

Iran just WON, Trump in PANIC as Israel's Demise goes Nuclear | Wilkerson

Former Joint Chief of Staff for Colin Powell and Retired US Army Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson joins to discuss PATREON.COM/DANNYHAIPHONG Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhai...> Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho> Follow me on Telegram: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> #iran #iranwar #trump

#Danny

We have Scott Besant, Donald Trump. They're all saying that their patience is wearing thin with Iran. Iran has been very firm in its positions on what it would like out of an agreement with the United States. We've seen now the U.S. strike Iran. Talk about Iran's response here. Why and how has Iran become so firm and confident in its position?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I think we're looking at, as I've said before, a very frustrated president who does not know how to extricate himself from something he should never have started. And there's got to be at least an occasional light bulb going off in that dull mind that tells him that. So he's looking hard for a way out. At the same time, I have to say that I don't think I've changed my original conception of what's going on here, which is that we are going to lull the Iranians. I say lull — they're not being lulled into it. They've got their eyes open. But we're going to take them into another period, just like the previous two periods of, quote, diplomatic disengagement, unquote, and attack them again, right in the middle of what is supposed to be a ceasefire.

But increasingly, we seem to have the same interpretation of the English word "ceasefire" that Bibi Netanyahu and other Israelis seem to have of the Hebrew word for ceasefire, because they aren't ceasefires at all. They're just maybe a little less killing, but the killing continues nonetheless. And this whole process is beginning to fall apart. It's beginning to fall apart, I think, around some key issues, one of which is the somewhat dire straits that Netanyahu finds himself in increasingly inside Israel politically, and the fact that there are rumors around that Miriam Adelson has grown—he's grown tiresome to her, and thus tiresome to the big money that she's been sending his way.

And there are other things that are happening too. I even posited the idea the other day that maybe if we think that the Epstein files really have an impact, and that impact is blackmail, maybe Bibi Netanyahu does not own that portion of the files or any portion of the files that deal directly with Melania and with Donald themselves, and therefore would be the most crushing if they were

revealed. Maybe Mossad controls them. That would make sense to me, and maybe Mossad is not all that happy with Bibi Netanyahu either, so they are not allowing him to wield that blackmail, and have even put word out that they're not doing it as much as possibly they were before.

There is some... let's put it this way. There's some tension right now among the elements, not only in his coalition, but in the entire Israeli government structure. And in that, I include Shin Bet and the IDF and the Air Force and the rest of the military and security instruments. It's not a happy camp. And it's certainly not a happy camp in Israel, particularly not up there in the north, where Hezbollah continues to pound the people who have been pounded out, back, out back, pounded again, back out again.

I suspect that the Jewish population of Israel has probably lost somewhere between a quarter to half a million people, Jewish people, just because of that interplay in that region where they can't go back to their homes or their farms with any confidence that they won't be killed. And that's why he's pressing so far north of the Litani River, even possibly going to cross—I forget the name of the next river—but even possibly cross the next river. He's already got advanced parties on that river. And he's killing people in between, and the people are not necessarily Hezbollah. In fact, they aren't Hezbollah in many cases. They're just citizens of Lebanon, which is, of course, majorly irritating the government in Beirut, which, frankly, as usual, doesn't know what to do.

So you've got a lot of issues that are happening there, but I'm not backing away from my original statement that we're going to do what we did before. Two different diplomatic periods, supposedly. Our way of doing diplomacy is really weird—no diplomats involved. And we're going to attack them yet a third time out of supposed negotiations, and this time out of a supposed ceasefire, which we're seeing every day is, quote, supposed, unquote, just like Bibi's. So that's all I know. And I think it's going to unfold again. Bradley Cooper's testimony before Congress was pitiful, absolutely pitiful. I think it was Jason Crow and Seth Moulton in particular that I watched us grill him.

