

Johnson: Russia BLOWS UP Kiev Missile Depot, Iran HITS FIVE Tankers

Former CIA Analyst Larry Johnson discusses how Russia's attack on Kiev continues to send shockwaves across the Ukrainian regime and its US-NATO handlers as war tensions in the Strait of Hormuz as Iran hits a tanker following Trump's renewed threats. https://www.youtube.com/@Transition_Protocol <https://sonar21.com/> https://www.youtube.com/@counter_currents_channel 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/spiritofho> #putin #ukraine #trump

#Danny

Welcome back to the show, everyone. It's Danny Haiphong. You can see I have Larry Johnson here with me. First, let's begin with the news. Russia's strike on July 6th continues to have reverberations up until now. This was seen late last night, where after Russia had hit a missile factory in Kiev, residential buildings actually came under their own kind of attack due to missiles that began to detonate and other kinds of munitions that began to detonate and hit surrounding areas. Now, Russia has not necessarily stopped its attack just because Kiev isn't under fire.

We see that in Donetsk and Petrovsk, a logistics terminal was hit very hard overnight as well, as was a Ukrainian drone hub in Kharkov with 500 bombs. The NATO summit is happening today, Larry. Zelensky was not allowed to give a speech at the actual summit; he gave a speech at the defense industry forum, begging for those PAC-3 Patriot interceptors, which have now all but run out. Also, right now it seems like about four tankers were hit in the Strait of Hormuz in the last 24 hours by Iran. Larry, these two wars seem to be escalating in a direction that the Trump administration, at least rhetorically, has said it does not want them to go in. Let's start with Ukraine and that front. What is the significance of what we are seeing, that we have now contradicted in that video—the claim that Russia was hitting civilians? It seems like Ukraine has actually been placing military installations around civilians. Your thoughts on what's going on there on the Ukraine front?

#Larry Johnson

Well, first we need to get somebody to do a parody video with ABBA — you know, “Gimme, gimme, gimme my Patriot missile.” You know, that's Zelensky. He's got to have those Patriot missiles, even

though they don't work. As Ted Postol pointed out, during the Iranian barrage of Israel, there was only about a 10% interception capability. But as we also saw in this latest strike, whatever Patriot missiles they had left, when they fired them, they missed their target but managed to hit civilian facilities, apartment blocks, and it was the Patriot missile that was responsible for killing these Ukrainians, not the Russians. So that's point number one. Point number two is Lockheed Martin can't make any more Patriot missiles right now because there's this issue with rare earth minerals that China controls, and China has not given them up.

And in any event, according to some recent publications, you've got like 20, 40 different contractors that are involved in producing different parts for the Patriot missile, the PAC-3. And each one produces a part, and that part has to be tested to make sure it works. And by the time they get these things assembled, from start to finish, it takes two years. Oh, that's a great system. That's going to get you responding to increased attacks. So this is why the Russians, after those attacks on Starobusk that killed the students, mostly young women, warned the foreign diplomats, you know, get the hell out of Kiev if you don't want to be a potential target, because the gloves are coming off — and they have come off.

It's actually sort of curious that, yes, I don't have an answer why Russia wasn't bombing the shit out of these places four years ago, three years ago. But regardless, they are now. So you got to deal with what the reality is now. And Kyiv has no answer for it. And all he's got is Zelensky begging, begging, begging. And he can keep begging, but he's not going to get what he needs. And so Russia, this is just, you know, one of the ways that Russia is ramping up the military pressure on the Ukrainians. You know, the defeat for them is inevitable, despite all the current nonsense and crap being put out in the West about, oh, Russia's losing. I mean, you saw Stubb, the Finnish, I guess, president today. He goes on CNBC and declares, oh, not that Ukraine is winning the war. No, Ukraine has won. Happy days are here again.

#Zelensky

The skies above are blue again.

#Larry Johnson

I mean, for God's sake. This is a leader of a country in the world, and he is absolutely divorced from reality to say something so nonsensical.

#Danny

Yeah, well, again, I want to point to this video again. I mean, this shows, first of all, that the Patriot systems are not working. There are none. There were no interceptions of any Russian missiles in this last attack, Larry, zero. And this is quite shocking, actually, because the narrative is, this is the—I don't know how to say this missile factory in terms of its name, it's a Russian name, Vishnev. This

missile factory caused the secondary rockets to detonate all around, and they detonated all around residential buildings, Larry. So maybe you can talk about this. Russia is taking the gloves off, and now Russia doesn't seem so concerned. It's saying, okay, we're going to take out all these military targets, but Ukraine has put them in people's—in harm's way. Well, yeah, yeah.

