

Iran's Hormuz Move BLOWS UP on Trump, Israel in PANIC | Larry Johnson

Former CIA Analyst Larry Johnson joins the show to discuss Iran's brutal show of strength to Trump on the Strait of Hormuz as the war reaches a breaking point amid Israeli attempts to sabotage the MoU. <https://sonar21.com/> <https://www.youtube.com/@UCewRbK22LRnNi6N3EcGjbow> LIKE the video and Subscribe for more in-depth geopolitical analysis Leave your thoughts in the comments below! Support the Channel: Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong> SUBSCRIBE ON RUMBLE: Rumble: <https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong> Follow Me on Social Media: Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DannyHaiphong> Telegram: <https://t.me/DannyHaiphong> Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhaiphong> Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritho> #iran #iranwar #trump

#Danny

This is Danny Haiphong, and here are the biggest news stories for today. So, the IRGC has issued a devastating warning to ships in the Strait of Hormuz that are seeking to transit without its permission. Quote, and here it is, quote, Now, MP Ghalibaf has put...

#Danny

Mohammad Ghalibaf, the head of the parliament in Iran, has put down Trump's assertion that Iran is giving everything right now to the United States, saying that the only crop harvesting right now is the decades of mistrust with the United States. And also, we have learned that there is massive panic occurring right now inside of Israel. A new Hebrew University of Jerusalem poll finds that 92% of Israelis believe Iran has emerged the winner of the war in this deal with the United States, indicating a level of panic inside of Israel not seen in decades. So with me to discuss all of this and more is Larry Johnson, former CIA analyst and current geopolitical commentator, analyst, and journalist.

Larry, good to see you again. Señor, how are you? I am great. Everyone, make sure you hit the like button. That helps boost the show in YouTube's algorithm. So yes, let's get into this. A ship was reportedly struck after that warning, Larry, from the IRGC that the Iranian Navy must be sought permission from in order for any vessel to go through. We have not heard any response yet specifically from Washington about this particular incident, but this is a big blow to the reports that the United States is getting everything it wants from Iran. What is going on here and your thoughts about these latest developments?

#Larry Johnson

Well, anybody who wants to know what's going on, they need only go with respect to the Strait of Hormuz. Go to marinetraffic.com, and it brings up a real-time map of what ships are where, what ships are going through. And right now, there's nothing going through. Or right over, let's see, right over on the coast, just off the western coast of Qeshm Island, you've got a small boat that's going to Bandar Abbas, and, you know, three little ships that are headed toward Bandar Abbas. The only ship, it's called the Halti, is headed into the Strait, and that's about it. The ones that have recently come out are all headed to China or Pakistan or Singapore. So, you know, Trump celebrating, oh boy, we've got 19 million barrels of oil out on Tuesday and all these ships that are flowing.

He... let's say he was confabulating. He was saying some things that just are not accurate. They are inaccurate. And Iran remains in full control of the Strait of Hormuz. And the reality is there's nothing the United States can do militarily to open that strait at a cost that the United States is willing to pay. And let me explain what I mean by that. Could the United States devote enough, concentrate military assets, both the naval ships and personnel and air assets, and ultimately silence Iran's ability to retaliate? Yes. But it would come at a tremendous cost — significant loss of life, significant loss of naval assets. And it would take more than six months, in my view, to try to do that.

And that's saying even if they decided to do that, to mobilize the force necessary to conduct such an operation would take at least a year. So that's what I'm saying. They just can't flip a switch and all of a sudden, oh, we're going to open it up. So Iran holds the trump cards here. Then you've got these other problems that face the Strait. When you pull up that map and you zoom out, oh my God, the Persian Gulf is filled with ships that have been sitting there for four months, just accumulating barnacles on the hull, and the salinity of the water is something that's going to have to be, you know, the ships all need sort of a cleanup maintenance routine before they can actually be returned to service.

So it's not like these ships are sitting out there just ready to run over to shore, and then they get a complete reload, they get filled with oil, and then they sail off and things are back to normal. No, that's not happening. And that's where Trump has been misleading. The other thing that Trump didn't really unveil is the fact that—why did he sign the MOU? Why did he do such a quick reversal before they were dragging their feet? It is because he was finally briefed on how dire the situation is with respect to heavy crude oil, which is used to refine and produce aviation fuel and diesel fuel.

And I just learned this recently. I didn't know this before. But a refinery, if it's going to produce, if it's got that heavy crude, it's got to make a choice: are we going to produce diesel, or are we going to produce aviation fuel? It's not like we can do both at the same time. They can only do one at a time. And I'm not sure what the time lag is between once you complete a refining process to produce diesel, how easy is it to transition and move to producing the jet fuel? I don't have the answer to that. I'm sure somebody out there does. But there is a shortage potentially within two weeks that we run out of that heavy crude, and so there's going to be a real crisis there—diesel

/aviation fuel—that there's no easy solution to. Right now, there's not enough crude flowing out of the Persian Gulf.

