

Iran DESTROYS F-18s as Trump Hints NUCLEAR STRIKE | Johnson & Wilkerson

Fmr CIA analyst Larry Johnson & Retired Army Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson discuss Iran's massive retaliation to US strikes that has Trump desperate and more dangerous than ever as he hints toward a chilling oncoming escalation. <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> #iranwar #iran #trump

#Danny

Welcome back to the show, everyone. As you can see, I have Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson returning to the show and Larry Johnson to break down the latest news. We begin with Iran. The United States has conducted two different strikes overnight, and Iran's retaliation has essentially lasted throughout the night and into now. Some of the notable hits overnight were at the Al-Azraq base in Al-Azraq, Jordan, which Iran says they hit, including F-18 hangars. There are also F-35s and other military aircraft, as well as other equipment stationed there. In addition to this, just in the last few hours, the Fujairah port, Iran says they hit with a missile and shut it down. This comes just a day and a half or so since Iran hit two supertankers, which also throttled the ability for that port to operate.

And air defenses, gentlemen, appear to be in dire straits. This is Kuwait, the largest military warehouse that supports the United States military in the region. A Shahed-136 drone absolutely crashed right into it without any attempt at interception. So the United States right now is hitting southern Iran as we speak. Ongoing are the strikes, gentlemen. Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, I'll begin with you. What do you make of the effectiveness of the U.S. strikes? And it appears that we're getting far more evidence of Iranian targets, Iran's targets, actually hitting, while the United States claims every, it seems like every six hours or so, they are conducting strikes along Iran's southern coast. What have you made of these developments? It's been a while since I've been able to speak to you. Your thoughts?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I think we're digging our grave deeper and deeper with every HIMARS or whatever strike on Iran. I think the game has laid itself out now in its essential parameters, and those parameters are decidedly against the United States and against the coalition of the willing, whatever you want to call it, that's joined up with them. Whether you're talking about the now completely bled-out area almost to the coastline from roughly south of Basra all the way down to Muscat, with the possible exception of the Oman section in there, that has left, is no longer there. And we have apparently, with all the military we can muster that can shoot missiles and rocket artillery and other things like that at essentially the coast of Iran along the Persian Gulf, marshaled all our forces in that area.

We've taken over their countries, in other words, with our military assets, particularly Kuwait. And I don't see anything changing. I see the basic strategic dynamics being the same. The diplomacy supposedly that we were conducting has been absolutely set aside with regard to the memorandum of understanding, particularly paragraph five, and the delineation, if you will, of which parts are the most key element here, other than the one I'll get to in a moment. The most key element, of course, is the Strait of Hormuz. Forget all the other elements—reparations, return of money, all that kind of crap. The Strait of Hormuz and the nuclear issue are the two central issues right now. The Strait of Hormuz, of course, is putting Iran in the catbird seat.

And the MOU was essentially going to at least seal a little bit of that. And so when the funeral occurred in Tehran and we had to postpone, we decided—I think we probably had already decided—that we weren't going to have anything to do with it. We weren't going to look at a channel that allowed Iran to operate independently and a channel that allowed Oman independence. And we couldn't bring enough pressure on them to make sure that that comported with our wishes rather than Iran's wishes. I think Oman was getting ready to make the decision that it was going to comport with Oman's wishes. And the Qatari proposal to have a central channel was out before it even started because everybody saw through that.

All to say that the Strait of Hormuz is still a critical element in this entire conflict, with Iran having essentially the catbird seat, as far as I can see, despite what we say or try to do. And then the bigger issue, the nuclear issue—Trump seems to have forgotten completely about it, other than postulating from time to time that he might put some troops on the ground to go out, which is the only way he's going to get any real hold on any nuclear material that Iran might have. And then you back up and say, what is Iran doing with that right now? Is Iran really not going to make a nuclear weapon?

Or is Iran going to make a nuclear weapon? Or has Iran already made a nuclear weapon, matched warhead to missile, and gotten ready to send it off if necessary, only waiting for Bibi Netanyahu and what he might do in desperation in order to respond to that? And then you look at Lebanon—it's a disaster too. Israel says in Rome that it is going to do everything that it's supposed to do.

Meanwhile, they kill more freaking Lebanese civilians. I saw the figure the other day. I couldn't believe it. These aren't Hezbollah; these are Lebanese civilians that they've killed—thousands of them that they've killed, homes they've destroyed.

And they're not about to leave because they know if they leave, they'll be malpositioned to stop another joint Hezbollah-Iran attack on Israel, which would probably be devastating, if not existential, for Israel. So where are we? We're at a point where Trump has no strategy. He's never had a strategy, I don't think, other than to blather about it and to make tons of money off of it. And Iran has all the cards. And I haven't even mentioned the fact that behind them are China and Russia, which is the real reason that some people in the United States are waging this war.

#Danny

Yeah, Larry, same question to you. What is the significance of the U.S. strikes and Iran's retaliation? What has happened, and what exactly does it signify? And tell us, the U.S. in particular has hit a military barracks, I believe killing seven military personnel who were stationed in the barracks. They were not a party to the conflict. And as I showed, some of Iran's retaliation there. So your thoughts on what's happened in the last 24 hours? You know, this appears to be going toward a direction for the long haul in terms of, you know, how long this will go. Your thoughts?