#Larry Johnson

Well, did you play the audio with that? Oh, no, no, no. Should I? Well, have you heard the audio? I mean, the audio I saw, the explosions go on for more than a minute.

#Danny

Right. Yeah, this is only a 27-second clip, but yeah, they go on for quite a while.

#Larry Johnson

Okay, here, yeah, you hear the... Yeah, it's actually absolutely... Yeah, I mean, this—whatever they hit...

#Danny

Yeah, that's coming from the factory too. That's not Russian missiles coming down onto the factory. It was struck, and yes, it kept emanating afterward.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, it was, you know.

#Danny

What did they hit, do you think? What did they hit?

#Larry Johnson

I don't know. Honestly, I don't know what kind of missiles were in there, what kind of rocket systems. You know, you get down to this argument, and there are some crazy people out there. There's a guy that writes something called the Ross Rant, and he's a pure example of delusional nonsense. So the propaganda line now is that the Ukrainians are killing eight Russians for every single Ukrainian that dies, despite the fact that since January of 2023 now—so 18 months—every month supervised by the Red Cross. So this is not Russian numbers. These are Red Cross numbers against the backdrop. And we're told that the war is a stalemate, that Russia is barely moving.

#Larry Johnson

They can hardly make any progress.

#Larry Johnson

But every month from January of 2025 until this June of 2026—we haven't had the exchange yet in July—for every 1,000 Ukrainian bodies that are turned over, there are 37 to 39 Russian bodies turned over. So, in other words, for every dead Russian, you're getting 37 or 39 dead Ukrainians. So the explanation then comes up, well, see, that's because the Russians are moving so fast that the Ukrainians don't have time to recover the bodies. Wait a second, you just told me it was a stalemate and that Russia's moving so slow, so now all of a sudden they're moving so goddamn fast that you don't have time to recover the bodies? Okay, which story is it? Slow or fast? It's not both. Give me one or the other. But, you know, the Ukrainians trot out their explanation according to the moment, you know, how they're feeling at the moment.

That's number one. Number two, what are the major causes of casualties in this combat environment? There are three: artillery—and I include mortars in that—drones, and FAB glide bombs. On the artillery front, Russia has an advantage of basically three and a half to four times more artillery than Ukraine. Ukraine's fired like 7 million artillery rounds. Russia's fired 23, almost 24 million since 2022. Drones, similar advantage. Yes, Ukraine has drones. Ukraine's inflicting casualties on Russians—not saying that they're not doing that—but Russia's got a three to four to one advantage on drones and is able to use the drones not just on the front lines, but as we've seen in cities like Kyiv and Lviv and, you know, Chernihiv and, you know, across the landscape.

But last and most important are the glide bombs, the FABs. Russia has them; Ukraine doesn't have any, or what it has is insignificant. Plus, you've got to have airplanes to launch them with, and whatever airplanes usually get aloft, Russia's shooting them down. Russia's launched, since 2023, 135,000 of these bombs that are anywhere from 1,000 pounds to 6,000 pounds. And they glide in from 50 miles away up to 100 miles away. And they're hitting targets where you've got, you know, Ukrainians holed up. It's a fortified center, and it just blows the hell out of it. It destroys it. So don't tell me that Ukraine's inflicting more casualties on Russia when, in every single frigging weapons category, Russia's got a three-to-one, if not 135,000-to-one, advantage.

#Danny

Well, I feel like now it's the most overt that the spin masters, especially in the think tanks like CSIS—I believe that's where they got that data from, supposedly. The New York Post published an article on that, on the so-called casualty discrepancy. But Zelensky, it says he spoke at the NATO summit in Ankara. He has not. He spoke at the Defense Industry Forum, which actually, I don't even believe is located in the same facility. But he said that currently, Ukraine is destroying 30,000 Russian servicemen every month, 28,000 in June alone. And of course, he begs for NATO membership.

#Zelensky

Ukraine is involved with NATO because NATO and Ukraine are an alliance for the future.

#Danny

So that's Zelensky's message, but that is the data he is peddling now, Larry. Your thoughts on this? It doesn't seem to conform to battlefield realities, in particular because Russia said that 13,500 troops alone were lost in the liberation of Konstantinovka that just happened.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, and Russia said, hey, you want a ceasefire so you can come pick up your bodies?

#Larry Johnson

And Ukraine said, no, no, no.