It's been 20% cut off for four months. And to compensate for that, the U.S. has been drawing down the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Well, that's basically—was it Jackson Browne or the Eagles— "Running on Empty"? That's what we're doing, running on empty. And once it hits that level, right now we're probably at about 100. We have, let's call it, 320 million barrels of oil left in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve in the United States. Of that, though, you have to keep 140 million in place to stabilize the salt caverns in which that oil is stored. Because if you take too much out, the way they remove the oil, they have to pump water in. Water mixes with salt pretty well and creates saltwater. Oil doesn't mix with salt. So that's why they use those to store oil there.

But if you have to pump in enough water, all of a sudden that water can soften and destabilize those caverns, and they collapse. So basically you've got 180 million barrels of oil, but that's not all heavy crude. It's light crude. And I think actually the ratio is about two-thirds of it is light crude, which makes gasoline. But the other is, you know, let's say you've got basically 40 million barrels of heavy crude. Well, you know, when you look at the consumption on a daily basis in the United States, the overall consumption is 20 million barrels of oil a day. So let's just say that the diesel/aviation fuel of that—what is it, 25%, 50%? That's another good question to ask the AI search engines. So this is coming to a head. And so the Strait of Hormuz remains this critical node that represents a threat to the economy, not just of the United States, but of the world.

#Danny

Let's get into, Larry, what Iran means in particular about... Oops, sorry, that's the wrong source here. I have to remove that one and add it to the stage. Here we go. Let's get into this. And Dropsite News reported this, that in this warning, they said that a new route was announced, that there were authorities that announced a new route for shipping traffic through the Strait of Hormuz without informing or coordinating with the Islamic Republic of Iran, and that it was unacceptable and completely dangerous, saying that there was an Oman and UN-affiliated international maritime organization that announced a temporary shipping corridor to allow hundreds of ships and roughly 11,000 stranded seafarers to transit the Strait of Hormuz. And this comes, Larry, as, you know, the Trump administration is saying that the Strait of Hormuz is completely open and that ships are now moving through in record numbers. But Iran is saying that this... Yeah, that's complete bullshit.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah. Just go right now. Type in marinetraffic.com. Take a look.

#Danny

Right. All right. Well, your thoughts about the danger that Iran is speaking of—what does Iran mean by the danger of this shipping route? And I'll find that information as you talk.

#Larry Johnson

Well, I mean, Iran's taking control. They're going to maintain control of who can sail where and when. So if the ships turn off their transponders, they forget that they've still got radar, and the radar can still show this, you know, this unknown target. And Iran's going to send out its patrol boats to figure out who are you, what are you doing. And those patrol boats are armed in a way that they can fire a missile into the ship. So, you know, it's not like these ships are flowing in and out. That's what's so crazy about this. It's a scant, scant number. Yeah. But you got to ask yourself, why are they lying about this?

#Danny

Right. Well, here's a live map. Is this the map you were speaking about? Yeah. Maybe not. Yeah.

#Larry Johnson

Okay. Yeah. So drill down. You drill down to the Persian Gulf. Keep going, keep going. Here we go. Yeah, keep going, keep going. Go back to your left and up, up. Here we go. Go back straight up. Okay, there it is. Keep going. Now drill in again. Keep going up. No, you're coming back. Go drill in.

#Danny

Yeah, here we go.

#Larry Johnson

There. Okay, there's the Strait of Hormuz. Wow.

#Danny

Okay, there are a lot of ships in there.

#Larry Johnson

A lot of ships are in there, but they're not going through the Strait, correct?

#Danny

Nope.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, and that's real time. So that's what I'm saying. They're lying. And so you've got to step back and say, look how many are in there. Now, the other thing, you know, we keep hearing that the Gulf is mined, yet we've seen no evidence of ships being hit with a mine and blown up. I'm wondering if that was just a psyop as opposed to being an actual intelligence, you know, an actual reality. I don't know.

#Danny

Well, why would Iran need to mine if they have the capability of their navy, the capability of striking ships anywhere? I mean, that's a lot of investment. That's an investment, and it's also hard to demine as well.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, no, I agree. Because, I mean, the last time they tried, they mined the Persian Gulf to stop the movement of ships was back in 1987 during the war with Iraq. And at that time, Iran had limited naval capability. They did have ships that could go out and drop mines, and those were mines that were trying to create a threat that would keep other ships from transiting, trying to cut off funds from Iraq. Because remember, the United States was funding, helping fund that war against Iran. And so Iran did the quite reasonable, rational thing in trying to retaliate. But, you know, candidly, they don't need mines now. They've got underwater mini submarines.

