

Larry Johnson: Saudi Arabia Opens New Front in Iran War

Larry Johnson discusses the Iran War, which has triggered a conflict between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, and possibly a larger conflict between Iraq and Kuwait. Johnson is a former CIA intelligence analyst who also worked at the U.S. State Department's Office of Counterterrorism. Read Larry Johnson's Sonar21: <https://sonar21.com/> Buy merchandise: <https://diesen-shop.fourthwall.com/en-nok> Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glenndiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glenndiesen> Support the research by Prof. Glenn Diesen: PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glenndiesen> Buy me a Coffee: buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

#Glenn

Welcome back. We are joined again by Larry Johnson, a former CIA analyst and also a former employee at the U.S. State Department's Office of Counterterrorism, and also a writer on Sonar 21. I'll leave a link to the publication in the description. Thank you, Larry. It's always great to see you. Hey, Jacqueline. I always enjoy our chance to converse. Well, I've been wanting to discuss the Iran war with you because it appears that, well, I'm not sure how to divide the war into different categories, but at least it doesn't look like it will follow the same trajectory as during the two previous rounds.

That is the one starting in June and then in February. That is, we see now, for one, the widening of the war. For one, there is this renewed struggle now between Yemen and Saudi Arabia. That's definitely a very important component of this war, among other components. But I see that the Houthi leader, Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, warned that Saudi oil, airports, and other infrastructure will be targeted now if the Saudis escalate this conflict against Yemen. And I was just wondering, how are you seeing this? What is happening, and what is the relevance, I guess, in the wider war about this Yemen-Saudi component of the war?

#Larry

Yeah, so with respect to that, initially when the attack took place at Sana'a Airport on Monday, the official government of Yemen that's been at war with the Houthis in a civil war for 10, 11 years claimed credit. But there were two U.S. officials later talking, I think to Axios, who said, no, it was the Saudis. And the Houthis wasted no time retaliating by hitting a Saudi airport just across the

border from Yemen in southwestern Saudi Arabia. Now, you've got to step back and start saying, if the Saudis did that, what are they thinking? Because from a strategic standpoint, right now, Saudi's not getting any oil to speak of out to the Persian Gulf.

It relies upon this east-west pipeline that winds up at Yanbu on the Red Sea coast. And from there, they're able to ship, I think, around 6 million barrels a day, reportedly. And so you would think from a strategic standpoint, you know what? We've got to keep that oil pipeline open, and we've got to make sure we can get our oil through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait to the south of the Suez Canal to the north. So probably the last thing we want to do is pick a fight with the Houthis, who could not only close down the strait but then hit our Yanbu with ballistic missiles and destroy our ability to export oil.

Yet that's exactly what the Saudis apparently did. And then within 24 hours, I think, you know, they backed off. Now, Iran itself issued a pretty stark warning last week, saying that if the United States renewed these attacks on Iran, not only would they close the Strait of Hormuz, but they'd look at closing the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, using the Houthis as a proxy. They would reconsider their nuclear doctrine, and they'd withdraw from the NPT. Well, if you withdraw from the NPT, what does reconsider your nuclear doctrine mean? Well, the current nuclear doctrine is no nukes. Reconsider means we're going to go for nukes.

So, you know, that's where I think actually the situation sits right now, with the parliament, the Majlis, coming back into session on Tuesday. They've already been pretty adamant that they're in no mood to negotiate with the United States, no mood to make any concessions to the United States. They view the United States as basically a liar and an aggressor, and they want revenge. And that appears to be more than a majority of the representatives in the Majlis. So, you know, the U.S. response in all of this was to restart the war, to start attacking Iran using the excuse that, well, Iran was interfering with ships that were trying to get out of the Strait of Hormuz.

Well, Iran was simply following the protocols that it had established in accordance with the MOU. I think it's vitally important that people around the world understand that paragraph 5 in that MOU gave Iran the only authority—it didn't identify the United States or Oman or any other Gulf country—that it was only Iran that had the responsibility for ensuring the safe passage of ships through the Strait of Hormuz. And in conjunction with that, Iran prepared and set up the Persian Gulf Strait Authority and provided the protocols that ships are to follow: provide us the name of your captain, the name of the ship, the owner of the ship, the destination of your cargo, and the names and nationalities of the sailors on board. File that in advance, and you can go.