#Larry Johnson

Why? Because if they pick up the bodies, they have to acknowledge these people are dead. And if they acknowledge they're dead, they have to pay the families. And they basically say, hell no, we're not paying any damn families. That money's for us. That's money for the Zelensky Retirement Fund. That's money that his uncle is carrying to Dubai to put in banks, to launder through Israeli banks to be sent to members of Congress. Yeah, so this is obscene, absolutely obscene, that they persist with this kind of lie and deception. But, you know, they sit there and tell themselves, keep telling yourself. You keep lying to yourself enough, you come to believe it, which they do. But the reality on the ground, you know, you have to look at this in the context of how this war has evolved.

I think you make a very credible case that Russia failed to adequately plan for this special military operation, that they made a number of false assumptions that came back to bite them in the ass. But they quickly recognized their mistake and corrected it. The early mistake was when they invaded Ukraine in February of 2022. They only had 150,000 soldiers in Ukraine, and I think the total Russian strength at that time was about 900,000. And they succeeded initially. They got Ukraine to come to the table, the negotiations were underway, and then even after the Russians had agreed to essentially a Ukrainian proposal, it got sabotaged by Boris Johnson and Joe Biden.

Then, you know, the Russians captured Mariupol, which was, if you think back on it, a pretty remarkable achievement in a short while with, you know, not massive overwhelming strength. But then the Ukrainians mounted a counter-strike in August. Basically, the Russians had already retreated from Sumy, but they still held positions with basically territorial forces in Kharkiv. And Ukraine drove them out of Kharkiv, and that's because the Russians didn't have enough forces in

place. And that was when Putin initially had contract soldiers whose contracts came up in August. And those guys said, okay, we're out of here. And so they had to replace them. They did an immediate draw of reservists, about 150,000, I think.

And then they called up an additional 300,000. And so then from September, and it was during that September, you had a variety of incidents. You had the capture of Kharkiv. You had the elections, the plebiscite, the referendums in Zaporizhia, Kherson, Donetsk, Luhansk, in which an overwhelming number of people voted, yeah, we want to be part of Russia. And then in October, you had General Zaluzhny go, okay, we can't keep our forces on the west bank of the Dnieper in Kherson. We'll get trapped. And so he pulled back. And then that was the point they recognized there was going to be this offensive coming from Ukraine. And so they began building these, and I forget the name of the actual general who constructed all of these defensive lines in Zaporizhia and Kherson that ended up thwarting the much-ballyhooed counteroffensive that Ukraine launched in June of 2023.

#Larry Johnson

Hang on here for a second. It was in 2023 that Russia started its offensive against Bakhmut in Donetsk. And, you know, at the time, the Ukrainians controlled about 55% of Donetsk. So the Russians started against Bakhmut. They had enough force to deal with one incident, one front, one target. After that, they moved to Avdiivka—again, one target. After Avdiivka, across again, one target. But then, coming into the middle of 2025, all of a sudden Russia is now attacking multiple locations because the troop strength's gone from 150,000 up to over 700,000. And they are now carrying out attacks in Sumy, in Kherson, in Donetsk, in Zaporizhia, in Dnipropetrovsk, and in Kherson. So it's a whole different ballgame now.

And on top of that, the things the Russians have, apart from an abundance of artillery, drones, glide bombs... they've also done a similar thing with armored vehicles and tanks. Again, decisive advantage on those fronts. But they've got reserve troops. They've got probably 800,000 to 900,000 active-duty soldiers that are in reserve that can be committed to the cause if necessary. Ukraine doesn't have that. Ukraine's total armed force now is about 600,000, and they don't have reserves to call upon. And now they've got to defend an area that, frankly, they don't have enough troops to cover. And so Russia is going to keep pushing, pushing, and they'll be rushing. The Ukrainians will be trying to rush reinforcements from site to site. Ultimately, they're going to collapse. It's going to cave in.

#Danny

Well, we can return to the Ukraine conflict maybe a bit later, but I wanted to first get your reaction to the other news that has been going around. Now it appears that there have been five tankers in the Strait of Hormuz that have come under fire. Allegedly, there has been some confirmation—for example, the first tanker, the Qatari LNG tanker that was hit in the last 24 hours. That tanker was confirmed by Iran to have been struck by Iranian missiles after repeated warnings not to go through

the U.S.-escorted Oman corridor. Now, Larry, we're talking about five. There's a Saudi tanker, and then there are some of these other tankers—a UAE tanker, then a couple of unidentified ones that have also come under fire, allegedly by drones.