He reminded me of a lieutenant commander on the game floor in Newport who would answer a question when I, as an Army colonel supervising the floor of that game, would walk up to the terminal and look at the lieutenant commander and say something really basic like, "How's it going, Commander?" And he would look at me and say, "It's going according to plan." And I would say, "Come here," jerk him up, take him into the corner and say, "Whenever a superior, especially on a game room floor or in a real-world situation, God forbid, never answer a question like I asked you with the answer you gave, because the mission doesn't outlast contact with the enemy. What you want to answer is, are you accomplishing your mission? Are you accomplishing your mission? You can be according to plan all day long and not be accomplishing your mission at all, which is what is going on here."

But then the problem is, and Seth Moulton sort of pressed in on this, what is your mission, Admiral? Do you know what your mission is other than to sail aircraft carriers and destroyers and shoot Iranians and drop bombs on Iran? Do you know anything beyond that? A mission normally, as we

taught at Newport, has two parts. It has the part where you say what you're going to accomplish, and then it has the purpose and the why. Okay, what's your purpose? How can you have a mission without knowing the purpose? They don't know the purpose. They're just executing. And the Iranians know their purpose. Their purpose is to stand up to it, and if necessary, and in stages that make some sense, inflict major damage on you. There's a real discrepancy here, and we're losing.

#Danny

The United States seems to be engaging. You know, they strike Iran, Bandar Abbas, they retreat. They strike again, they retreat. Iran retaliates in an equal kind of manner. And yet the U.S. keeps on saying this is all within the bounds of the ceasefire. This is limited. Why is the United States even engaging in these strikes? Then a lull could simply mean just waiting until ready. Of course, with the weapons stockpile situation being as it is for the United States, that could be many years to be ready for another long strike, intervention, and another long campaign of strikes. But nonetheless, the U.S. is going about it in this way under Trump. Why is it? What is with these, what some call, pinprick strikes, where it seems like the U.S. is in this pattern now where it seems to be almost every weekend they go in this direction?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I have no idea, Danny. I have no idea, except that maybe they think, and maybe the military is advising, that you have to keep hitting them every now and then to remind them that you have the capacity to do so. I can't figure it out. But as far as munitions go, you know, we've got tons of dumb bombs. And you can strap a JDAM set, you know, a smart bomb-making set, on any iron bomb and make it a smart bomb, at least for a certain range. So we've got plenty of them left. And there are probably, in ours and Israel's combined arsenal, quite a few that you could go on bombing, in other words, ad nauseam. It wouldn't be very smart, and it wouldn't do anything probably but destroy civilian infrastructure and kill civilians.

But after all, what is Netanyahu doing in Lebanon? That's exactly what he's doing in Lebanon. It's what he's doing on the West Bank. It's what he wants to do further, and Gaza is doing piecemeal every day. And God forbid, I heard this morning on another interview that he's talking, or someone in Israel is talking about Jonathan Pollard, perhaps, about going on and not stopping at Lebanon. Well, you know what the next country is after Lebanon. Good luck, good luck. Erdogan didn't parade that new ballistic missile down the avenue in Ankara just for looking at the shiny metal. I think we're looking at, again, I come back to this proposition, we're looking at merging all these conflicts.

And Ukraine is the one staring me in the face right now after Lavrov's comments to Rubio, apparently, and others too. The next strike is going to be in a NATO country. Well, the next strike is going to be against NATO assets, including ours, who've been warned duly to get out. But I don't put it past them to go one step further on the escalation ladder—call it a half step. Somebody put another rung in there below the present one, or below the one above the present one. And that

rung is, okay, we'll do that in Ukraine. And if that doesn't work, a few airstrikes on top of these staff groups that are in Ukraine and doing things like directing Storm Shadow missiles and such to targets in Russia—deep, deep in Russia.