#Larry Johnson

Well, we're bleeding ourselves dry, and Iran has every advantage. So, you know, what are we striking Iran with? There's really been a lot of bad information put out there. Oh, they're hitting them with the ATACMS. No, they're not. They may have fired some ATACMS from Bahrain directly across the strait, but that's confined, because the ATACMS' range is 150 miles. Well, the distance across the strait is 180 miles, so a little problem with the distance management. So the HIMARS fires what's called a Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System, GMLRS. Well, that goes 45 miles, so take that off the board.

It doesn't matter if we got 10,000 of those. They're irrelevant. Can't reach Iran. That leaves you with the ATACMS. The problem is the ATACMS are no longer in production because the Army has decided we don't want them anymore, because they go half the distance of what's now called the Precision Strike Missile. But then how many of the Precision Strike Missiles have been made? The number for 2026 is 54. OK, 54. Guess what? That means you've got a limited number that you can fire. They go up to 500 miles. But one week and you're out of Precision Strike Missiles. How about the JASSMs and the Tomahawks?

Again, with every one they use, I think they are diminishing the stockpile. And if you think of this, it's only CENTCOM that's got a demand on these. Oh, forget about that—the Indo-PACOM, the commander of the Pacific, EUCOM, commander of the European theater—they each claim, hey, we need some Tomahawks for our mission. So here's Hegseth going to have to figure out who gets

what. But the point is, we don't have an unlimited supply of either Tomahawks or JASSMs. So with each passing day that the United States goes on striking Iran, we're using up missiles and weaponry that we cannot replace anytime soon. Not replaceable within a year, maybe replaceable in three years.

OK, and that's even a question mark because the Tomahawk requires 18 different rare earth minerals. Good luck finding those from China, because China ain't selling. Look at it from Iran's standpoint. All Iran has to do is attack 10 targets over and over and over and over and over and over, day after day. The two air bases in Jordan—Muwaffaq al-Salti and Prince Hassan. The one air base in Bahrain, Al Isa. The one air base in Kuwait, Ali al-Salem. The one air base in Qatar, if necessary, Al Udeid. The one air base in the United Arab Emirates, Al Dhafra. The Naval Logistics Center in Oman, Duqm. That's it.

They don't have to attack 50 or 100 or 1,000 targets, whereas the United States does, because they say they're going to degrade Iran's ability to launch missiles or drones at ships. Go up to, I think it's called Bandar-e-Ghanim, which is north of Qeshm Island, and then go all the way to the south. It's about a 200-mile coastline. All along that coastline are coastal defense cruise missiles, drone launch sites, short-range ballistic missile launch sites. That's just along the coast. And then there are drone and short-range, intermediate-range ballistic missile launch sites in the interior of Iran.

And we haven't even begun talking about the underwater drones, the surface drones, the submarines, and the gunboats. So Iran's got a lot of resources that the United States has to try to attack. And the United States has limited munitions. This is not rocket science. This is basic addition and subtraction. Whereas all Iran has to hit are those 10 targets. They pound them day after day. And I don't know if it's going to be five days, seven days, 14 days. But at some point in that process, those bases are going to become uninhabitable. And then what does the United States do? It's not like it's got 20 or 30 different options out there. It doesn't. That's what's so crazy about what Trump is doing.

#Danny

Yeah, well, I'll pull it up on the screen, as Larry was noting, Colonel Wilkerson. I mean, these are the targets that Iran has been hitting, and it has been hitting them every single day since the United States renewed these strikes. And I have the same question for you, Colonel Wilkerson. What exactly is the U.S. hitting? Iran has noted that, for example, in Bandar Abbas, some military installations there, they claim—Iran says—that those have long been abandoned. There's no one there; they're just hitting empty space at this point. What are your thoughts on that? The U.S. continues to claim that it is wiping out military installations, aircraft, drone facilities, air defenses, etc. Is that true?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

In their dreams. But still, this is all tactical bullshit. This has absolutely nothing to do with what the United States, I think, believes it needs to do with regard to Iran, which is to, one, ensure it loses any kind of dynamic and injurious-to-the-United-States-interests control over the Strait of Hormuz. Failure, failure, failure. And two, eliminate the nuclear program. All the rest of it's just noise around the edges. It's killing people, particularly in Iran. It's killing people on the other side too, though. But it's irrelevant in terms of what's happening that makes a difference. What's happening that makes a difference is Iran is standing up resolutely to everything we're doing to it, delivering its own blows back, which in some cases, as Larry pointed out, are more effective than our blows for a number of reasons.

But Iran knows those reasons and is going to pound those reasons. And we're doing nothing, absolutely nothing about what Trump says all along, has said all along, is the principal issue—and that's Iran's nuclear program. Oh, by the way, that's what Bibi Netanyahu says is the principal issue too. And the latest thing I've heard with regard to what Larry was more or less intimating there—that we're running out of places to go where we aren't going to be destroyed—is that we're deciding, and might decide in the next 48 to 96 hours, that we're going to start consolidating our assets in Israel. Think about that for a minute. Not only will Bibi be extremely alarmed at our taking all of his apron space, all of his military facilities, and so forth, but look at the ripe target array we would make if we did that.