The U.S. is supposedly escorting all of these tankers through the Omani corridor, with Iran repeatedly warning that this will continue to bring attacks on them and danger in the Strait. What do you make of this, especially amid this massive funeral procession that's still going on today? I believe in the city of Qom, if I'm saying that right. Over 10 million people have participated in this funeral alone, and many of them are calling for revenge against Donald Trump and against the administration and the regime for the crime of not just assassinating their supreme leader, but, of course, all of the crimes that came around and after that. So your thoughts on this development? This comes as the Trump administration has tried to claim it is not violating the MOU and it wants to continue talking on the 11th, which Iran has said, no, we are not.

#Larry Johnson

When did they say they weren't going to meet on the 11th?

#Danny

Yesterday, I believe Abbas Araghchi—I can find that post.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, because I hadn't heard that yet. Last I heard were the Pakistanis saying, oh, yeah, they feel confident that they're going to get everybody together on the 11th. So that would be a good, interesting piece of news. I'm just looking right now at marinetraffic.com and vesselfinder.com, two great sites that track vessels. So there are no more vessels trying to—there are three that have been in place, virtually the same place, for the last eight hours. The Amaria—hang on here. Oh, that's interesting, that pulls it up. The Almaria is an LPG tanker.

#Larry Johnson

That's interesting. So, yeah, it's an LPG tanker. It's supposedly going to Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates. That's its stated destination. But it's stopped. Behind it, you've got the SSF Leo. It's a container ship. It's supposedly going to the UAE, Khor Fakkan. It's coming out of Jebel Ali. And then the other one that's there is the Safin al-Aman. It's a bulk carrier, and it's also going to the UAE. But, you know, as you pointed out, Iran's hit a total of five ships. What's interesting is, so far, the United States—not that they have a right to retaliate on this because, again, according to the MOU, the only country that's got the obligation, the right, to figure out who goes through the Strait of Hormuz is Iran. That's what it says in the MOU, that it's up to Iran to determine the safe passage of ships.

And Iran has put in place the PGSA protocol, the Persian Gulf Strait Authority protocols. If you want to come through, you have to submit an online electronic application. Tell us where you're going, what you're carrying, et cetera. And then, you know, as long as you're not going to Israel or working with the Israelis, you're going to get through, no problem. Well, some of these ships working with the United States apparently are trying to sort of provoke it and see what they can get away with. And so, you know, Iran's hitting them. So that part of the strait now is completely clear. And let's see, we're at 1:30, so that means it's about 9, 10 o'clock at night there now. But you said that these ships are being escorted. Now, to be clear.

#Danny

Yeah, what does that mean, exactly?

#Larry Johnson

They're not being escorted by a U.S. ship on the note. No, they've got some aircraft flying over.

#Danny

Air cover, right.

#Larry Johnson

Well, it's not air cover, because the air cover didn't fire back.

#Danny

That's true, yeah.

#Larry Johnson

So if you're going to actually do some sort of air cover for it, you would probably want Apache helicopters out, accompanied by A-10s. But again, that would be in violation of the MOU, because there's nothing in the MOU that says the United States has the right to stop Iran from enforcing its protocols. Not one damn word about that. But it does say that the United States will not attack Iran and that Iran will not attack the United States. But in this case, if the United States attacks those ships, then Iran's going to respond.

I think it's telling so far, and we'll see if it continues, that the lack of military response by the United States to these acts by Iran signals that the United States recognizes that if they launch any kind of attack right now, it's going to set off a damn firestorm. Now, what's interesting is when you look at the north, the Iranian corridor, man, there are a lot of activities there. Let's see, there's one, two, three, four, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve ships. These are

crude oil tankers — the Tonigawa, another crude oil tanker, the Mount Tenjun. It's heading to Singapore. The other one is headed to Kinwan, Japan. Let's see, Dream Diamond.

It's a vehicle carrier. That's interesting. I don't know if it dropped off or is picking up. You've got the Seagull, which is a chemical oil products tanker. It's going to Singapore. You've got the Lotus Leader. Come on, Lotus Leader. It's a vehicle carrier. It's going to Singapore. So, you know, the point of this is all this activity that's in there in the Gulf right now — where are these ships headed? Singapore. Asia. Asia, South Korea, Sri Lanka. Here's one, Nexor. It's an LPG. So the oil flow to Asia is restarting. Now, just because these ships are in the strait, they're still 40 days out. So it's not like these countries have got an immediate solution staring them in the face.