But Iran also stipulated in those protocols that any ship that does not adhere to these will be met with force. So when Iran tried to enforce those protocols, the United States took it upon itself, saying, well, we're not going to allow that, and attacked Iran, which was a violation of paragraph one of the MOU. So Iran responded. Now the United States is caught in a pickle because it's stated, it's now said they're attacking targets all along the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz. And it's about

a 200-mile piece of coastline that runs from north of Qeshm Island, from Bandar-e-Ghanim, I think it is, all the way south to Sirik. And the problem the United States faces is that Iran doesn't just have five or six or ten or twenty launch sites for missiles along that.

They've got more than a thousand. You think of it—over a 200-mile coastline, if you just put ten missile launchers every mile and spread those out over a mile, you've got 2,000. So here's the United States trying to blow these up. And with what? The only missile it has that can be fired from a HIMARS from Bahrain toward Bandar Abbas is called the Precision Strike Missile, the PrSM missile. That only has a range of 500 miles, but Lockheed has built fewer than 60 of them. So they've got, I mean, you've got nothing. You've got a very limited supply. Then that leaves them relying upon JASSMs, Tomahawks, HARM missiles. We know for certain that there are great limitations on both JASSMs and Tomahawks. I'm not sure about the HARMs, but I suspect it's not any better with that.

So here's the United States, day after day, launching these missile and bomb strikes on multiple Iranian targets—targets that Iran can easily repair. And Iran, for its part, is now turning around and having to attack only ten bases. They attack the two Jordanian airfields, which are the primary places where U.S. air operations are taking place. And, in fact, they've hit those so much that there used to be a \$250 million drone called the Triton based there. It's now been withdrawn to Lake Cyprus because it's too dangerous. So you take out those two air bases. You've got the air base Al-Dhafra in the UAE, so that's three. Then Al-Udeid in Qatar, that's four. You've got Al-Isa in Bahrain, that's five. You've got Ali Al-Salem in Kuwait, that's six.

Then on top of that, you've got Duqm, which is not an airfield, but it is a Navy logistics supply port in Oman. You then have the Army base. You've got the Fifth Fleet headquarters in Bahrain. You've got the Army base in Kuwait from which missiles have been launched. And then you've got a refinery in the UAE that's been critical for aviation fuel supply. All Iran has to do is stay up. They don't have to pick out about 50 targets or 100 targets—10 targets, just 10 targets. Keep hammering them over and over and over and over to the point that the bases become no longer—you can't occupy them at all with any personnel. They're no longer capable of posing any threat to Iran. And effectively, it forces the United States out of the Persian Gulf. That's what's taking place.

#Glenn

Well, the U.S. trying to wrestle back control of the Strait of Hormuz, I think that was predictably one of the main things that would undermine or even destroy the MOU. That is, the idea that the U.S. would accept not just the Strait falling outside of U.S. control, but being under Iranian control. Again, I think this was also evident in some of the back and forth with Trump—that he was going to put a 20% fee on all ships going through the Strait of Hormuz. Then he realized this might actually legitimize what Iran is doing, so he backtracked on the whole thing. Of course, it would be within Iranian waters, so they would have at least some claim to a fee based on the services they provide, as opposed to the U.S., which is on the other side of the planet. But in terms of the targeting, though, you outlined well the limited number of bases that the Iranians are now pounding.

The focus on Bahrain and Kuwait could also, of course, be an effort to undermine the U.S. ability to launch a land invasion. Indeed, I saw Joe Kent making this point—well, not exactly that point, but he was making the point that the U.S. could be in preparation for a land invasion, or at least considering a land invasion of Iran. How do you read that? Because it doesn't look like it would be very successful—or at least it wouldn't have good projections for being successful.

#Larry

Well, I'd like someone, you know, those talking about a ground operation, to please explain to me how you get your U.S. soldiers or Marines onto land. So right now, there used to be—there's only the Boxer, USS Boxer—which has about 2,500 Marines on it. It's the only, if you will, amphibious landing ship or this Marine Expeditionary Unit, the MEU, left in the area. The other Marine entity that was there, I understand, has withdrawn. That's according to Open Source Defender, so it's open-source information. So how do they get there? An amphibious landing at Chabahar? How do you sustain that? Number one, you've got to get your ships in close enough to offload the Marines. And then all of those—these are not small boats.