If that doesn't work, we're going to hit somebody else. Maybe we'll hit Lithuania or Estonia or Latvia, where we know there are other cells. In fact, we know there's a cell that is a planning cell, and it includes a number of NATO countries, including EUCOM, the United States Command in Europe, that are planning an attack on Kaliningrad. So why don't we just take that out, and let's take it out inside a NATO country? Dare you. Dare you to invoke Article 5 in any meaningful way. So we're playing with fire here, I think, and I don't mean that in terms of lighting matches.

I'm talking about playing with real fire, maybe backing Putin up to a wall and getting something really started, and maybe some cohesion—momentary cohesion—in NATO. The Poles would go for it probably, one half of them. The Germans, about a quarter of them would go for it, including Merz. Maybe some of the others would jump in, but we wind up having an Article 5 to which only a few answered the call. And not for a moment did—and this is my sincerest view—not for a moment do I think Donald Trump would answer the call. So where are we then? We've got a war between certain NATO countries and Russia, and Article 5 invoked but not adhered to. And where do we go from there? I know Putin's probably thought about it. I doubt we have.

#Danny

Yeah, we know that the U.S. empire is having a really hard time, especially when it comes to leading institutions, if we can call it that, within NATO, staying away from wars.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

This stuff is coming home, too. It's coming home to the United States. You can't fight wars overseas, basically, without some of the violence and some of the attitudes that are developed in wars like this coming home. And I keep telling people, you know, this is a country that has not had bombs dropped in its front yard since 1865. And, you know, oh, we had 12 million men or 16 million men, depending on how you count them, in World War II. Uh-uh, they were overseas. There was nothing on our soil of consequence. A few firebombs floated over by the Japanese to the Pacific coast. A little bit of action in the Aleutians, which stopped very quickly when we took action against it. And there was a little on the East Coast with a few Nazi spies and this, that, and the other thing. But no American in three or four generations has had bombs in his front yard.

None. We just don't know what it's like to be in a place like Ukraine, or in a place like Gaza, or in a place like the West Bank, or a place like Lebanon. We simply do not know. We fought all our wars at arm's length. What kind of thing is going to happen to the empire when it comes here? And it might come here for domestic reasons, not necessarily some foreign power attacking us. That could happen. It certainly could happen with a dirty bomb or something like that coming across one of our

borders. But that would be the excuse for the invocation of the Insurrection Act, the declaration of martial law, and we'd be off to the races, because I think that's what the domestic agenda of this administration is—led by none other than your favorite Secretary of War, he whom Trump likes to hold up as a movie-star image of a killer.

#Danny

There seems to be another kind of diminishment happening with the U.S. empire that's being more and more acknowledged, even by neocons, and that is the decline of the overall empire. And I'm curious, given that you talked about the merging of these conflicts—you mentioned Ukraine. There's, of course, heavy U.S. involvement there: munitions and intelligence, et cetera. Iran, this has been a pet project of the Trump administration. And now we see that China seems to have gotten away in many respects from the United States—still a heavy military presence, but China has been showing itself very, very, very resilient, strong, rising, and now becoming a center of global power. And they're even talking about Cuba and other projects that the U.S. empire wants to engage in. But it seems heavily overextended. And what else, in terms of, you know, we talk about the military all the time, but what else might the U.S. empire be losing right now through this engagement in endless war?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I think an article that appeared in a publication put out by Win Without War, I believe it was. I think I've got the author's name—yeah, Nicholas Davies. The title of the article is very pertinent, and the article itself is eloquent. The title is, "Do U.S. War Crimes Doom the World to Endless War and Chaos?" And the answer to that question, I think, is absolutely. And that's what's happening. We are destroying international law. We are destroying everything that we built up after World War II that Franklin Roosevelt talked about at Yalta, that Eisenhower was very instrumental in helping to build, that Harry Truman was 100% behind, that the United States became the real look-to, if not the actual—and in many cases, we were the actual—power behind that law.