#Danny

Right. Yeah, great points, Larry. Well, I want to actually pull up what Abbas Araqchi said, because it's being interpreted, of course, as social media does, as a message about the fragility of the Jolly Oven talks, but it doesn't in itself say they're not going to happen. So he says, millions of Iranians rallied in unity to honor our Grand Ayatollah Khamenei and his legacy. Neither they nor our brave armed forces are moved by any threats. Paragraph 13 of the MOU is clear: negotiations on a final deal will not commence if threats continue. Honor your signature. Now, he says this, and I'll find the comments, but Donald Trump did, in the last 24 hours, threaten Iran that it would go back to war and wipe away all the infrastructure in about an afternoon, I think he said, if a deal does not end up being reached. So your thoughts on this? It does seem like the talks are on fragile ground, just on the MOU alone, because the MOU, of course, is just the first phase, if I'm correct.

#Larry Johnson

Well, yeah, the Pakistanis, you know, Pepe and I reported yesterday that Pakistan believes it's gotten the talks for the MOU back on track, that these will take place in Islamabad, that Iran said they're not going anywhere else now. They're going to go to Islamabad because that's the only place they feel they will be secure, outside the range of Israeli assassination teams, and basically to force the United States to acquiesce to Iran's demands. Now, we'll see who the negotiators will be. Is it going to be J.D. Vance? Is he going back, or is he just going to send Witkoff and Kushner along? Excuse me. So, you know, there's still a lot to be decided on that front, but, you know, the outstanding issues remain. One, Lebanon.

Israel's got to get out of southern Lebanon. And so far, the United States has played a bunch of games to try to prevent that. In addition to Lebanon, it's the issue of the frozen assets. Pakistan had reported they'd brokered a deal with Qatar and Saudi Arabia to provide \$6 billion apiece to Iran, but that hasn't happened yet, to my knowledge. And so that remains outstanding. The full lifting of sanctions, not just for oil but across the board, that hasn't been accomplished yet. And as Ron said, they're not talking a damn thing about nukes until those other issues are settled. Settle those issues, then we'll talk about the nuclear issue.

#Danny

Yeah, well, let me pull up now what Abbas Araqchi is responding to, because this in and of itself is a violation of the deal. The incessant threatening of Iran, especially during this sensitive time, is, I would say, not a great idea by the Trump administration, especially one that is banking so hard on Strait of Hormuz activity continuing to increase. Here we go.

#Larry Johnson

Look, we're going to win one way or the other. We're either going to make a deal or we're going to finish the job, okay? And it won't be tough to finish the job. I'd rather make a deal because I don't want to affect 91 million people. We can knock down their bridges in one hour. We can knock out their energy supply, all of those big plants that they built — big, beautiful, modern plants that cost a lot of money. They don't have any money now. We haven't given them any money, but we can knock out their electricity and power-generating plants. And I would say in a small part of an afternoon, every plant will be gone. And they know that.

#Danny

So those were the comments made. And this came as he said he doesn't want to affect 91 million Iranians, Larry. Assassinating the Supreme Leader, I think, alone, let alone all the others who were killed during the war, I think affects the 91 million Iranians and especially affects their resolve and how they feel about the United States at this point, as the funeral has made clear. But your reaction?

#Larry Johnson

Well, despite the Western propaganda that 80% of the population was against the Ayatollah — so, do the math. 80% means, you know, that's about 65 million, or, excuse me, 75 million. So...

#Larry Johnson

How many people are out there at the funeral? Well, you know, 15 million at minimum in Tehran, another 5 million at least in Qom today, maybe up to 10 million. Najaf, which will be in Iraq, that won't count, but they're going to have millions there as well. And then Mashhad on Thursday, millions, you know, probably another 10 million at least. Oh, that's way more. What that underscores is that there is massive, massive support for the Islamic Republic, not as the West has lied and tried to convince itself — oh, there's nobody supporting this — or they come out and say, oh, yeah, these people are being forced to show up. Yeah, right.

#Danny

That's what they always say. Yeah.

#Larry Johnson

You know, they're choosing to go there. And we've got it, you know, you see it from—fortunately, we've got enough reporters on scene, apart from, you know, Professor Morandi. But then you've got Patrick Henningsen there, Max Blumenthal is there, Jackson Hinkle is there. So you've got a variety of observers who are saying—oh, and Suleiman Ahmed, he's there. So, you know, a number of people that I've talked to or that I know are there as, if you will, independent voices. This is real. You know, I keep mentioning this, saying the same line over and over, but it's important to do so. This is unprecedented in human history. We've never had anything of this scale take place in history. I don't care whether it's been the death of a pope, the death of John F. Kennedy, the death of Mahatma Gandhi, the death of Charles de Gaulle—you know, pick your event.