They've got underwater drones. They've got surface drones. They've got surface vessels that can carry boat-to-ship missiles, they'll call it. They've got aviation drones. They've got short-range cruise missiles, coastal defense cruise missiles. They've got short-range ballistic missiles. They've got a lot of options that they can use to threaten and hit a particular ship. They don't have to create a threat that ties everybody down unless, you know, that may have been their purpose. As long as the insurance companies, Lloyd's of London in particular, perceive the possibility of the threat from mines, they're not going to let those ships move.

So, yeah, there are a number of built-in obstacles preventing those ships from moving, not to mention being able— is there any oil at the terminals, any liquefied natural gas at the terminals to load up with? In Qatar, the LNG is very damaged and maybe a year or more from being repaired. So, you know, that's another issue. What we can say definitively is, since the straits opened under this MOU more than a week ago, no ships of any consequence have passed through the straits carrying oil to the United States or to Europe. It's going to Asia.

#Danny

Yeah, I mean, Iran has made that very clear. And yet, Larry, the United States, the Trump administration continues to put out this idea that everything that Iran is going to get out of this deal is going to come right back to the United States, whether it's oil shipments because of the relieved sanctions, the temporary relief of oil sanctions, and of course, the unfrozen assets — the \$12 billion that reportedly has gotten back to Iran from its stolen assets in places like Qatar. But Ghalibaf says straight away, I mean... how are negotiations actually going with comments like these?

It's obvious that the Iranian side is not trusting the United States, that there is very little love on that side. And from the U.S. side, not a lot of comments. Trump is putting out a very enthusiastic framing. But I think the general public in the United States is very much not trusting the United States' behavior in this deal, despite wanting it to work out. The vast majority of people want it to work out. The vast majority of people see this deal as not being sustainable in the long term. What are your thoughts on this?

#Larry Johnson

Well, let's turn the question around. So, if the United States doesn't like the deal, what can it do about it?

#Danny

That's a good question.

#Larry Johnson

I mean, what can it do? Is it going to invade Iran? No, it doesn't have the ability to do that right now. And it appears, I know that the orders have been drawn up to start the redeployment of U.S. air assets and military personnel that were sent forward. So it's been drawn up for at least two, three days. It has not been signed off on yet. Once it's signed off on, then as they start to flow back, the ability of the United States to carry out attacks on Iran will diminish, not increase. It will be less capable of using any kind of military force against Iran. To use military force, to use effective force against Iran would require maintaining the existing assets we have and probably boosting them.

The problem is this. You remember we talked about, you know, there's a supply — they call it sweet crude, sour crude. So it's the sour crude out of which comes the aviation fuel, the diesel. So at the start of the war, you had this level of diesel being produced, this level of aviation fuel being produced, and they were essentially meeting the demand. The war starts. What happens? The demand for aviation fuel goes up. Why? Because the civil airliners are still flying, but they need that fuel. You've now got all these jets conducting these combat operations that they weren't previously.

Well, and now you're doing that at a time when the supply of oil that you had was here at the start, or before the 28th, and now with the shutdown of the Strait, it's dropped 20%. So you've got less

supply, more demand, price shoots up. But then, just because the price shoots up doesn't mean that everybody's demand can be satisfied. Now, if the United States decides to return to war now, we're going, just as we've depleted some of our weapons systems, we've actually depleted our fuel source. And it goes back to, you know, running on empty, right? So the United States has got limited options for what it can do to Iran from a military standpoint. So it's going to have to rely upon the diplomatic side.

#Danny

Yeah, and the United States engaging in diplomacy is really going to be interesting to watch, given the history it has with that.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, it's like watching a pig ride a bicycle.

#Danny

Yeah, yeah, and that's putting it very lightly, but also, I think, a very welcome image. But, Larry, does Israel have any idea? They seem to be so rabidly obsessed with war, Greater Israel, genocide. You know, I put this up at the beginning, you know, this Hebrew University of Jerusalem poll, which also was collaborating with a think tank on this, where it wasn't only that 92% of Israelis believe that Iran is the winner. It's also that the Israelis now have a very low opinion of their government and of Netanyahu.

But because of the fact that they are failing in their capacity to continue the war, this is how mind-boggling it can be to think about what it's like inside of this colony. So, Larry, Israel is still attacking Lebanon. I mean, that happened overnight. I can pull that up. Will Iran respond? How does this go from here when Israel seems to be the one playing, quote-unquote, spoiler? And now Netanyahu is saying that Trump has agreed that Israel can stay in Lebanon. And of course, that means attack Lebanon. Your thoughts?

#Larry Johnson

What was the attack overnight? I haven't seen that.

#Danny

It seems in southern Lebanon, the Israeli defense minister said it was, I don't know if it was a drone strike in southern Lebanon, killing two people overnight yesterday.

#Larry Johnson

Okay, yeah, so there still is. Here it is. Go ahead.