And yet I'm hearing the Pentagon talking about sort of hunkering down and consolidating assets in Israel and mounting all of the action that takes place in Southwest Asia from Israel. What a colossal strategic error that would be. I hope there's no truth to it. But I've seen dumber things done by this administration, particularly by this Secretary of Defense. And I'm increasingly thinking his Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, who seems more and more like an Air Force weenie every time I pick up a paper or hear something more about what we're doing. It looks like Air Force, Air Force, Air Force, which is no way to win a war. So I just hate to keep coming back to the essentials here. But the essentials are control of the Strait and the nuclear program. And we are doing nothing to ameliorate either situation.

#Danny

Yeah, and well, let's talk about now, because to your point earlier, Larry, you said this is becoming a dead end. Yet the United States does not seem to see the dead end in front of them. And according to the Wall Street Journal, now Trump is leaning toward expanding operations, including the use of ground troops and even bombing. Now, I wanted to also play Donald Trump's comments here, where he is promising and actually telegraphing next week that there will be more significant strikes, especially on Iranian infrastructure.

#Speaker 1

Do you anticipate that the strikes we're seeing this week against Iran will expand? Are you considering hitting energy targets or other locations inside Iran?

#Donald Trump

I'll save the energy targets for last, but ultimately we'll hit energy targets, yeah. But we're going to hit them very hard tonight. We're going to hit them very hard tomorrow night. We're going to hit them very hard the night after. And then next week it gets really bad for them, because next week comes the power plants. Next week comes the bridges. We're going to knock out all their power plants. We're going to knock out all their bridges unless they get to the table and negotiate.

#Danny

And there's that theme again—waging war to force capitulation. Larry, your comments.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, it didn't work the first time, not going to work this time. And, in fact, every Gulf country right now is on notice that they've got to make a choice. Either they support the United States, or their power stations are going to be taken out. And guess what? It's summer. They can't live without electricity. They'll have to abandon their cities. So it's a pretty stark choice coming at them right now. And Iran is, you know, they're not panicking. Iran continues to step it up. And, in fact, I think Israel is actually fearful, quite fearful, that it could get into the middle of the war right now. They don't want to.

Because, you know, a senior IDF official, Israel's Minister of Transportation, reportedly revoked permission for U.S. military aircraft, particularly the KC-135s, to land at Ben Gurion International Airport and be stationed there. Israel said, no, we don't want to be a target. We don't want to get hit. If that's true, then going back to what Colonel Wilkerson was saying, the United States is screwed because it's going to be driven out of Jordan. Those two air bases that are being targeted, they're going to be hit every night to the point that there's not going to be any—you know, they'll have some runways. They'll be repairing runways every night. That would be about it.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

The other support services will be destroyed.

#Larry Johnson

U.S. troops are going to be redeployed. They're not going to keep U.S. aircraft based there. So the United States is being effectively driven out of the Middle East. Now, that's Iran's stated goal. But whether it's happening de jure or de facto, it's happening. So this is, you know, Trump can do all the

tough talking he wants. My prediction: by the middle of next week, he's going to be pleading through the Pakistanis. I mean, he'll come out and say, oh, Iran's had enough, we've forced their hand, they're now pleading for talks, so we're going to accommodate them. Nonsense.

It's going to be the United States that's caving, because it's not going to be able to withstand the damage that's being done to its forces. And on top of it, the economic chaos that's flowing. You're already seeing diesel—diesel prices are going up. They're going to continue to go up because there's a global shortage of diesel. The fuel that comes out of the Persian Gulf, the sour crude, the high-sulfur crude, that's needed to make diesel and aviation fuel—25% of the global supply is now cut off, not coming back anytime soon. And so you're going to see escalated prices in both diesel and aviation fuel.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

And just to add to that, Russia has made it mandatory that any diesel be used inside Russia, not outside Russia. So you're looking at nothing going there. And we have this new phenomenon now, too, which is really interesting to watch. And following the oil traders right now, very interesting to watch. You have a reverse situation developing with China from what was the past policy. OPEC did it. Russia did it. Somebody that produced oil at a vast amount or rate could influence the cost of oil. Well, now someone who uses oil—the number one economy in the world, unquestionably the number one economy in the world—that uses oil and uses it in such prodigious amounts.

And when it goes to refill its strategic petroleum reserve, which is what it's contemplating right now, it influences the oil markets because it uses so much, and it has such a humongous ability to do all the things that are necessary to be diversified. It has the best renewable energy in the world, it has vast reserves of coal, and it is a huge influence on the petroleum market because it consumes so much—not because it sells, not because it has oil, but because it consumes so much and is so key to the world economy in that consumption to control prices. And so you have a whole new phenomenon right now operating in the oil markets. And China's just waiting to trigger which way it wants to go on this. I don't know what it's going to do, but it has vast influence in the markets now because it is such a huge consumer.