You've never had one. The burial of Ayatollah Khomeini back in 1989 established a record, according to Guinness, for the most people at a funeral. And now that's been broken by this event and this series of events. So it's important for the West to understand this is a moment in Iranian history. That is, is it as impactful as what happened to the United States on December 7th, 1941—how that attack changed American opinion, how it changed the public outlook toward how they were going to interact with the world at that time with Japan and Germany. Even though this attack took place on the 28th of February, culminating in this kind of funeral, this kind of involvement. And, I mean, let's put it in another context: the fact that you've got the World Cup going on and you've got that many people out in the streets.

#Danny

Yeah.

#Larry Johnson

Hello. Hello.

#Danny

Yeah, yeah, no, it is truly impressive. And I'll just show one more video to underscore exactly the dynamic that you are describing. Here is what Donald Trump's face—the treatment he is getting when a banner arrives with his face on it. I can't read Farsi, but I can imagine that doesn't say anything delightful toward Trump. But there you have it. That is the scene. And, you know, this has changed so much, though, Larry, because it's not just that every Iranian inside of Iran is so firmly in defense of their country and against anything that the United States and Israel throw at them, right? But it's also this newfound control that Iran has over the Strait of Hormuz, which, as some have

said, is a nuclear weapon in and of itself. Some have said that Iran is not exercising that leverage properly. I'm not so sure what you think about that, though, Larry, because there are some people who are worried about the leverage that Iran has. Your comments on this?

#Larry Johnson

Well, Iran's leverage with respect to what?

#Danny

The United States, the war, being able to continue on and defend itself from U.S. attacks.

#Larry Johnson

Well, actually, let's look at it in terms of reverse leverage—what is it that the United States can do, or can it do anything, to compel Iran to acquiesce to U.S. demands? And that's where I think what the first, you know, 42 days of the war exposed, and now what is continuing to be exposed, is the limitation of U.S. power—U.S. military power—that the United States doesn't have ground forces. I know my good friend Alex Krainer has been talking about the possibility of a ground invasion, but Alex, he's a great economist, but my friend, he doesn't really understand military logistics and what is required to carry out a ground operation. That's not going to happen.

The U.S. has the ability to put together a force that could conceivably try to attempt a land invasion of Iran, whether an amphibious landing on the south down around Chabahar, a parachute drop into the interior, or a ground invasion from Iraq. It could conceivably try to put together those operations, but at what cost? Iran is not going to sit there passively and let these things develop. They'll be able to fire back, and fire in a way that the United States would not be able to sustain the combat operation. And it's one thing to land troops on Chabahar, but then to put in place the logistics to provide water, food, ammunition, and gas—both diesel and gasoline—for a variety of vehicles.

And that gets into another whole logistics issue for the U.S. military. Is it going to use gasoline or diesel? It tries to use both, and that complicates the logistics chain. So the United States can't do anything from a ground force level. It can't do anything with its navy, to speak of. It's left with air power alone, and air power is inadequate. It's got a limitation. So what this has exposed is that the United States cannot do anything really to coerce Iran. They're going to have to negotiate. They're going to have to get Iran to be willing to do things voluntarily, and that means the United States is going to have to make some concessions.

#Danny

Larry, and to your point, it's important, I think—I don't know if you saw this report. There's a report in Dropside News that a U.S. Joint Special Operations Command task force has reportedly spent more than three months deployed in the Middle East, standing by for an operation to recover Iran's highly enriched uranium from underground facilities. This is according to Highside, an independent national security outlet founded by Sean D. Naylor. According to the report, the operation would have involved transporting the recovered uranium to a laboratory in Hanford, Washington, while planning relied in part on Israeli intelligence to identify the uranium's location.

The report says some officials believe the mission could cost the lives of the entire squadron of 60 to 90 operators, and by late June, the operation was viewed as increasingly unlikely, with one former defense contractor saying the deployment had become more of a deterrent force for a diplomatic solution than a practical military option. Although most of the task force remains in the Persian Gulf region in special military operations, officials told the outlet personnel are gradually moving to the United States. So, essentially, not happening. That seems to be the crux of that report, but confirming what you're saying.

#Larry Johnson

Well, you know, I was back 20 years ago when the United States was considering then invading and attacking Iran. I was scripting exercises for that very task force. It's under JSOC, the Joint Special Operations Command. And we actually put together an exercise that involved Delta Force going. We used, as I recall, a location in Nevada, sort of north and east of Las Vegas, quite a ways out. And it was attacking what was called a hardened, deeply buried target, HDBT. And so, you know, we created this scenario—it wasn't this current one—but in which the Delta Force had to go in, they had to breach this underground facility, get in, seize a nuclear—I can't remember if it was a nuclear bomb or just enriched uranium—but regardless, and then get out.