#Danny

No, no, no. Boom, there we go. This screen share is super annoying on StreamYard. All right, here we go. Yeah, this happened overnight, late June 24.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, so that is, that's not a scaled-up attack. So I don't, you know, something, there will be that kind of violence, and Israel deliberately tried to get away with it. But I don't see that altering the ceasefire so far. The statistic I find fascinating is the one you showed, that 92% of the Israelis concede that, hey, Iran won the war. You know, what is sort of crazy about that is if you watch Fox News in the United States, oh my God, the United States won the war, boy, Iran got its ass kicked. This delusional nonsense that infests Washington, D.C. While the Israelis acknowledge that Iran has won so far, that doesn't mean that they're willing to accept any kind of status quo with Iran. They still remain convinced or committed to wanting to destroy Iran and eliminate the Palestinians.

So there's, I think, too much discussion about Bibi Netanyahu. What does Bibi Netanyahu think? What is Bibi Netanyahu's future? What's going to happen to Bibi Netanyahu? Bibi Netanyahu doesn't matter one whit. Bibi Netanyahu's only utility at this point is that, up until recently, he was generally seen as a positive asset for dealing with Americans, making Americans feel comfortable with Israel. Once he's gone, the corruption allegations surrounding him are substantial. Once he's gone, that's not going to change Israel's policy as far as its views toward the Palestinians or the Iranians. In fact, that may become more extreme.

But what changes is how willing the United States is going to be to continue to fund this effort. And we saw, even with a recent article by Sy Hersh, that this divorce between Israel and the United States is real. Alastair Crooke's wife, Aisling, put out a great summary today or late yesterday about what the Hebrew press is saying about this divorce between the United States and Israel. So Israel is now rapidly coming into a position where it no longer has the 100% guarantee that it can rely upon the United States to cover its ass. And so that is ultimately going to force it to change its calculation.

#Danny

Yeah, well, in the meantime, as all of this catches up to Israel, there are reports. It seems like Israel and the Trump administration, I would say the Israeli regime, the Trump regime, they play a very similar kind of game, but maybe it looks a little different. They both like to spin and spin and spin what is going on. And right now, what some Israeli media are saying is that Netanyahu has reportedly convinced Trump that Israel should not withdraw from southern Lebanon, despite Iran's protestations against this. But there have also been reports that the Trump administration has a list

of restrictions over what Israel should and should not be doing. Those haven't come out publicly, but it does seem like because there's a deep need, a deep crisis to keep the MOU alive, Israel's behavior is an impediment to that, no doubt. Your thoughts?

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, well, apparently the conversation between Netanyahu and Trump was very, very pointed. And, you know, I think even Sy Hersh described it as a divorce. So, you know, what we're looking at here is a fundamental change in the relationship between the United States and Israel. And look, we're seeing some of the political indications. Look at all the money AIPAC spent to get rid of Thomas Massie. So they got rid of one congressman who was going to vote against them, and yet three members of Congress that traditionally voted for AIPAC and with Israel, they got defeated on Tuesday in New York City. So, you know, how has that worked out? You spend all that money to defeat one guy and you lose three more seats?

That's going in reverse, not going in the right direction. And I think there is a growing sentiment that the United States is too beholden to Israel. I mean, let's face it, the number—just, we're not talking Zionists, let's talk Jewish Americans in general, you know—and the majority of Jewish Americans don't identify as Zionists. There are only 10 million. And, you know, they by and large vote on the Democrat side of the ledger anyway. So from the standpoint of, you got to ask why the Republicans are so beholden to such a tiny, tiny sliver of the electorate. And then within the Zionist element, the estimates—you know, I had someone ask Yakov Rabkin—you know, his estimate was about 3 million out of the 10 million. So, you know, it's an inconsequential amount, but yet we end up conditioning and, you know, using it as a litmus test for people.

I mean, you had John Fetterman the other night. He was on Sean Hannity, and he was saying that if you don't support Israel, you're un-American, right? Oh, he's a nasty Zionist. Can you imagine saying, if you don't support Madagascar, you're an anti-Madagascarite? Pick any country in the world where you'd require a loyalty oath from Americans. The only way you can be a true American is you've got to support this country overseas. Give me a break. Sorry. Americans like me and others are getting fed up with this. You know, Israel should mind its own damn business, stay in its own lane. The United States is not beholden to surrender, submit, bow before Israel at all. That is a growing sentiment among a growing number of American voters that has the Israelis scared to death.

#Danny

And it's across the political spectrum, too. It goes from the farthest left and even people who consider themselves on the right. It's becoming a universal issue for Israel. I think that's what's fueling Israel's panic and desperation, too, is they're seeing these poll numbers. People are supporting this deal in the United States. I'll post some of that up. But, you know, I'll also play what you're talking about here. Here is John Fetterman. I mean, this guy is a nasty Zionist. He's someone,

you know, he's one of these guys that, along with others in the Democratic Party, former Biden officials, who have said, yeah, we would go to war with Iran anyway. I mean, I think this shows the bipartisan nature of the disease of Zionism in the United States government.