#Danny

Yeah, Colonel Wilkerson, staying on you, the whole—I'm probably butchering the name—Pickaxe Mountain issue, I've seen reports that say... Pickaxe. Pickaxe, yeah, the Pickaxe. Well, the Pickaxe Mountain, I've seen reports about how heavily fortified it is and that the only potential way to penetrate it is through a tactical nuclear weapon. What do you make of this? Is Trump really threatening a nuclear strike on Iran, and what would that even do? Because, you know, there are a lot of questions about whether that's even useful in the first place. But your thoughts on this? Well,

I'll preface my remarks with what I've said in the past: I think the United States will be the first country to use a nuclear weapon again—against human beings or against territory inhabited by human beings.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

We did it in 1945. We'll do it again. So that's a general answer to your question. Would Trump use a nuclear weapon? You're damn straight he would. You're damn straight he would. If it were presented to him by the Pentagon as an option that might work, and that might work with minimal risk—fallout, if you will, in the sense of the real fallout, in the sense of the political fallout. I have no hesitation saying Trump would do it. I don't think he needs to, but I think he would. Even more so to that point, though, is would Bibi Netanyahu do it? And I keep coming back to that chapter in Sy Hersh's book about what Jonathan Pollard turned over to Israel. And one of the things that apparently he turned over was the knowledge of, and the plans for—and they have acted on those plans—thermonuclear weapons.

So I'm told that it might be 25 or 30 of the stockpile that Israel has, which is anywhere from 60 to 300 weapons. Who knows how many total they have? I'm told that a number of those are thermonuclear. That changes the whole equation if it really is true, because thermonuclear is so much more powerful than the regular atomic bomb, like those we dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki—thousands of times more powerful than those bombs. Just watch the test at Bikini Atoll and you'll see the kind of dimension of the change and the difference that thermonuclear means. So we have a situation where, if those kinds of weapons were used, yes, it might obliterate the entire area around and the mountain itself.

Who knows? I hope we don't go there. I hope we don't even contemplate the use of those kinds of weapons. I hope we don't contemplate the use of any nuclear weapons. But again, I'll come back to the fact that Bibi's in trouble right now. He is in deep trouble, politically and maybe even in terms of the state of Israel surviving his premiership. So, you know, what's going to happen in Israel?

What is going to happen politically, and what is going to happen if Iran decides, for example, that the Lebanon deal is a piece of junk—which I think it probably is—that Israel is not going to abide by it in any way, that Israel is going to place itself in a position to impede Hezbollah acting in concert with Iran? And Iran goes ahead and says, well, we're going to do it. And Hezbollah will do the damage that it can, when it can, and how it can. And Israel is put in extremis once again. Larry's right—they sense this. They don't want this. They really do not want this, particularly not during this election period. But it's getting really, really dicey, I think, for Israel right now. And is Trump considering that? Or is Trump just, you know, Bibi's coming for his shot of adrenaline—he's coming to Washington in order to get, you know, the blessing from the U.S. president so he can get elected again?

I think it's this weekend he's supposed to come. I don't know. But I do think we're getting into a period here where the dynamics might change appreciably. And then you've got to look at the fact that over Iran now, hovering over Iran, is the number one economy in the world and all that represents, and probably the number one military in the world and industrial base to go along with it, alongside Russia. You have both of those countries very interested in Iran's survival now, I think, interested enough to ensure it occurs. This is a dynamic that no one ever thought about, I think, in the Pentagon—that China would fight back, and fight back in this indirect way. But they are; they're fighting back. And to a certain extent, Russia is too. So we are at war with the greatest powers in the world, in different perspectives.

#Danny

Yeah, great points, Colonel Wilkerson. Larry, anything you want to comment on there? But also, I want to play these comments that Trump made a few days ago to the media, which almost indicate a hint that the U.S. has already used nuclear weapons. I don't think that's actually occurred—it's pretty hard to hide such a thing. But anyway, I think the comments are significant. Here's what he said to the Salem News Channel.

#Benjamin Netanyahu

He's done a good job. If I wasn't around, or if Bibi wasn't around—especially the combination—Israel would not exist today. We wouldn't have hit them with the B-2 bombers. You know, they were going to have a nuclear weapon within two weeks. Had I not hit them with a nuclear, within two to four weeks they would have had a nuclear weapon. And once they had a nuclear weapon, they would have used it. And you wouldn't even have Israel around. No, Bibi's good.

#Danny

Is there anyone in Israel better than him? So that was his comment about Netanyahu, but he made a bit of a slip-up that people paid attention to in terms of hitting them with the nuclear. But, Larry, your thoughts on this—you know, it seems like an incessant escalation ladder that the U.S. is climbing itself, one that seems to have far more dire consequences than maybe benefits.

#Larry Johnson

Well, number one, the Iranian nuclear sites are impervious to nuclear strikes. They've been built specifically to withstand a nuclear blast, okay? So they are far deeper underground than many in the West understand. You know, I've heard Alastair Crooke has been into some of the facilities. So, you know, it's just, you know, this is... this is one of those, you know, I guess it's like that movie

Independence Day, you know, where the aliens are coming and we fire our nukes at them and they just bounce off. It didn't have the effect that we thought it would at all. So that is what Trump's looking at.

Number two, the Majlis, you know, the legislature, they really had not convened in session since the 28th of February. They reconvened day before yesterday. I'm hearing reports that they are going to pass laws, legislative action—one, prohibiting any further negotiations with the United States on any kind of MOU without actual concrete concessions by the United States up front, such as unfreezing the damn assets first and withdrawing the sanctions second. But also, they'll act to have Iran withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the NPT. So once they withdraw from the NPT, then I think the road is now open for Iran to build a nuke.