The amphibious landing craft have been increased in size over the years. So Iran's got drones. They've got missiles that can rain down on those. And then once they get onto the beach, how do you sustain them? Particularly now, in the middle of summer, when it is, you know, 50 degrees plus Celsius in many of these locations. So, you know, rule out an amphibious landing. You can't do an amphibious landing in the Persian Gulf because the ships have to get through the Strait of Hormuz, and they won't make it. They'll get blown up and sunk. So that's why no U.S. ships are standing about 200 miles offshore. So that leaves you with an air assault, paratroopers, or you fly them on a plane.

Now, understand that it's not like you fly 1,000 guys on a plane. A C-130 can handle 92 fully combat-loaded soldiers. A C-17, even though it's a much bigger aircraft, can handle 126 fully loaded combat soldiers. So you're going to need—how many personnel are you going to put on the ground? And once you get them on the ground, how do you resupply them? Now, the last time we did an invasion, a ground operation in the Middle East, going back to 2003, it took the United States over 12 months to assemble a force of 165,000 in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Well, back then, I think the total U.S. Army was a little over 750,000. Today, it's 452,000.

#Larry

So it's about half of what it was 20 years ago. And if you try to assemble a sizable ground force that could actually go into Iran and take control of territory, where are you going to assemble them at a location where they will not be in jeopardy of getting hit with ballistic missiles and drones? And the

answer is nowhere. You can't do it. So, I mean, these people talking ground operations, and we're talking, you know, some guys that had three and four stars on their shoulders. Well, they had three or four stars, but they didn't have a frigging brain in their skull.

Because the challenge is trying to conduct a ground operation and then sustain the forces there with the necessary logistics. And then, you know, as people get killed or wounded, how do you recover the bodies? You know, helicopters? And so you're assuming that Iran doesn't have any more air defense, doesn't have any more weapons that could counter helicopters and planes? So, yeah, the ground operation—I'm not going to say it's not going to happen, because I can't rule out stupidity on the part of Trump and those around him. But if they do it, it'll be a suicide mission for those who are tasked to carry it out.

#Glenn

So what is the overall strategy here then for the United States? By going back to war to begin with, because obviously it didn't go that well before the MOU, and there haven't been that many changes. I mean, they didn't get that much energy through the Strait of Hormuz. I mean, it's not as if global markets are stable. It's not as if the U.S. has been able to produce all these new interceptor missiles or drones to attack Iran further. I mean, is this Washington assuming if they just bring some more punishment to Iran, then they will be able to tweak the MOU more favorably? Or is this just Trump going all in?

#Larry

Well, he's not going all in because he doesn't have the resources to go all in. So I think part of it is explained by the fact that he's surrounded by advisers like Stephen Miller, who doesn't know a damn thing about military capabilities and operations. He's got strong opinions, and I think he keeps telling Trump, oh, it'll be easy, all we got to do is— they believe their own lies, that Iran's under such pressure that all you got to do is put a little more pressure, they're going to break, that Iran is suffering economically, that they can't stand the pain, they'll be begging us for a deal. Well, we've now got two events in the last 14, 15 months.

Well, actually, 13 months. Go back to June, the end of the 12-day war. What country was seeking an end to that war? Was it Iran begging the United States to end it? Or was it the United States cutting a deal with Iran to end it? It was the latter. The United States cut the deal. Israel was saying, hey, we can't stand this anymore. Please make it stop. Make the pain stop. Okay. How about on April 7th, April 15th? Again, who was pressing for the ceasefire? It wasn't Iran. Iran was not out saying, oh my God, we can't sustain this, we need a ceasefire. No, it was the Pakistanis who mediated that.

And they put some pressure on Iran and said, come on, you know, the United States is serious this time. They really do want to make a deal. So they go through with it, and the Iranians reluctantly agreed. So this go-round, there's no amount of military pressure that Trump can apply that's going

to change the Iranian attitude and the Iranian opinion, number one. And in fact, if anything, the existing MOU is dead. If there's going to be a new MOU, this one will come with conditions such as frozen assets. You're going to deliver \$12 billion before we sign the MOU as proof of your good faith that you're going to unfreeze the other \$280 billion in assets, number one.

Number two, you're going to lift the sanctions before we sign the MOU. And you're going to lift them not just on oil, but on these other areas, again as a sign of good faith since you violated it in the past. Three, Israel is going to get the hell out of Lebanon now before we sign an MOU, or we're not going to do it. I see Iran's position becoming much more firm on those issues, and that's why I don't think there'll be a new MOU. I think the United States is going to be left trying to—it's going to have to withdraw. The reality is U.S. forces have already withdrawn from several of the bases, and they can't go back. And they're not going to go back because it's too dangerous.