#Speaker 1

All right, let me ask this: why the deep hatred for Israel? Why?

#Speaker 2

Yeah, because, I mean, if you have such contempt for Israel, I mean, of course, you're also anti-American, and you're anti-Western civilization, and you're against capitalism and the American way of life. I mean, now, you know, they're all socialists, of course. And now there are communists and now Marxists, and now they're proud of this. And now, of course, we have Pete Housel in Maine. You know, that's another one who calls himself a communist, too. Now that's not even looked down on.

#Danny

I mean, this is what passes for political leadership, Larry. You know, I say keep going, guy. You're going to turn the whole damn United States socialist if you keep talking like this, because you look really bad here. You look like a raving, really illiterate, and absolutely imbecilic Zionist.

#Larry Johnson

Well, yeah, just take what he's saying and substitute the name of any other country, and you'd be saying, well, that's fucking outrageous. No. Hello, that's the reality. It's outrageous, especially with respect to Israel. And I heard one other commentator on a part of a panel where he insisted that the United States had no role in the creation of Israel. Excuse me? Are you that ignorant of history? Go to the Truman Library in Independence, Missouri, where I grew up. In fact, my wife and I, for 10 months, actually lived across the street from the Truman Library. And they have an entire room devoted to the creation of Israel and the role that Harry Truman's former business partner, who was Jewish, played in persuading Truman to get the United States and to help rally other countries to get behind the UN resolution that created the state of Israel. I mean, the United States absolutely played a critical role in that. You know, people want to pretend that didn't happen, but that's just, you know, that's a lie.

#Danny

Oh, I mean, the United States during that time period, during World War II, I mean, there was a concerted policy to turn people away coming into the United States who might have been identified as Jewish and say, go to Israel. You know, that was, go there, go settle there, because there was

obviously something brewing, which we all know culminated in the Nakba not a few years later. So, it's absolutely ridiculous to think that the United States, given its growing superpower position as it was trying to get to, was not going to try to take advantage of something that was brewing in the wind—burning in the wind, I should say. Now, Larry, I have a question about something that's been bothering me about, you know, I feel like there's a propaganda war on many fronts. There's, of course, those who are on the Trump side, MAGA, whatever we want to call it, you know, people who are trying to push Iran fully defeated. They are giving everything we want.

Then there are others who oppose the U.S. war and the Israeli war on Iran, but are now very suspicious of Iran's engagement in these negotiations and have brought up a point about Gaza and the first point of the MOU talking about an end to war on all fronts, but not explicitly talking about Gaza. Now, recently, the Foreign Minister of Iran, Araqchi, said to Hamas that Iran is going to raise Gaza in these talks. And yet we are hearing so many talk about—I see this all over social media, among people who even maybe have traveled to Iran, have really championed peace—being very critical about this process. What do you make of this engagement and this kind of debate around the veracity and the validity, the legitimacy of Iran's participation in the MOU and whether they're making the right decision? I don't believe it's the right approach to take, but I'm curious your thoughts about it.

#Larry Johnson

Well, is Iran getting bombed on a daily basis? No.

#Danny

Nope.

#Larry Johnson

That right there—has Iran been required to give up its sovereignty, to surrender its control over the Strait of Hormuz? No. Has Iran demanded that the territory of Lebanon be respected, both the territorial integrity and sovereignty be respected? Has that been rejected? No. Yeah.

#Danny

No, that's not happening.

#Larry Johnson

So, okay, again, explain to me what the problem is—why this is bad for Iran. I don't get it.

#Danny

I have no idea. I mean, it seems to me that there's such a deep nihilism, all right? And I get the point of wanting to see a country as resilient and as steadfast as Iran has been, wanting to keep pushing the envelope. However, this, I don't believe, is the right approach because this is a long—I mean, this is not going to be something that is resolved. First of all, there are very few wars that are resolved in a matter of less than a year. But I don't think this is something that's going to stay in the status quo forever and ever and ever. The United States, Israel, they are who they are, and Iran is who it is. And so I'm like, maybe a little patience. Maybe Iran is doing what it feels like it needs to do and what might be beneficial toward it. It seems like they're gaining a lot of benefits for themselves, and that is a big gain for everybody—Palestinians, Lebanon, et cetera. But back to you.

#Larry Johnson

Well, again, how long—you know, Israel first invaded Lebanon back in 1982. And so that's 44 years ago. Now, for the first time in 44 years, we have the United States signing a document that acknowledges the right of Iran to ensure the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Lebanon. Unheard of before. Absolutely unheard of before. So, yeah, that's why these critics—I just turn to them and say, well, what is it exactly that you want? You know, what's the problem here? You know, you want to continue having Iranians killed in American attacks?