What the exercise showed was that it would cost a lot of casualties, and there was no guaranteed success. I don't believe—if anything, I think the circumstances have gotten more difficult, not less difficult since then. So, you know, I'm not surprised to hear this at all. We did the exercise, and the lessons learned at the end—you do what's called a hot wash, lessons learned. You're supposed to sit around and say, okay, you know, we found out we got problems getting people on target. Once we get on target, we got problems controlling the fires that are coming in on us. And then once we try to, you know, secure the material and safely exfiltrate it, then we got other problems. You know, so it was one problem upon another.

#Danny

Hmm. Yeah, yeah. And, you know, I wanted to now, in the last 15 minutes or so that we have, I wanted to show you something that I find very interesting with regard to the Ukraine conflict, not talked about so heavily, and that is this. We have here—this is the Financial Times. As the West, and

especially the Western mainstream media, go absolutely haywire with enthusiasm for the Ukrainian side, the Financial Times said this: that American intelligence assistance has played a role in these drone attacks, aiding Kyiv in charting the best paths for the drones and helping them to skirt air defenses. That's what Ukrainian officials told the Financial Times.

Now, this comes, Larry, as Donald Trump has shown himself to be less than enthusiastic about the current NATO summit, saying that he is only there because of Turkey and that he's very disappointed in NATO and has very little to say about the conflict in general. So what do you make of this discrepancy? This has seemingly made up the Trump administration's entire tenure when it comes to this conflict. You have American intel helping Ukraine commit these pinprick strikes, which honestly are very ineffective if the last 600-plus drone attacks—where I think 99%, 98% were shot down—is anything to go by. But your thoughts?

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, well, the strikes the other night—let's see, today's Wednesday—so on Monday night, they didn't intercept a damn missile. And whatever damage was done to civilian targets came from errant Patriot missiles. So what we're seeing is the United States continues to be schizophrenic, you know, and contradictory in its policy. On the one hand, claiming to want to talk to the Russians to reach a peaceful accommodation. On the other hand, continuing to support Zelensky and provide intelligence and material support.

#Danny

Yeah. Yeah, that's... Now, your comments, Larry, on the NATO summit. \$140 billion is supposedly on the table, according to Ursula von der Leyen, to support Ukraine in this very enthusiastic period of, as Foreign Policy magazine puts it, a "momentum crisis"—characterized period for Ukraine. What exactly will this NATO summit be about? We have Donald Trump mostly touting bilateral relations with Turkey at this time. And there is the controversial F-35 deal, which Israel is not too happy about.

#Larry Johnson

Nope. Well, yeah, actually, what's come out so far today is Trump said, hey, I'm lifting all those sanctions on Turkey—Turkey, he calls it Turkey, not Türkiye. And yeah, hell, you guys can buy that S-400 from Russia if you want. And Erdogan's going, what? What? He couldn't believe what he was hearing. But, you know, so you understand American idiomatic expressions. And so to call the F-35 a turkey... it's not a compliment. It's basically suggesting that it's something best killed and served at Thanksgiving. The F-35 is a turkey. It is an overpriced, underperforming, unreliable, highly expensive-to-maintain aircraft.

And even if the United States sells you one today, there's no guarantee that you can actually get one fully equipped with the radar that it's supposed to have in the nose cone, because China's withholding the magnets and other rare earth minerals necessary to make that radar. So it's like, you know, this is a meaningless scam. And why Erdogan and his Air Force would think it's a great deal to get an F-35 when there are Chinese and Russian fifth-generation fighters that are as capable, if not more capable, and certainly more cost-effective than anything the United States is offering to sell. But, you know, maybe just because it pisses off Israel, that's why he wants to do it.

#Danny

Yeah, well, here is Trump on NATO. Here's what he said about it as he sits with Erdogan during their presser.

#Larry Johnson

So he would not have attended, Larry, if it wasn't held in Istanbul. The problem is, though, that...

#Danny

The Ukraine conflict continues on its current path. There doesn't seem to be any negotiated settlement, one that involves the United States, anytime soon.

#Larry Johnson

No, I mean, Peskov's made it clear there's not going to be a negotiated settlement. There's going to be a military settlement. You know, Russia's moved away from that. Lavrov and others have made it clear that whatever was agreed to at Anchorage, that's dead. They're not going back to that. That's no longer on the table. So they've made it clear they're going to settle this militarily. And the West has embarked on this—we talked about it earlier—this desperation of claiming that, oh, man, Ukraine's wiping the floor with Russia, Russia's on its back heel, the Russian economy is collapsing, the military is rising in revolt against Putin, the Ukrainian army is being victorious. I mean, it's just flat-out delusional nonsense that they keep repeating, and yet people in the West believe it. I mean, I've got a number of folks here telling me how wrong I am about my claims regarding Russia, but it's not, you know, I'm not getting paid by Putin or anybody to say what I'm saying. We just look at the reality on the ground.

