NATO lost the war. Europe lost the war. You will not win. They will not win. It's impossible to win because Russia now views this as existential in nature. We're going to be looking at the erasure of Ukraine — the physical erasure of Ukraine. You know, the head of the State Duma on defense gave an interview where he expanded upon the statements made by the Foreign Ministry and the Defense Ministry. But basically, what's about to happen to Ukraine is going to continue until Ukraine accepts unconditional surrender. That's it. So Russia's made that choice now. It's no longer a debate. It's no longer a discussion. We don't have to debate what did Sergei Karaganov mean or what did so-and-so mean. We now know — at least what Russia says. Now, we can find out that Russia is all talk, no action.

I don't think they are, but I think you're going to wake up tomorrow seeing a completely different reality on the ground, or wake up soon. Russia has given sufficient notice for people to leave Kiev. I think 48 hours is more than enough notice. So we'll see what happens tonight. It could happen very soon. But it's not just a reaction. It won't be a reaction. I think you're going to see a whole bunch of reactions. I think you're going to see a whole bunch of capabilities brought in. And this is going to be sustained. It isn't going to let up. This isn't going to be one and done. This is the end of Ukraine. And if Europe wants to play ball, it'll be the end of Europe. I think Russia's at that point right now where they're done playing stupid games with stupid people. That's where we are.

#Nima

Do you think that the war would go to Europe because of the support, because of the way that they're producing arms?

#Scott

It's gone to Europe. What do you mean, will it go to Europe? Europe is an active participant in this conflict. So the war will go to Europe. Europe wants to play. I mean, it's amazing. Europe keeps going, "We want war. We want it. We want to go to war. France, we're ready for war. England,

we're ready for war. Germany, we're really ready for war. NATO, we're ready for war. The Baltics, we're ready for war. Not just ready, but we want war. We're looking for war. We will be at war. We are in war." That is a quote from Pistorius, the German defense minister: "We are at war with Russia." Well, hey, guys, you don't have to ask for it once. You want a war?

You'll get the war. And they're going to get the war because once Russia begins the erasure of Ukraine, you're going to see that strings are attached to those people who continue to sustain Ukraine's elements. If Ukraine keeps launching drones, and, you know, Zelensky has promised a big month in June, a big month in June—I mean, he's going to attack everything. The British are giving him drones. The Germans are giving him drones. Everybody's giving him drones. NATO is giving him intelligence. And he's going to just blanket Russia with drones. Well, Russia is going to erase Ukraine. We know that's happening. But then they will start to erase Europe.

Europe made that choice. Now, the only way Europe can get out of it is to say, oh, we were wrong. We don't want war anymore. We're not looking for war. And you're starting to see that panic come out of the Baltics because the Baltics recognize they've gone a little too far, and they're sort of left hanging right there. That's why you have this group coming in, talking, "We're going to defend the Baltics." But what they're really saying is, stop allowing Ukraine to use your country as a corridor, because I can guarantee you one thing: I'm going to be in Russia this time next week attending the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum. It's a big deal—bigger than Davos. Number of people coming, etc. If Ukraine launches drone attacks to disrupt the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, it'll even get worse for Ukraine.

But moreover, any nation that facilitates the transit of Ukrainian drones that strike St. Petersburg during this time period or at any time going forward is also going to pay the ultimate price. Naryshkin, the head of the Russian intelligence service, has identified, I think, seven decision-making centers related to Ukrainian drone operations on the soil of Latvia. And everybody's coming together—oh, you can't talk, it's not really happening—but they all know what the truth is. The Latvians know what the truth is. And with this drone thing, the Latvians are saying, we've got to stop this. And they're saying, you've got to stop this because Russia will take them out. We just have to look at Russian production. Russia said they went into serial production of a drone in August of last year.

Let's call August a null month. They started, but they didn't get it. September, October, November, December, January, February, March, April, May—nine months. Now, let's say the low range of Geraniks that can be produced is five a month. Nine times five is 45. So there are 45 Geraniks. Russia has fired three. There are 42 left out there. I say that the production could go up to 25 a month, based upon my experience, direct observation at Votkinsk. But it probably isn't, because there are competing resources through the Yars, which incorporates elements that are also with the Geranik. So you can't, you know, rob Peter to pay Paul. So let's say instead of 25, they're producing 12. That's a good median number—12. Nine times 12 is 108. It's not 108. Was I right?

#Nima

Yeah. 108. 108. You're right.

#Scott

Marine math. I mean, come on. Yeah, 108.

#Nima

I said 118 first, but I was like, no, that can't be right. Yeah, 108. But you hit it right after that.

#Scott

Because every once in a while it clicks. But the point—because I'm counting on my fingers—but... my point is, 108 is totally different than 42 in terms of capacity. The other thing is, Russia doesn't rush ahead of its capability. They don't get ahead of their skis, so to speak. When Russia makes a decision, they have the resources to back it up. All along, people go, "Russia's going to run out of missiles." I'm like, "Russia will never run out of missiles." Once Russia agrees, it goes on this. That's because a decision has been made that we can sustain this activity and sustain the feed into this activity without sacrificing overall strategic capabilities.