Or now you've got the United States, because of its economic peril, because of what's coming down the pike, that it has to negotiate. It doesn't like it. The terms that Donald Trump—he keeps trying to, he refuses to acknowledge what the real terms of the agreement are. He keeps pretending that it's something else. But the reality is what the reality is. And, you know, the Iranians are letting Trump just step back and play his games, make his ridiculous claims that he's got this and that concession from Iran, which he doesn't. And then, in the course of all this, Iran's making progress. It's not just Iran.

Look at what is happening with the new security architecture being erected in the Persian Gulf, with Pakistan playing a leading role. But they now, you know, on Sunday, last Sunday, you had the foreign ministers of Egypt, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan meet. The Iranians weren't there because the Iranian foreign minister was up in Switzerland meeting with J.D. Vance indirectly. So, you know, you've got tremendous movement right now creating this security architecture that we've talked about, to the point that, um, it is, uh, it's becoming real. It's not just some far-off flaky idea. There is actual movement forward on that.

#Danny

Hmm. Yeah. Well, uh, maybe we can talk more about this. What is the impact of that then on the rest of the region? You have even mainstream publications talking about the United States, even just its presence in the region, as being completely and wholly unproductive, counterproductive. Here is Foreign Policy magazine, full of neocons, but this particular author, who is at the Cato Institute, which is full of neocons, says Washington's Middle East military presence is uniquely

counterproductive, citing that it's actually a relatively new concept over the last few decades for the U.S. to station as many troops and have as many bases as it does, and that none of this actually provided not only any security requirements, but even met U.S. objectives and interests—not just so-called national security, but even the very notion that these bases are increasing and expanding U.S. influence and dominance in the region. So you have mainstream neocon-lite or straight-up neocons talking like this. It seems like a pretty big shift and indicates that they're aware that the security architecture could very well be real in the future.

#Larry Johnson

Oh, no, look, the security architecture is fundamentally changing. So first, like with the Saudis, they've told the United States in no uncertain terms, we're not doing a damn thing with the Abraham Accords until the Palestinians—Israel's out of Gaza, out of the West Bank, and the Palestinians have a state. Until then, don't waste your time with us. Qatar and the Saudis, according to our Pakistani source that Pepe and I have been in touch with, are saying that they've got assurances, or they have informed the Pakistanis, that we're kicking the United States out. Qatar puts a nine- to ten-month window on it to close down Al Udeid Air Force Base and get the United States out of the region. So that's real. These various bases that were attacked and in large measure destroyed during the course of the war, they're not going to be rebuilt. And they're certainly not going to be restaffed with a thousand personnel.

So, you know, you're really looking at here a significant change in the U.S. role in the Middle East or West Asia, however you want to call it. The vision of China and Russia, in which the Arab, Turkish, Persian nationalities, who are all under a banner of Islam, come together to perform their own security function, that, you know, will further terrify Israel, because Israel can no longer use this divide-and-conquer strategy. They're going to face a united front that is, frankly, much more powerful militarily than Israel is. With the combined armies of Turkey, Egypt, and Iran, and Iran's superior ballistic missile capability, it's something that Israel is not prepared to confront. So, yeah, this whole war of choice initiated by the Israelis and Donald Trump's acquiescence, it's blowing up on them. It's achieving the exact opposite outcomes that they anticipated.

#Danny

Yeah, and they don't even—the Trump administration does not even sound convincing anymore. I mean, never. They never did. What am I saying, anymore? But even the level of confidence in their position—I feel like whenever you see Marco Rubio now being paraded about, and this is somewhat parallel with the way the United States has handled the Ukraine conflict—I feel like when Marco Rubio gets out in front, it means that there is a loss of confidence in being able to achieve anything other than a... Here is—you know, Marco Rubio was in Bahrain recently, and I'm sure you're aware of the Gulf statement that was made about the need for a free flow of traffic in the Strait of Hormuz and a demand for it. Here was what Marco Rubio said in Bahrain.

#Marco Rubio

And then we're going to have chaos. So that is unacceptable. You can call it a toll, you can call it a fee, whatever you want to call it—it's a game of semantics. The reality is that no country on earth has a right to charge for the use of international waterways, and that will never be an acceptable condition of any deal. The President's been fundamentally clear about that.

#Danny

So yeah, Trump has signed the MOU, and fees are being charged.

#Larry Johnson

Well, it's not an international waterway. It is Iranian territorial waters. Halfway out is 12 miles out. That's Iranian territorial waters under international law, period. They say, except for this—you know, England and France, they could insist that anybody wanting to travel the English Channel could be charged. England would control traffic halfway through, halfway out, and France could control the other half. They haven't done it, but you know, this notion—the irony of this is the one piece of possible international law that might apply to this is a law the United States has never signed because we don't recognize it as legitimate. So it's like, Marco, shut up. Okay, just shut up. The reality is Iran is going to charge a toll. The United States may not like it. Okay, what are you going to do about it? How are you going to change that reality? And the answer is, you're not.