#Glenn

Well, another area where the war could spread, though, is through Iraq and Kuwait. That is, only a few hours ago I saw this message coming in about some big explosions on the border between Iraq and Kuwait. Yesterday there were some reports of shooting, that is, again, on the border. How do you see this fitting in? Because, again, you don't only have the Yemen–Saudi Arabia conflict. There also appears to be a potential conflict again between Iraq and Kuwait. I mean, a lot of things could unravel here as we go up the escalation ladder. But how do you see this component of the war?

#Larry

Well, I think Iraq is ultimately going to take full control of Kuwait. Previously, I think it was part of Iraq before Europeans came in and started dividing up the area. But I think Iraq's going to regain full control of Kuwait. And these bombings, the missile strikes and drone strikes that Iran is carrying out, are just, you know, further weakening Kuwait. And it's a message to the Kuwaitis: as long as you keep protecting and harboring the United States, you're going to be a target. Another way to make yourselves no longer a target—kick the United States out. And same message to Bahrain, same message to Qatar, same message to Saudi Arabia, UAE. Iran's uncompromising on that.

#Glenn

How about Pakistan, though? I mean, this is one you and I have spoken about before. That is, I'm a bit surprised. I think many were surprised by the role it played during this conflict. That is, you know, as opposed to India, the Pakistanis had some very key diplomatic role in this, even as diplomacy is dying, because it also has this connection with the Saudis. It has got a good relationship with the Iranians. Again, in these days of everything being divided into blocs, it's kind of unusual. Do you see Pakistan still playing a key role in the weeks and months ahead, even as, of course, the MOU, which they helped to put together, falls apart or has fallen apart? Sure.

#Larry

Yeah, it's going to continue trying, and it's doing so at the behest of the Chinese. Now, China's got an interesting dynamic here. On the one hand, China does want to see the flow of oil, liquefied natural gas, sulfur, urea, and helium coming out of it. Get that flowing. And helium is not going to flow for a while, so just take that off the board. But get that coming back out of the Strait of Hormuz. On the other hand, the Chinese also see the advantage of having the United States expend its inventory of Tomahawk and JASSM missiles and HARM missiles hitting Iranian targets. Because every single one of those missiles it fires is one less missile that will be fired at China when the United States attacks China.

And from the Chinese standpoint, they don't view it as an if. They believe the United States will at some point attack China, and China is going to be ready for that. So, in a way, the Chinese get to use Iran as a proxy to attrit the U.S. military capability, which in fact is exactly what's happening right now. So, Pakistan, through Asim Munir, he's the main player in this. Today, the Pakistanis reportedly issued some threats to Yemen and to Iran that any attack on Saudi Arabia would be viewed as an attack on Pakistan. If that's not the Pakistani stance, I think they're going to have less sway with Iran, because Iran is, you know, they see this as an existential threat to them from the West.

And while they've appreciated they've got some common interests with Pakistan, this kind of rhetoric out of Pakistan is not helpful. So we'll see what happens. I know Pakistan reportedly is still trying, working with Qatar, to get the negotiating track back on, you know, or get it back on track. But the death of Al Thani, who was, you know, the previous leader of Qatar, and the funeral activity surrounding that, that's really put a delay on some of the negotiations. But in the meantime, Iran is continuing its attacks and warnings to the other Gulf states: if you don't want to be attacked, don't facilitate or enable U.S. attacks against us.

#Glenn

I guess with the Chinese, you can put the Russians in the same category. That is probably beneficial for them as well if there's war, if the U.S. puts all its resources and focus on the Middle East. Because as we saw, Trump signaled he's deepening his involvement in the war against Russia. Marco Rubio also suggested, you know, peace might be advanced if Ukraine, you know, did more deep strikes into Russia. So they appear to have gone, you know, all in, embraced their inner Biden, and committed to this war — essentially as the Europeans and Zelensky wanted. Yeah. But you're in some contact with some of the Iranians there. What is the sentiment now, though? Is it possible to talk anymore? As you mentioned, they don't have much trust in diplomacy, but is the main objective now just to destroy all the U.S. bases, essentially exhaust the United States and deliver the economic pain, which, well, essentially is the U.S. cost for itself? But what exactly is on their drawing board, I guess, in terms of objectives?