If Mao was right that international law comes out of the barrel of a gun—and I think to an extent he was—that gun was owned by the power that had dramatically supplied all of the United Nations. And that's the term we used at the time, not "allies." We called them the United Nations. Eisenhower used that term. Marshall used that term. We supplied all of those powers that wound up being, quote, "victorious," unquote. On our side, they were prostrate at the end of it, most of them. Britain certainly was. The Soviet Union was. France was. Japan, an enemy, was. We were the titan in the world, and we put the titan's weight on the Security Council, often thwarted by others—mostly Russia when it was in their interest to do so. But we were the titan behind international law.

We were the law. However imperfect that was, there was law. Now, as that title implies in Davies' article, and I think he's right, we have destroyed it. Not only have we destroyed it, we have had a president who impugned it, a president who disregards it. His mind is more important than the law.

And James Madison is spinning in his grave. If men were angels, they wouldn't need governments and they wouldn't need laws. Well, we destroyed international law, and we are working hard to destroy U.S. law, constitutional and otherwise. What goes on overseas comes home. That's almost an axiom of our wars. And we have been at war for the past 30 years, if you count them off, and all the people we've destroyed, hurt, put into either internal displacement or external displacement, or killed.

38 million is one analysis of how many people we have killed with our sanctions, 50% or more of whom were women and children, since 9/11. 38 million people. That rivals Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution. That rivals Stalin in the purges, in the deepest, darkest hours of the purges. It even rivals Hitler, really, when you talk about the people he personally, or his Wehrmacht and other forces, killed—100 million total, but probably somewhere between 30 and 40 at Hitler's door personally. So we are the rival of those people, and the people that we have killed with our sanctions since 9/11. We are no longer the arbiter of international law, good or bad. We are no longer the world's protector, good or bad. And I would argue that for a long time, there was more good to it than bad. Now we are just all bad. We are all evil. And we sponsor people who are even more evil than we, like Israel.

#Danny

Those numbers that you put out there, yeah, there's no way to Cold War spin that or to feign ignorance. All of the world has witnessed this destruction. And Colonel Wilkerson, with Israel, we have a very difficult situation that is being played out, I believe, not being covered very much in Western mainstream media. And that is the situation, the war that Israel has launched on Lebanon, which has led to massive resistance from Hezbollah. And in this, we also have developments emerging like what we saw—the horrific war crime humiliation that Ben-Gvir conducted on the flotilla activists.

And now the U.N. has put Israel on their list, the blacklist of those states that commit sexual violence in war, which is a big blemish now and a blight on Israel—Israel's already blighted résumé in history. So, Colonel, talking about the situation here and the impact on the world, it appears that the Israeli regime, the regime you just said is behaving, if we can believe it or not, worse than the U. S. war machine in many ways, is really up front and center in terms of being exposed as such.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Well, I take Lindsey Graham to heart when he says that if they weren't doing it, we'd have to be there doing it. And were the forces doing it for us composed of Lindsey Grahams, I have no doubt that if they could overcome their cowardice, they would be doing that. And that's one point you've got to make about these people. I mean, I'm sorry, these are not the most courageous, bravest

warriors in the world who make it their practice on a daily basis to kill men, women, and children. Now, I will admit, in Iraq, in Somalia, in Afghanistan, in Libya, and elsewhere, we were responsible, directly or indirectly, for a lot of women and children being killed.

But I don't think we ever walked out on a battlefield with a Marine or a soldier or a sailor or an airman whose purpose in life—there may have been some aberrations, there always are—but at large, whose purpose in life was killing women and children. These people's purpose in life is killing women and children because they will tell you they have the wounds or the potential to grow up, and they will be terrorists or they will produce terrorists. That's the kind of language I hear out of these people. They remind me of some of the neoconservatives in this country who would say the same thing from the top page of the New York Times, right side above the fold, if they could get away with it and maintain their jobs, because that's the way they feel. Kill them all.