#Danny

Yeah, and, you know, there will be few others other than the United States who will, and maybe Gulf countries that are under their vassalage, that will protest this. Abbas Araqchi has already said that they are pitching the institutional framework for a fee in the Strait of Hormuz to cover the services needed to manage it everywhere, including to China. And I don't see any protests coming from China, given how firm China has been on Iran's sovereignty and the sovereignty of all countries in the region and the world to be able to defend themselves if needed and to protect their interests if needed. It doesn't hinder China, and it doesn't hinder, really, international trade whatsoever, unless the United States tries to disrupt it, however foolhardy that might be.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah. Well, again, we get back to the question of what can the United States actually do to change the situation? What is its leverage? And, you know, right now, the United States has been forced to vacate several of the bases that have been staples in the past. And without the U.S. presence there, their prospects for further military action are extremely limited. And right now, orders have been drawn up to start the withdrawal of U.S. air, ground, and naval assets from the region. To my knowledge, that order has not yet been signed. Once it's signed and these planes start moving out—

I mean, there was a report yesterday; I haven't confirmed it independently yet—but the 28 KC-135s had departed Ben Gurion Airport. Now, why might that be? Well, that would be a first step.

So you would take these aircraft, get them away from Ben Gurion, fly them to, say, the airbase in Cyprus, or fly them to an airbase in Italy, fly them to an airbase, you know, in Spain, Portugal, France, England, because they'll refuel, or up in Germany. And then as these F-35s try to fly home, you know, they'll fly about 450 miles before they need to be refueled so they can fly another 450 miles. And then the question becomes, how many hours is a pilot going to be allowed to fly before they have to have downtime? Since it's not a combat situation, they may put a pilot on an eight-hour limit or a 12-hour limit. I'm not actually sure what that is. So it'll take a while to start ferrying these aircraft back to the United States. Well, if they're in the process of moving back to the United States, they're not available for use in combat operations against Iran, which further reduces what Israel could count on or threaten to do.

#Danny

Yeah, and a lot has been made of Greater Israel, Larry, but I see this moment as actually being a big crisis for this dream project of the Likud party and the rest of the fanatics inside Israel who want to see this kind of, from the Euphrates to wherever, across the Mediterranean. This idea that they are going to expand in this way—it does not seem like that is doing anything. That concept is anywhere but in collapse. Your thoughts?

#Larry Johnson

Well, they're the ones insisting "from the river to the sea," and Israel is just projecting. They don't want the Palestinians to claim that because that's an Israeli right, don't you know? It says so in the Torah.

#Danny

It's absolutely, absolutely ridiculous. I mean, this is what always gets me. If Israel and the United States—but let's just say Israel right now, because Israel is the one vocally espousing the Greater Israel dream—if they wanted it so badly, why don't they just do it? I mean, they've had to commit genocide in Gaza. They say they control 70% of Gaza. I don't even know what that means, honestly, because to me that means very little if Israel can't actually establish any. A lot of colonial situations—you're a student of history, Larry.

When you're a colonizer, you have to have administrative control. You have to administer an actual colonial government, you have to dictate, and I don't see that in Gaza. I don't see that. What does 70% of control mean? That you have troops running around waiting to get in? I don't understand it, but that's what they say. And then Hezbollah—they can't defeat Hezbollah. They got their butts kicked in so many battles, even just of late. I don't see this Greater Israel dream as being such a

Syria, where they occupy desert areas. Like, I just don't—they're not confronting anybody. Jolani is just Al-Qaeda. But once that project is collapsing, I don't see Syrians saying, "Okay, this is exactly what we want." I feel like it's a lot of borrowed time, but maybe that's my rosy outlook. What's your thought on the regional situation when it comes to Greater Israel?

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, well, the Greater Israel Project is now dead. It's dying. It is not sustainable. And the growing sort of opposition to it means that it's running up against the limits of Israel's military power. Israel does not have a large standing army. It's a reserve army. And even with the size of the reserve army they have, they could effectively fight on one front. They can't fight multiple fronts, and that's exactly what they're trying to do—to engage both in Gaza, the West Bank, Syria, and now Lebanon. And Lebanon in particular is especially problematic for them, because Hezbollah, despite past efforts to weaken and defeat Hezbollah, has failed. And Hezbollah's use of drones has proved to be a very, very effective countermeasure to the Israeli attacks.

#Danny

Hmm. And we have one question from the audience, Larry, that I am actually not familiar with, but a member of the show as well gave a super chat. Thanks so much, Tropes. Does Larry know why three giant plumes of smoke have been burning for over three months in the UAE, visible from satellites—intentional or out of control? Are you aware of any of this, Larry?