#Larry

So I learned a new word from last week. It was being shouted in the streets of Qom, shouted in the streets of Mashhad, in Qom, in Qom. It means revenge. That is what the Iranian people want. They want revenge. And the last written message from Mostafa Khamenei basically endorsed that. So Iran's in no mood. There's no conciliation among them right now, including with Qalibaf. You know, there have been some criticisms of Qalibaf among some of the population, accusing them of being way too soft, way too lenient in dealing with the United States.

But both have been out in public of late, making it clear that, you know, if you will, the opportunity for negotiation has passed. Iran is going to press forward, and they made it very clear in the release last week. If the United States proceeds with these attacks, they're going to close the Bab al-Mandab. They will reappraise, reevaluate their nuclear doctrine, and they will withdraw from the NPT. So those are sort of the benchmarks to keep an eye on. When we see that happen, then that lets us know that Iran is moving forward in that direction.

#Glenn

Well, before, you mentioned other areas of escalation, but do you think now the Iranians could get this nuclear weapon? Because my impression was that with the Strait of Hormuz, their ability to fight off the Americans with conventional means, that this would be enough. Also, if they are a threshold state, that they signal that they don't have nuclear weapons, but they can acquire them if it becomes necessary. Do you think, also, of course, the fear, to add, that an Iranian nuclear weapon could spur some proliferation in the region—do you think these are enough reasons for the Iranians not to acquire nuclear weapons, or do you get the impression there's a shift in mood over in Tehran?

#Larry

Well, I want to be clear because some people listening will accuse me of trying to claim that, oh, Iran's got a nuke, therefore the United States and Israel need to strike, that I'm trying to create some pretext for an escalation beyond what we're already seeing. And I'm not doing that. You know, my dear friend, Professor Marandi, he noted in his own conversations, and he's looking at it over the last three or four years. He said, you know, four years ago, if you went out into the streets, the majority of the people would have said, you know, Ali Khamenei is right. We don't need a nuke.

Now, in the aftermath of two surprise attacks by the United States, it has flipped, where he said a strong majority of those he's talking to say, you know what, if we had a nuke, this wouldn't be happening to us. So we should get the nuke. Clearly, Iran has the engineering and scientific expertise to do it. And they've got relationships with countries that have nuclear weapons, from North Korea to Pakistan to Russia to China. And while, again, the Russians and Chinese have been

good advocates of trying to restrain proliferation, I think Iran can make a very good case that, look, we've tried the nonproliferation route. What has it earned us? It's earned us unrestrained attacks and the murders of our citizens.

So this is, you know, this is—I think Trump has actually lit a fuse on a bomb that he didn't want to go off, and it's going to go off. And so this will change, it will change the entire strategic picture because, you know, in the past, Israel could tell—we've got, they haven't said it openly, but the implied threat—we've got a nuke and we can wipe you out. But now, if Iran shows up with a nuke, Israel has to think twice. Some people say, oh, Israel's going to nuke Iran immediately. Really? Well, if Iran fires back with its nuke, it is much easier to destroy Israel as a country than it is to destroy Iran.

Iran's size just dwarfs that of Israel. The other thing that's going on, though, too, is the Chinese Beidou system. So the West relies on GPS, and the Chinese used to rely on GPS up until 1993, when a CIA report claimed some Chinese ship had chemical weapons or some weapons of mass destruction on board. The U.S. tried to stop it. The Chinese said no. And so the U.S. literally turned off the GPS. So this ship no longer had the ability to navigate by GPS, other than going back to compass and sextant. So it showed that the U.S., by controlling GPS, could control the Chinese fleet at the time. So China said, oh, we've learned an important lesson here.

We've got to have our own system, which they developed—the Beidou, B-E-I-D-O-U. And it is a GPS system. It's actually more accurate than GPS. And Iran adopted that. Because previously, back in the 12-day war, Iran was still using GPS targeting on its missiles. And it wasn't widely known at the time, but the United States and Israel were able to spoof or put false GPS coordinates into those missiles to take them off course so they didn't hit their targets. That's now not the problem. Now they're highly accurate, and they're hitting. And it's because of the Chinese system. So I put all that in background just to say that the entire face of this war has changed in a way that is very disadvantageous to the West.

#Glenn

Iran is also, because of the sanctions, an important country to a great degree for China and Russia to work with, just because in the efforts of setting up an alternative international economic architecture, the Iranians have experience living without American technologies, without American industries, without the dollar, without American banks, without American payment systems. So they have the experience there, though. So I think that comes in handy as well for the Russians and Iranians, as they also reached the conclusion that, yeah, they can't depend anymore on everything from American technologies to the currency, banks, and that.