Slaughter them all, as my lieutenant in a George Washington University seminar told me about his two years in the IDF and his time in Operation Cast Lead, which was a couple, three weeks of preparation for what you're seeing post-October 7th in Gaza. Always planned to be done eventually on October 7th, whatever its inception was. October 7th, like 9/11 for us, gave the Israelis the excuse to go out and put Operation Cast Lead into play across the whole breadth of Gaza. That's what they're doing, and they've been planning it for a long time, and they are bloody-minded about completing it. Naftali Bennett—what has Naftali Bennett been accusing Netanyahu of? Not finishing off the Palestinians in Gaza, not finishing off Hamas. Go down in those tunnels and kill Hamas.

Get them out of those tunnels. Kill them. And Bibi and the IDF—and I don't blame them—are content to stay up above ground and kill them piecemeal during a ceasefire and belie any kind of humanitarian aid, really, that could get in there and help. Even got cheating going on right now with Israelis and Palestinians making money off the cheating. That will always happen. But humanitarian assistance in there now is sort of a joke amongst the relief agencies that really know how to do it and know what's going on there. So this is just terrible. All the way from East Jerusalem across Gaza to the West Bank into Lebanon. He'd be in Syria if he had enough troops to take that on at the same time, too. He's only got a holding force in Syria.

And then Iran. And I'm sure Bibi would tell Trump that at any moment that Trump wants to march ground forces into Iran, he'll put the IDF—you know, turn it around from Lebanon, put it on hold in Lebanon—and go on and join him with the ground forces in Iran. I almost wish he would, because they'd get swallowed up and murdered. I hate to say that, but it would probably be the end of the IDF. But that's whom we're dealing with. And now I'm trying to figure out, have I been right that Israel has all along been our tool? Or are other people right that we're their tool? I think the two have had moments where each was operative, and now they've merged. They've merged. It doesn't really matter because we're both criminal.

#Danny

Two wings of the same bird at this point. It feels like they are... two wings of the same drone. Yeah, exactly. Our friend George Galloway often says, two cheeks of the same you-know-what, backside. So... but, you know, to what you're saying, this situation in West Asia, of course, has global implications. And what you see in the world that's changing dramatically, especially in the last several years, but even in this last iteration from October 7th to February 28th, it feels like the world has changed quite dramatically. And it's the U.S. and Israel, too, that feel like they're catching up and almost committing atrocities in order to try to do that and get ahead of it. But it doesn't seem like that's occurring.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Well, I don't for a moment attribute the same kind of almost evil genius to Donald Trump that I would to Bibi Netanyahu. I mean, you don't stay in power as long as he's stayed in power in a volatile Jewish state like Israel. And I say that with emphasis on the Jewish because I don't think the Arabs really have much say in it. And, of course, there are more Arab Palestinians plus Christians and others in Israel than there are Jews by a slight amount. I suspect it's more than a million now because I think a million Jews have left. They voted with their feet, and I don't think they're coming back.

But I think what we're looking at now is a situation where the United States is so locked in this, and we're led by a person who really does not understand, except for the pecuniary aspects of it, where he and his family are making tons and tons of money. I don't know if you saw that story this morning. This is sort of an aside, but it's indicative — about the \$40 million in gold and Rolex watches and other things that they found in the CIA agent's home. And now the agency is saying that, you know, there were some circumstances in hiring him that weren't copacetic. I mean, you can't make this up. You know where he got that.

He got that in Ukraine. And as I told my daughter this morning, you know, you could go to Ukraine as a CIA operative, and if you really had sticky fingers, you could pick up \$40 million in gold overnight, virtually, and walk out with it. I'm the man who saw \$16 billion U.S. dollars go on pallets on a C-130 and get shipped to Iraq and disappear. Sixteen billion dollars. So there's more money lying around in Ukraine than you could shake a stick at. But it's indicative of what you and I are talking about — the corruption of all of these wars and the corruption associated with European and American support for Ukraine and Zelensky in particular. And...