#Larry Johnson

No, I'm not. My guess would be oil fires that they've been unable to put out. That's the only thing I could imagine that would create that kind of plume and continue to burn. That was one of the other calculations of the UAE—that they thought that because of Fujairah on the south, they would be able to continue to export oil and not suffer what the other Gulf states were. And Iran fixed that pretty quick. They took that out, and so the UAE is now really hurting for cash flow.

#Danny

Maybe also to lead with this question, what do you know about that giant explosion just a couple of days ago at Ras Laffan? What happened there? You said earlier in the show that it's going to take at least a year, two, maybe more years for Qatari gas to recover. Does this hurt it even more, this catastrophic explosion?

#Larry Johnson

Well, again, I don't know specifically what blew up and what was damaged, so it would just be speculation. But it's not unreasonable to assume that that was not viewed as a positive. And was it

just an accident? Maybe. And you could argue that it was an accident that was caused because of the structural instability of the system based on previous attacks, that that may have helped precipitate and expand and make this worse. But it is just a reminder that even though you get oil flowing out of the Persian Gulf, the fact that the Qataris aren't pumping out LNG—and with LNG comes helium—those are two critical elements that the world's going to be short of for some time. I'd say at least six months, if not a year.

#Danny

And I'd be remiss not to cover what was absolutely horrific last night—the two earthquakes in Venezuela, a magnitude of over seven. Now, the reported numbers—these are still early in terms of the impact—are devastating and tragic. But under the assumptions that were made by the U.S. Geological Survey, they're saying that it would run into tens of thousands, if not 100,000 plus. Right now, 188 dead, 1,500 injured in two seven-magnitude earthquakes that occurred within 39 seconds of each other. The first thought I had is, one—you know, Venezuela did build up quite impressive infrastructure.

If they keep those numbers below what was assumed, then that means Venezuela has been very resilient under sanctions, but also the level of damage. If it continues to add up into these catastrophic numbers, the level of impact that sanctions do have that are still technically there—despite the Trump administration, then Trump's, uh, their best friends of ours, we, uh, are so much, you know, have this great relationship now—those sanctions are not really lifted, especially those universal sanctions that go beyond oil. Your thoughts on that?

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, it hasn't really changed anything in terms of, you know, it hasn't made the world more peaceful, more wealthy, you know. This change, you know, getting rid of Maduro, is just taking away, you know, someone that Trump considered to be an obnoxious presence. And, you know, is it going to expose or end up exposing potential corruption from U.S. actors? Yeah, I think so. Possibly. By the way, I saw one of your commenters was asking what kind of cigars do I smoke. Yeah, what kind of cigars do you smoke? Alec Bradley Superstition. It's a cigar made in Honduras.

#Danny

Oh, okay. All right. Very cool. That's a whole other world to me. I've never smoked a cigar, but you always look like you're victorious when you're smoking one on the program.

#Larry Johnson

I waited until I was 35 to develop the vice.

#Danny

That's all right. That's all right. Well, in any event, Larry, any final thoughts on the current situation globally before we head out and I do some announcements?

#Larry Johnson

Well, the biggest one is what's going to take place in Europe. We are headed toward the war that's currently confined to Ukraine expanding beyond the borders. It will involve Europe—Germany, the UK, France, Poland, Romania, Latvia, Lithuania—they're likely to become engaged in this war. They're going to suffer significant damage. The Russians are prepared for this. They've warned them, and those warnings have been ignored. So I think we're going to actually see the expansion of the war in Europe before we see it in Iran or the Persian Gulf.

#Danny

Yeah, well, in Europe, especially their NATO leader Rutte, they are bragging about being involved in all of the wars and how absolutely loyal they've been to these, what have been, losing causes. So no surprise there. But yeah, it is definitely going. The war in Ukraine is not over, but it's not going in their favor, that's for sure. Which is why they need the drone theatrics and optics to cover up that reality. But we are here—that's why we're here—to uncover and lift the veil of this war propaganda. Everybody, thanks so much for joining today. I want to make sure you know, and I don't know, I hope it's in there, but I'm going to get it in there. Make sure that you follow Larry Johnson's blog at Sonar21. I am going to put it in there. If it isn't in there—nope, for some reason it wasn't.

But now it is. So in the video description is sonar21.com. And oh, Transition Protocol, right? Yeah, I said also, yeah, also Transition Protocol. That's the Pepe and Larry show, hosted by Zulfikar Ali. I feel like he's been in touch with me; I should probably be in touch with him too, you know, if he ever wants to coordinate anything. All right, all right. That is also in the video description below, so do subscribe there, support that show, hit the like button before you go—that helps boost the show on YouTube's algorithm. And underneath all of Larry's resources are where you can support this show—Patreon, Substack, and much more. All right, I'll be back tomorrow with our mutual friend Patrick Henningsen, same time, 2 p.m. Eastern Time, June 26. See you then. Bye.