But I was thinking, though, as this war widens, it is interesting that Israel is sitting this out, I thought, because, again, they're the ones who started this whole thing in June of last year. And, again, I see reports of explosions from Dubai to Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait—well, the

whole list there. But Israel hasn't joined in. Is this because they're tied up in Lebanon, Syria, killing off Gaza? What is it that's preventing Israel from joining this? And also, Iran hasn't taken any steps toward bringing Israel into the fight, I guess.

#Larry

Yeah, I actually think it goes back to what I was talking about with the Chinese BeiDou system. During the 12-day war, Israel was able to avoid a lot of destruction because they were able to divert Iranian missiles, since the Iranian missiles were using GPS. Now that Iran has the BeiDou, Israel has no defense against those—none. And it's noteworthy that two days ago, the Minister of Transportation for Israel tried to ban any more U.S. KC-135 jet air-refueling aircraft from coming to Ben Gurion Airport. He wanted them to leave. And it was only yesterday that, I guess, Netanyahu got involved and reversed that decision.

But you have to step back and say, why? Why would they want to get rid of the U.S. Army? And they realize it's going to make them a target. And, you know, in the past, they didn't brag. I realize now they didn't brag about the fact that they were spoofing the Iranian missiles. So the Iranians would fire these missiles, and they'd not hit where they were supposed to hit and just blow up sand as opposed to destroying infrastructure. That's not the case now. And so that has been, in and of itself, a dramatic change on the battlefield.

And I think that's one of the things—Israel doesn't want to get back into a situation where it's going to be in the crosshairs of Iran. Because right now, the United States cannot operate out of Bahrain, cannot operate out of Kuwait with any kind of, you know, drone launches. Those have been destroyed. So it's basically confined to Jordan. And that's now coming into question, which means next stop, Iran, Israel. And if U.S. operations are taking place in Israel, then Iran's going to hit those U.S. bases, and Israel's going to suffer. And I think Israel recognizes, despite all their tough talk, there are limits to how much damage they can take.

#Glenn

Well, just a last question here. How long do you think the U.S. can keep this war going then? Because, as you and I discussed the last time the war was going on before the MOU, the U.S. was running a bit short on its missiles, its interceptor missiles, and of course the global economy being pushed off a cliff, as Trump himself recognized. He was making this point that he signed the MOU because they only had a few weeks left of oil—well, a certain type of oil. What does this mean, though? I mean, how long can the U.S. stick in this time, given that they also kind of threw away the Iranians' willingness to actually talk to the U.S.? This seems, again, like a gamble—a huge gamble that is all in, given that they might not have an off-ramp. So how long can the U.S. stay in this fight? Because, again, just to add another question in there, I get the impression it doesn't have the same high intensity as it did before, but still. Right, right.

#Larry

Yeah, no, you're correct. They don't have the air assets in the region right now to conduct the kind of major combat operations they were during the first 40 days, from February 28th to April 7th or April 15th. But again, what that showed is that by that five-week period, the U.S. capability to sustain that war was—let's call it—reaching the exhaustion stage. Because, again, they do not have unlimited supplies of the ATACMS. They don't have unlimited supplies of the PRSMs, no unlimited supplies of Tomahawks, or of JASSMs, or of HARMs.

I looked up the HARMs as well. They're down. So the more they use them against these Iranian targets, it's like punching Jell-O. They blow it up, but it really doesn't degrade Iran's capabilities, doesn't at all affect their underground missile facilities and launches. And then when you add in the economic issues that are going to continue to crop up, I think the United States can sustain this for about another two to three weeks, and then it's going to be looking for the off-ramp again.

#Glenn

But that off-ramp won't be there then, will it? Or it might be, but I'm assuming if the Iranians would want to talk, they would demand buy-in to the talk. You know, a big gesture from the United States, not promises, because, you know, the MOU was full of great gestures—that is, 300 billion in reparations for Iran, releasing all of the frozen assets, canceling all the sanctions—but it doesn't mean much if it's just words on paper. I mean, indeed, the more—not generous, but the better—the deal was for Iran, the less likely the U.S. would actually implement it. So I'm assuming the principle of a buy-in, that is, for the U.S. to actually give something away just to get the talks started, would be a condition. Again, I'm not sure how that would play out.