#Danny

Well, Larry, my final question to you in the last five minutes or so would be to help us understand what the current trajectories of what's going on in Iran and Russia really portend for the world. Because, you know, the way I see the Trump administration behaving right now, it does feel like—I

say this a lot—I just feel like the United States is whistling past the graveyard, staying within the status quo to a certain degree but having to make pretty meaningful retreats, especially with regard to Iran. So what does it mean now that this is the reality we are witnessing? And it's one that, of course, I think the desperate headlines from the NATO sphere, from the Western mainstream media, U.S. mainstream media, and Trump's constant threats to Iran with very little to show for it demonstrate.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, well, it didn't just start with Iran. I mean, let's go back to Operation Prosperity Guardian in the Red Sea, launched by Biden back in December of 2023 to open up freedom of navigation against the Houthis in the Red Sea. That failed. So that failure introduced the concept of the limitations of U.S. military power. You know, we're supposedly the strongest military in the world, according to Donald Trump. Yet we couldn't stop the Houthis, who are not the second or third or fourth or fifth strongest military in the world.

They're just a bunch of hard-ass tribal people that don't know when to quit. So, um, it is a lesson that the United States has yet to learn. This lesson was driven home now in the Persian Gulf in our war against Iran, where we come up against the limitations of our power. We have constructed our military based on 20th-century concepts, and they're not ready for the 21st century. One of the 20th-century concepts is you get en masse enough troops, and then you can overwhelm a defending force. Well, that was before there were drones—and FPV drones, to be precise. So now, all of a sudden, any concentration of troops, more than three or four—and even three or four—they're ripe targets on a front line. So you can't get a mass troop formation moving forward because they're going to be hit with drones, with short-range cruise missiles, ballistic missiles, and not to mention artillery.

So the age in which you can mass concentrations of troops and move them forward and maneuver—that's history. That's 20th century. But that's how the United States is still set up to fight. Similarly, we project our force via our aircraft carriers. Those aircraft carriers, man, are big—you know, those are sitting ducks, so to speak, because they can be hit and defeated by hypersonic missiles. So it's just, the United States has spent a lot of money, and we've got a very expensive military, but it's completely—you know, it's like you're wearing Gucci designer clothing and being asked to go into a coal mine. Not that you're properly outfitted.

#Danny

Final word, Larry, in 60 seconds or less for you. Do you feel like the United States is going to rebuild its assets in West Asia?

#Larry Johnson

No.

#Danny

Yeah. Yeah. Short answer, but no. The \$1.5 trillion investment, Larry, does not mean that the U.S. is about to make in the military. I mean, we're both in the United States. We know also how slow the way that contracting and all of that actually goes, also in terms of capability. Well, in any event, Larry, I know you have another appointment. I just want to make sure people know that in the video description are both CounterCurrents, Transition Protocol YouTube channels, and Sonar21. That's where you can follow Larry and all the work that he is doing. Any final thoughts, Larry, before you head out?

#Larry Johnson

That's it, Danny. Always a pleasure, man.

#Danny

All right. We'll see you again soon. Yeah, Friday with Ray McGovern. It should be fun.

#Larry Johnson

I'll be back. Okay.

#Danny

All right. Bye-bye. Take care. Bye-bye. All right, everybody, I'm closing out here. Everyone, you should hit the like button before you go. That helps boost the show. I want to thank new member Hazayat. And I want to say, Farzan and Adim, you should try wearing an Aloha shirt too. Now, I don't know if I can. It's not my style. I don't even know where you get those shirts, but I appreciate the spirit that they embody for our friend Larry Johnson here. So with all that said, make sure you do hit the like button. Make sure you subscribe if you haven't subscribed. Do go to the video description to find all of Larry's work, but also how to support this work—Patreon, Substack, and there are many more options.

That's how you continue to support independent media, whether YouTube exists or whether it doesn't, for those of us doing this kind of work. Tomorrow, I am back live with our friend KJ Noh, the great geopolitical analyst, who will be back to analyze the developments not only of the last day, but also what they mean in the broader scheme of geopolitical developments. And of course, we will take a very hard look at Asia, especially with regard to China's recent ballistic missile testing. Without further ado, everybody, that is it for today's program. Hit that like button, as I said before, and I will see you all tomorrow. That will be the same time, 1 p.m.