I personally believe Iran is going to build a nuke. They may do it sooner rather than later as a result of these continued attacks by the United States. The United States violated every single part of the MOU, kept trying to blame it on Iran. Iran upheld the MOU. It was the United States that broke it, no matter what they say. And I think many in Iran have come to the conclusion that the only way they can survive and not have to face constant attack is if they have a nuke as insurance. And so I think, you know, Trump, with all of his threats and protestations, once they detonate it, it's just a whole new game.

#Danny

Yeah, and Colonel Wilkerson, Trump is saying that it's Iran who is calling to come to a deal, that they're begging for it. He's not so sure he wants to do it. Any comments you have on what Larry just said and the... You know, what is even the point? I feel like we've been through this before. I've been saying that it almost feels like we're back in April, in the middle of the 39 days of initial aggression. But your thoughts?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Well, that's a good observation. Nothing changes with Trump. He just keeps saying the same thing over and over again, like a broken record. Now he's making a lot of money off the needle going into the groove and coming out of the groove and going back into the groove and coming out again. And so is his family. I mean, they're playing all of this for tons and tons of gifting money. But otherwise, he has no plan. He has no strategy. He has no idea what he's doing. And that's particularly true with the use of the military. And I agree with Larry that, in fact, I would even put it back further than this meeting of the Majlis, or this session of the Majlis. I think they made a decision way back, and when I say they, I mean the leadership of the IRGC, that they were going to build a nuclear weapon.

And I just don't know if they've built it yet, they're in the process of building it, or it's on the way, so to speak, that they're going to build it. I think Ted Postol is right that there's at least a 60 or 70% chance that they've already got one, two, or several. This is what happened to us with the North

Koreans. And by the way, we did not detect their test at all—the first test. We wouldn't have detected the second if the seismic center in Geneva had not told us about an event. And we put it on the map and took a look at it and said, well, let's just say we knew where to look the second time. And when they conducted a second, a little bit larger test, about three-quarters of a KT—the first one was about half a KT—we detected it. And we knew positively that what Jim Kelly was being told was accurate.

They had a nuclear weapon or two or three or four, or, as Kim Jong-un said, 12. I think the Iranians are at that point. I think they've taken the lesson, and the lesson is if you have a nuclear weapon, you won't be bothered. If you don't have one, the United States will hound you mercilessly, especially under Donald Trump. And there's no coordination, no strategy, no outlook for anything better except holding out and being resolute and using your two central strategic pillars, if you will—control over the Strait of Hormuz and your nuclear program. I don't see they have any alternatives. And then you throw Netanyahu into it and you say, well, that son of a bitch might use one at any moment. You've got to have something to deter him too, especially if he's reelected. I hope to God he's not. But if he is, you're going to need something to deter him.

#Danny

Hmm. Yeah, and some breaking news. Iran has, all day since I woke up this morning, been striking Iraq—U.S. forces, in particular the Kurdish areas where they support, where Trump even said, we have other people who will do a ground invasion. He's usually referring to these forces. But there are reports of U.S. military casualties now, according to Israeli media. And so, Larry, I wanted to ask you, what happens, one, to the U.S. military personnel who are on these bases that continue to be hit? We hear very few reports about casualties. Also, what happens to things like the F-18s that we began the show with? Are they gone? Are they destroyed? I mean, how does this work exactly when Iran is hitting these sites and the U.S. keeps on whistling past it? It almost seems like it's not really a concern of theirs.

#Larry Johnson

Well, bunkers. You get into bunkers underground and hide out and hope it doesn't hit you directly. You know, right after June 17th, after the signing, so just about 30 days ago, Pete Hicks had issued orders to start withdrawing U.S. forces. It was going to be done in waves. We did have reports in the last two weeks that the B-52s that were based in London withdrew back to CONUS. F-15s that had been based in Jordan flew back to the UK. The F-22s that had been forward deployed also withdrew from the area. Then over the last three or four days, there was a lot of confusion, and apparently a lot of the orders to withdraw have now been suspended. So the people are now being ordered to stay in place. But you don't have the same force structure that we had on, you know, say, the 27th of February to launch massive attacks—much reduced.

And look, so far these attacks have been limited to the coastlines. And, you know, the United States does not have an unlimited supply of weapons. So every day it uses one, that's one less that's going to be available to INDOPACOM or EUCOM. So it really creates, you know, it's created a strategic dilemma for the United States. But if the United States, you know, they're talking about the possible use of ground troops in Iran—okay, someone explain that to me, what you're going to do. Are we going to conduct a ground operation like the invasion of Iraq in 2003? Well, give us 11, 12 months, we might be able to build up 200,000 soldiers in a location that is going to be constantly under attack by drones and short-range ballistic missiles killing troops trying to, you know, get deployed?

Or does this mean we're going to try to do amphibious landings down at Chabahar? Yeah, get those damn Marines ashore. You got 5,000 of them. Then what? How do you support them and sustain them when Iran is going to be unleashing a barrage of missiles and drones on those troops? It's not just artillery. Good God. And so our ability to logistically, you know, to project and sustain that force, it's not there. I hope to God there's somebody in the chain of command that realizes it and says, no, no, we're not doing that because it's a suicide mission for those troops. Or what, take Kharg Island? Same thing. You know, people, they watch so many movies in Hollywood, and they think it's just a matter of flying some planes and dropping the troops.