#Larry

The United States is not going to be in a strong negotiating position. That's the point. And by virtue of that, they may have to make even more concessions to Iran than they want to at this time. There's always some surprise in August, and again, let's say that by the end of next week Iran announces, in light of these unjustified attacks and the failure of the world to even respond to support us, we've seen no alternative but to develop a nuclear weapon. They come out with that—that's going to shake Washington. You know, it's going to lead to some considerations about trying to up the attacks, but all of that is just going to be acts of desperation. Because if the United States ups the attacks and Iran really does have nukes, Iran may use the nukes. So, I mean, it just, you know, we're entering a very dangerous period, and it's made worse by Trump's recklessness.

#Glenn

That's why I find this war to be so strange, just because there are so many areas where there can be an escalation. There are too many variables that can't be controlled. Again, I see that Iran has

warned that if the U.S. attacks its power grid, Yemen will shut down the Red Sea. It's not unthinkable that you will have Iraqi militias crossing the border into Kuwait. I mean, you have all these possibilities, which are difficult to predict. The Iranians, of course, actually pursuing a nuclear weapon. For the U.S. to go up the escalation ladder now, which is a requirement if they're even going to have a chance of knocking out Iran, then there are a lot of things Iran could do, which is why I don't know.

I would like to know what the strategy of the United States is here, because I don't see this pathway to victory. And I haven't seen this either. I hear a lot of slogans—oh, we're going to punish them, they will regret this, we kill a lot of people or destroy a lot of infrastructure. But no one outlines exactly what is a victory, how do we define a victory here, and how do we achieve it? What resources do we have? What is our approach? I see nothing of the sort—just emotional appeals and sloganeering. But again, I don't expect them to share everything, but at least among the analysts or academics or some think tanks, at least someone must have a scenario about how this could actually work. But, uh, have you seen anything?

#Larry

No. That's the point. Nobody's thought this through. The strategy is when you start with the assumption that it's okay, the Iranian economy is decimated. We're assuming that the majority of the population is willing to rise up and overthrow the Islamic Republic and that the economic situation is just dire. Therefore, all we have to do is put enough military pressure that it will cause these people to rise up. That's their strategy. Well, the strategy is a failure. It completely failed, especially last week with 40, 45 million Iranians turning out in Qom, Tehran, Mashhad to say farewell to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and to chant revenge. So whatever the U.S. banked on with its strategy, it's not working.

#Glenn

Yeah, I feel that we live in a post-strategic thinking era. You know, same with Russia, by the way. That is, oh, let's just do more strikes into Russia, let's get deeper involved. And the assumption is that, oh, once we kill enough people in Russia and destroy enough of their infrastructure, they will capitulate, and they will accept NATO moving into Ukraine, stacking it up with drones and missiles which can target anywhere in Russia. And we'll essentially have escalation control over Russia through our proxy. And yes, they will just accept this. And none of them appear to have ever, you know, looked up in a history book about how Russia looks at this kind of capitulation. I mean, it's... no one's thinking or asking the basic questions: what does victory mean against the world's largest nuclear power, which considers this to be an existential threat? And you see the same in Iran. I just don't get it. Anyway, any final thoughts before we wrap up?

#Larry

Yeah, well, as I said, people fail to learn from history. And there was this guy named Adolf in Germany back in 1941 who was convinced all he had to do was invade the Soviet Union and it would crumble like a house of cards, collapse. And then he discovered four years later that it destroyed his own country and that he didn't want to awaken that sleeping beast. And the United States has now done the equivalent of that, not just to Russia, but to Iran in particular. You could make a credible argument back in December that there was some domestic unrest and there was some opposition to the rule of the mullahs, that they were not happy with how the government was running things, felt that there was corruption, etc.

But the surprise attack on the 28th of February, the murder of Khamenei, the murder of the little girls at Minab, and other strikes — this has completely transformed Iranian society, and they are now united in their desire to defeat the Great Satan. Because, frankly, this is the second time in 47 years that the United States has been directly involved in provoking a war against Iran. The first was with Iraq, where we backed Iraq's attack. Now we're doing it ourselves. And this generation of Iranians has created a new nationalism that's not going to be easily quenched.

#Glenn

I would at least assume that the Germans would have remembered this chapter of their history, but not to repeat it. But yeah, here we go. Anyway, Larry, always a pleasure. Thank you so much. Thank you, my friend.

#Larry

Thanks, Glenn. We'll see you later. Bye.