That's how the Russians think. Unlike the United States, we've got war in Iran, and we ran through everything, had no production, we had to steal everything, and we've weakened the whole world. We are the opposite of Russia. Russia doesn't work the way we work. Russia works differently. So for Russia now to commit to the erasure of Ukraine and to retain the capacity to launch debilitating strikes against Europe, I'm thinking that means their production level is higher than five a month. I could be wrong.

#Speaker 04

I don't know.

#Scott

We know also that they have other systems that haven't been publicized. The Russians have bragged about this. They said there are things, there's talk, whispers about an Iskander 2.0, which implies it's better than 1.0. We know that they have, you know, modern versions of the KH-101 missile, which is something pretty cool. I'd have to see the whole thing, but it appears that it was coming in and got intercepted, got knocked off, and then corrected and continued its mission. And

we know that coming in, they're launching countermeasures that are sucking Patriots out. But they also have the Iskanders, the standard Iskander-Ms. They have the Iskander-Ks, long-range cruise missiles.

They've built those, again, with countermeasures. The Russians just have a lot of systems available. They could even employ the Yars with Avangard non-nuclear hypersonic maneuvering warheads to come in and hit other things. What game does Europe want to play? Russia is ready to play that game. I don't think Russia makes this decision because the Russians think through things, cause and effect relationships. And they don't make this decision lightly, which means they've thought it through. They have a plan. They have contingency plans. They have the resources to implement these contingency plans. Meanwhile, Europe has nothing, literally nothing.

They don't even have 4,200 American troops coming in, because Pete Hague just said, no, we're canceling that. It's amazing. But half that equipment is already put on ships. Now they have to offload the ships. They'd actually sent men and women to Poland as an advance party. They have to come home. And the disruption—I've been in the military—when a unit deploys, that means they've already taken all their leave, or, you know, they've moved their families. Many of them moved their families because, you know, you can't have your wife with a newborn baby sitting in a base house. So you've relocated your wife home.

You've done a whole bunch of stuff, put a whole bunch of money down. They're life-changing decisions. And now, nope, it all isn't going to happen. And now they have to get a training schedule back up. Schools were canceled. Schools were—the chaos that was done. This is why Pete Hegseth is the worst Secretary of Defense in the history of Secretaries of Defense, because of the chaos that he has created for these soldiers. You think they want to reenlist? This is life-ruining stuff to some of these soldiers. He doesn't care. Trump doesn't care. We care about our troops. They don't care anything about the troops at all. Nothing.

#Nima

Scott, before wrapping up, I remember Tom Wilkerson once said that the most dangerous country in Europe is Poland because of some irrational people in that country who are running the show—by the way, who are policymakers in Poland. One of them is Sikorski. And here is what he said.

#Speaker 06

I'm skeptical about Poland, with Putin, on two grounds. Number one, when you've been a dictator for over 20 years, everybody lies to you. And these dictators always drop some of their maximalist results too late because they don't know the true position they are in. And secondly, Vladimir Putin is a man whose word and whose signature cannot be trusted. He lied to us repeatedly. So I think the war will be ended by someone else.

#Scott

Of course, he's a criminal. You know he's a neocon. You know he has no legitimacy whatsoever. This is a man who posted "Thank you, America" when Nord Stream 2 got blown up. They had to take the tweet down. That was a mistake. He's married to Anne Applebaum, who is one of the most virulently Russophobic Putin haters in the world out there. This man lives in his own fantasy world. Nothing he said there was true. Vladimir Putin has never lied about anything. One documented lie—give me one documented lie. Sikorski lies about everything. First of all, he's corrupt. There's a lot of corruption that follows this man. He's not clean. He's horribly corrupt.

He lies about his own social media postings. What has Vladimir Putin lied about? Vladimir Putin has been honest about every single thing he has gone into because that's what legitimate leaders do. They don't lie. You know... look at Kiev. Did the United States and Israel give Iran advance notice that they were going to carry out a decapitation strike on February 28th? No. Were civilians impacted by that? So under international law, you're supposed to give advance warning, adequate advance warning, to any military strike that may impact civilians. That's a requirement by law. Vladimir Putin is the only leader in the world today that gives that kind of advance notice. He's the only one.

Only one. Iran did. I'll give Iran credit. Iran gave the Israelis advance notice. They would always say, this is where we're going to strike, leave. So, Iran—amazing. Iran also abides by international law. It's funny how that works out. The nations that we tend to denigrate the most are the ones who abide by the law the most. I mean, you know, we're the ones who assassinated Qasem Soleimani as he tried to broker peace in the region. We're the ones who kill people at home. You know, but the Iranians give Israel advance notice. They're going to strike a place, they leave. And Russia has done the same thing in Kiev. So Sikorski is crazy, but Sikorski is not Poland.

People need to understand that there is a tremendous amount of pushback inside Poland by people who understand the consequences of these actions. And again, I think there's going to be a great awakening in Europe. Yes, voices like Sikorski and others are going to be magnified now when Kiev gets erased. See, this is what we told you about Russia. But the rational thinkers are going to go, well, you did that. You created that condition. You made this happen. And now you want it to happen to us too? So I encourage Sikorski to keep speaking because every time he does, he just digs the hole deeper for him, his ideology, his sick, demented wife, and everybody else who buys into his neocon vision of how the world's supposed to work.

#Nima

Thank you so much, Scott, for being with us today. It's a great pleasure.

#Scott

Thanks a lot. Have a good day.

#Nima

See you soon.