How many—I don't even have a clue how many troops you'd need to, quote, secure Kharg Island. I think somewhere on the order of 2,000. So when you look at 2,000, you got to say, okay, how do we get them there? Well, if you're going to bring them via plane, the C-130 can only hold 90, 92 combat-loaded soldiers. The C-17, a bigger plane, only holds about 30 more soldiers than the C-130, which is 126. So even with the C-17, to bring in over 2,000 soldiers, you're going to need close to 20 flights of C-17s. I mean, so just stop. I wish people would stop talking this nonsense. It doesn't—all you're doing is, if you do that, you're going to establish—you better have the body bags ready because they're going to be stacking bodies of U.S. soldiers.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Let me reinforce what Larry just said with some history. When we were looking at the Desert Shield portion of Desert Shield–Desert Storm, the first Iraq war, we knew Gus Pagonis in particular, the logistician who handled the overall logistics for Norm Schwarzkopf, knew that we didn't have squat. We didn't have any way to get into the area other than to land on a few friendly airfields and walk. So what we did was we took that six to eight months that was the buildup, the Desert Shield portion, and we built the most sophisticated, modern, capable throughput facility—we called it forward movement and rehabilitation training, forward movement and readiness, or something like that—in Kuwait. A marvelous facility that could accept thousands of troops at a rapid rate and funnel them into whatever theater in the area that we wanted to fight in, in this case, principally Iraq.

The second time we went in, in 2003, under George W. Bush, we had that facility and brushed it off and modernized it a little bit and did the same thing. We do not have that facility now. It is gone.

The Iranians have destroyed it lock, stock, and barrel, as far as I can ascertain. And we're just sitting there with forces as they come in that are mostly armed MLRS unit types—you know, the multiple launch rocket system types. HIMARS is a whole huge system of weapons. They go from MLRS types that'll go 15 kilometers, extended range 30, to, as Larry was saying, the single missile ATACMS, which really will go 500 kilometers if you really max it out in its ER stage.

So it's a whole range of weaponry. And that's all we have there, as far as I can tell right now, because everything else has been destroyed, just like it's been destroyed in Bahrain. And I'm hearing that a lot of it is destroyed around al-Hadid too—the biggest facility we had in the region for launching aircraft—and other facilities like that are gone. So Larry's right. How do you stage this? You don't have a staging place. You go into Iraq, and what does Iraq do to you if you do it there? And how do you do it?

Because there are no facilities there, really—not staging facilities, not a place where you can bring thousands upon thousands of troops in, get them ready, and then launch them somehow in a way that's not self-defeating when you do it. Larry's right. I mean, how are you going to land on Kargah, really? Are you going to parachute down? Good luck, paratroopers. If you thought you were getting shot at badly by machine guns on the ground, watch those drones get you. I mean, I don't know how you do this. I realize I've been out of the military for a long time and things have changed a lot, but there are some things that haven't changed.

#Larry Johnson

Like logistics.

#Danny

Yeah, well, we saw what happened during what appeared to be some kind of operation that led to the downing of the F-15. We saw what happened there. It didn't go very well. A little bit of breaking news before I get back to you, Larry. It looks like the U.S. is doing what it often does in war, which is targeting civilian infrastructure—this time, a children's hospital in Abas, where there are strikes going on right now. And then, you know, to both of you, there is no lack of attention to expanding war efforts—expanding war right now—as defense officials at the Pentagon are briefing Trump on military actions for Cuba, including an amphibious aerial assault campaign. So, airstrikes of its own on Cuba, which would expand the theater of war quite dramatically and would be a real first just 90 miles off the coast of Florida. So, Larry, your comments on this—the United States plowing and kind of rolling down the mountain, or maybe climbing up the mountain, of escalation with Iran and also looking at Cuba.

#Larry Johnson

Well, again, what's the end game? So we put troops in Cuba. They have a guerrilla force. Their military and militias are set up to fight as insurgents. So we'll actually be taking probably more casualties there than we have with respect to the war in Iran, simply because it's going to be more—you know, you've got more troops in contact with the population. And then, you know, you break it, you buy it. So then all of a sudden the United States has to be responsible for providing water, providing power, providing food. And I guarantee you, the U.S. military cannot walk and chew gum at the same time right now. So are they going to be focused on the logistics support for the operation in Cuba, or provide the logistics needed to sustain operations in Iran, on the understanding that with, you know, each day a missile strike goes on, that's fewer missiles in the U. S. arsenal that cannot be replaced?

And it is going to reach a critical level with respect, particularly to the Tomahawks and the JASSMs. So, you know, there is no strategic thinking going into this at all. This is all an emotional reaction. And I think what we're going to see is sometime in the next, probably by the middle of next week, Trump, you know, the narrative will change about how, you know, Iran is—yeah, we've kicked the hell out of Iran, Iran's now begging for talks. Yeah, so we're going to probably sit down and talk to the Iranians now. The reality is Trump's going to be begging the Pakistanis to intervene with Iran. And I think Iran's going to tell Pakistan to go screw off. No, we're not interested anymore.