What's happening in Israel and Lebanon and elsewhere, and what's happening in Georgia — we must not leave that out. They're still trying to overthrow that government. And what's happening adjacent to Kaliningrad and in the Baltic in general, and on up to the Arctic. We are painting a tapestry that the Chinese and others in the world, who are about to meet in India in September with the BRICS meeting, Modi in charge — they can't figure it out, I don't think, but they know they're winning, and they don't want to do anything to disturb that victory. So you have the kind of advice coming out of Xi Jinping, I suspect it goes something like this: if you can damage them, damage

them, but don't damage them in such a way that it reflects back on us or causes them to respond against us. Which is why he told a whole bunch of lies to Trump with regard to support for Iran. Of course he's supporting Iran. Is he doing it through third countries?

Well, how else would you do it and get away from, you know, the patrols and so forth? And is he doing it with overhead satellites? Well, probably so. And is Russia doing it? Well, probably so. Are they doing things because they feel like they have to protect Iran? Yeah, to a certain extent, but mostly it boils down to protecting their own interests, particularly China's interest with regard to the railroad to Iran and so forth. So we're up against them in Ukraine. We're up against them in Iran. We're up against them largely everywhere we go. Were we to try and take Cuba, I bet you we'd probably be up against them there, one or both of them. I hope we don't do that. So why are we doing this? This is a huge question. Why are we doing this? Is it just to make money for Trump's family and Trump himself? Is that the only reason we're destroying the domestic environment of this country, destroying international law, waging war and killing people for no purpose whatsoever except money?

#Danny

I can't figure it out.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I mean, I can't say that enough. People don't like that as an answer, but I'm sorry. This is, in many ways, that old word "ineluctable." You can't figure out what's happening because it is so base. B-A-S-E, base. As in depraved. As in broken. As in nonsensical, illogical. Except that a lot of people are making money.

#Danny

Yeah, money and the attempted full-spectrum dominance to get it.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Yeah, where's the full-spectrum dominance when you can't even open the Strait of Hormuz?

#Danny

I think that's why we're seeing money go so much in command. I think there are often times in history where it feels like state military power in a system like ours is in command in some respects. And now it does feel like money is far more in command. But then there's also the fact that, and you've talked about this a lot, and we can end here, when an empire is falling or in decline, we often get these empires lashing out. But we've never really seen an empire like this one, the United States

Empire, which has denied it's an empire for the duration of its history. And also it claims all kinds of virtuous values and just so happens to, at one point, have been the dominant economy in the entire world. And that is no longer the case and is quickly becoming the opposite. So it is a different moment in history. And, of course, as you also mention a lot, nuclear weapons. We've never had that ace in the hole.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Yeah, that's the one that scares me — the nuclear weapons. No treaties and 10,000 or more between us and Russia. That's a hell of a lot of nuclear, enough to destroy the world several times over. And the other thing that truly troubles me, and I can't emphasize this enough, is the profoundly inept leadership we have right now. You can say it's superb in grifting, superb in manipulating the stock market for money, superb in using the taxpayers' dollars for its own purposes — either personal or what it calls national purposes. What the Congress is becoming, even in the Republican part, more and more skeptical of, particularly these things like this \$1.6 or whatever billion-dollar fund to pay back all the people who participated in January the 6th, which got even Thune, the majority leader in the Senate, up on his back legs.

But all of that is going on right now, and there seems to be no counterpunch. There seems to be no effort that is meaningful to right the ship of state, to use a metaphor. I'm not sure it can be righted, but I don't see anybody actually trying to do it, and that's extremely worrisome. And then you come back to what you pointed out. You come back to the nuclear weapons and the desperation we're going to feel at one point here, probably not too far into the future, maybe even in my lifetime. This desperation is going to be so deep and so all-encompassing that we're going to start something that we can only finish with nuclear weapons. And that's not a very pleasant prospect for me to think about for my grandchildren and their children.