#Danny

Right. Well, Colonel Wilkerson, as Larry mentioned earlier in the program, the majority of Iran's parliament has essentially trashed the MOU, despite the fact that Trump continues to talk about it. But I want your thoughts first also on the Cuba question, because this would be unprecedented, especially amid, as Larry mentioned, the absolute logistical nightmare that this presents—not to mention the overstretched nature of all of this—and having a war 90 miles off the coast of Florida go on while an unpopular war is raging in Iran. It seems to have a lot of consequences to it. But your thoughts on this report?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Well, I think it's just the sort of thing Trump would do. He wants attention off the failing wars. Both wars are failing. The one in Ukraine, I think, is going to show dramatically that it's failing within the next 12 months. And the one in the Gulf is failing also. You take attention off it by starting another one. That's standard Trump technique. And it doesn't matter whether it goes to hell in a handbag, which I think it will pretty quickly, because he will have what he wants. He will have diverted attention, and we're approaching the midterms. He needs something to divert the Americans' attention, and he's going to use that as it. And his viceroy in Venezuela will be welcoming being a viceroy in Cuba.

So he's got a cohesive thing to do for that part of his administration, his cabinet, that's most volatile right now. I understand there is quite a battle going on between Rubio and Vance, mostly in terms of who's going to replace Trump. And so it's right in the way Trump does things. I would not be surprised at all. I wouldn't be surprised, Danny, if he went and took Greenland too, or at least made some move on Greenland in terms of consolidating U.S. control over the northern portion, in particular the portion within the Arctic Circle. Wouldn't surprise me a bit. This is a man who does what he wants to do when he wants to do it, and to hell with everything else, including the Constitution and the rest of the government.

#Danny

Yeah, well, Larry, your comments on the, you know, now that there are reports, now more details about this hospital in Avaz — I guess it's a children's cancer hospital that was struck — all the patients are being evacuated. Yeah. Everything that the Trump administration, especially Donald Trump himself, says and then does is a war crime by definition. Not only attacks on civilian infrastructure — I believe a steel plant was hit as well in the area.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

They destroyed the wrestling museum too, or the Coliseum, the place where they train and everything. They destroyed it.

#Danny

Right. And there are also reports, too, that they targeted warehouses containing grain and wheat in Khuzestan. And since Khan denied it, they did one of those horrific posts — I could pull it up in a bit — where, you know, they fact-check supposedly Iranian claims. But, Larry, your comments on this. This is a really important part, I believe, of how one should look at this war in the history books.

#Larry Johnson

One word. That's Farsi for revenge. That was what was being chanted in the streets of Qom and Mashhad last week. So the Iranians want revenge. They don't want negotiation. And the attack on this hospital just reinforces that. If you want to call them the voices within the Iranian government, I don't want to call them moderates or hardliners. I think that's just stupid language. But the ones who thought, okay, let's give the negotiations a shot — they've now been discredited. They now have no argument whatsoever. And instead of arguing that, they are now in a position to say, yes, the United States must be punished.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

The Moshtaba

#Larry Johnson

Khamenei made that very, very clear in his last written remarks in association with the death of his father. So again, I wouldn't be surprised if by the end of next week we're going to see something dramatic out of Iran that will completely change the face of the Middle East. And people say, well, if Iran develops a nuke, Israel's going to attack with a nuke. I don't think so, because if Israel attacks with a nuke, Iran's going to respond with a nuke. And then Israel—it's a lot easier to destroy Israel than it is to destroy Iran.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I mean, it sure is. Yeah, well... you know, Danny, if you want to think about a prescient set of remarks that is now applicable once again, in December of 1941 when Yamamoto was leaning out of his carrier deck or whatever he supposedly said, "I fear that what we've done has awakened a sleeping tiger and filled it with a fearful resolve," or words to that effect. I fear we have awakened a sleeping tiger and filled it with a fearful resolve.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, absolutely.

#Danny

I couldn't agree more. When it comes to these strikes, gentlemen, I wanted to ask now about Yemen, which has entered the war as well. There are reports that Iran is saying the U.S. can expect other waterways to be disrupted soon if U.S. strikes continue. I believe they're referencing the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. And so, Colonel Wilkerson, first to you. I want your comments on this. This has been a move that has not been exercised yet throughout this duration of the U.S.-Israeli aggression against Iran and, of course, the intensification of attacks and genocidal attacks on Lebanon.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Well, I'll take you back to Hegseth's remarks. I can't remember exactly what they were, but they were to the effect of, this will be over really quickly. We're going to send the Houthis running. And they sent us running. And I, you know, I was talking with some people on the Hill about their information with regard to what was happening in Yemen vis-à-vis Saudi Arabia, because it was my understanding that the war had never stopped, that there were still things going on, mostly on the Saudi side, but some on the Houthi side too. There were things still going on in terms of the conflict

originally started by Saudi Arabia against the Houthis, and that we pitched in and helped and gave intelligence and bombs and everything else in order to make the Saudi task easier, and they still couldn't beat the Houthis.

And I understand now that it has picked up to the extent where the Houthis look like they might be aiming at taking out the Saudi pipeline. In addition to doing what they did in the past with regard to the Red Sea, which I think would be accomplishable once again, we would have the same problem. And as Larry's pointed out, we don't have nearly the assets. One of the things Larry didn't say—I don't know, I can't verify this—but I've been told by sailors that we have ships sailing around right now on missions in other areas, other AORs, that do not have their stores filled. In other words, they do not have missiles in the bins because we don't have missiles to put in the bins. We don't want anybody to know that.

#Benjamin Netanyahu

We aren't advertising it, of course.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

But if that's true, then we are really hurting in terms of some of the most critical munitions that the Navy at least wields. So if the Houthis did that, if they really entered back again, full score, and if they were able to eliminate that pipeline, and they were able to close the Red Sea again to everyone other than those who were opposed to what's happening to the Palestinians, we come back to the Palestinians again. Then that would be formidable. I mean, it would just add to the U.S.'s problems and to the world's problems, really, because the Bab al-Mandeb is really more important than the Strait of Hormuz in terms of overall general commerce.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, this has to be my last comment. I've got to bail out. But the Saudis did something stupid the other day.

#Danny

That's what I was about to ask about—Saudi Arabia with the United States said, okay.

#Larry Johnson

Here are the Saudis. So their last outlet for oil that's getting out into the world is through Yanbu on the Red Sea. And they've had a prior six-year war, ten-year war with Yemen, and they lost it. And so they're sitting around thinking, okay, God, what can we do that's going to secure our ability to get oil out of the Red Sea? I know. Let's attack Yemen so that the Houthis then bomb the shit out of our

airports and blow up Yanbu and then close the Bab al-Mandeb so we can't get any oil out. That's a great idea. Let's go, guys. Yeah.

#Danny

Under Trump's direction, supposedly, or at least with his blessing, we should say.

#Larry Johnson

So they did that, and then immediately the Houthis hit two airfields, and then the Saudis go, maybe this wasn't such a good idea. And they've been silent. They haven't done a thing since then, because I think they realized this was incredibly stupid. And on that positive note, I gotta go.

#Danny

Yeah, Colonel Wilkerson and I will close out here. Thanks, guys. Yeah, take care. We'll be in touch. All right, Colonel Wilkerson, your thoughts, your comments on this?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Well, I think there are very few people left in the world, very few states left in the world, probably very few people, too, that care a damn about what's happening, which started all this in many respects. And that's the plight of the Palestinians. Supposedly, the Saudis were adamant that any kind of deal that was reached, whether it was a revival of the Abraham Accords or something else that included Israel, had to include a viable plan for creating a Palestinian state.

And it had to be viable, and it had to be implementable, and it had to be quick, not long-term. That's fallen by the wayside, too, even as far as I know. No one's talking about that anymore. All that's happening is we're getting ready to submit over, I think, somewhere around a quarter of a million to 300,000 Palestinians in that rubble and simply start over again with no reckoning or accountability for that humongous crime. And that's been lost sight of in all this, I think, except maybe by people like the Houthis, and maybe it's a practical reason for Iran.

#Danny

Yeah.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

And that's a shame. That's a real shame.

#Danny

Yeah, I believe 16 Palestinians were killed just today by Israeli aggression.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Ro Khanna's lucky he didn't get killed.

#Danny

He was arrested, detained by those, you know, settlers, whatever they call them over there. Those thugs. Yeah. And then he goes on to Jeremy Scahill's program and starts defending why the United States should continue to give them "defensive weaponry," quote unquote. It's absolutely... This is the state of U.S. politics at this point, Colonel Wilkerson. Any final comments, Colonel Wilkerson, before we close out here?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Just that I think we're looking at an extraordinarily dangerous period between now and December in America. We are. I'm watching what ICE is doing. I'm watching what Pete Hegseth is doing and has done. You know, we didn't promote a female Navy admiral for the first time in something like 17 or 18 years. He's shaped this military. He's shaping it with Christian nationalists, with mental category fours. He's shaping it for something. And I think I know what he's shaping it for. He wants it to be neutral or actually on Trump's side when we start something in November.

#Danny

Yeah. And while I'm a political economy guy, you always have to take a look at the personnel, too. Their whims, their unhinged character can certainly influence history, as we've seen so often, regardless of limitations, regardless of consequences.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I think that's what makes it all—the crap that's coming out on the former Secretary of Homeland Security, on the current Director of the FBI. I mean, this is a regime full of criminals. When's the last time we had one like that? I think it was in Berlin in 1936, 37. Right.

#Danny

Yeah, great point. Well, we can close out here. I want to thank Senator Wilson, asking you guys to reach out to someone in the present cabinet to talk to them about this war. Maybe they would listen, or he would listen to experience. Yeah, I don't know, Colonel. Keep tapping on your sources.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I'm trying a couple, and I've gotten absolutely nowhere.

#Danny

Thank you so much, Guitar Jim, for that super sticker. Everybody, make sure you hit the like button before you go. That helps boost the show in YouTube's algorithm, and that helps more people hear what Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson and Larry Johnson had to say today. I'll be back on for the first time tomorrow with John Mearsheimer, actually, at 1 p.m. Eastern Time, July 16th. So join us then, July 16th, 1 p.m. Eastern Time. Thanks so much, Larry. Thanks so much, Colonel Wilkerson. And we are out. Thank you, Danny.