

Iran RAZES Israeli Embassy as Trump Goes NUCLEAR | Larry Johnson & Col. Lawrence Wilkerson

Larry Johnson and Col. Lawrence Wilkerson discuss how Iran is reaching deeper into its target bank with major strikes on US and now ISRAELI assets in the Gulf region as Patriot Air Defenses go up in flames. PATREON.COM/DANNYHAIPHONG Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhai...> Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho> Follow me on Telegram: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> #iran #iranwar #trump

#Danny

Welcome back to the show, everyone. As you can see, I am joined by Carl Lawrence Wilkerson and Larry Johnson to break down the latest developments, where we begin with the 11th straight night of strikes. First, of course, the U.S. striking Iran for the 11th straight night and Iran retaliating. According to reports by Mint Press News, Iran targeted and hit the Israeli embassy in Bahrain. This is according to reports gathered from Channel 14 News in Israel. There hasn't been any assessment of the damage just yet.

But nonetheless, Iran has, even as of this hour, been striking U.S. bases incredibly hard—not just in Bahrain at the Sheikh Isa Air Base, but here in Jordan at the King Faisal Air Base, which, as Larry has mentioned many times on this program previously, there have been evacuations of heavy military equipment. And according to satellite imagery now, we are seeing that the airstrikes—the missile strikes by Iran and the drone strikes—have confirmed that C-130 transport aircraft, fighter jets, and other hardware have left the base. Iran also overnight hit an F-15 hangar, with MQ-9 drones still inside their packaging.

This all is in Jordan, and Bahrain, and Kuwait. As the escalations continue, the United States also hit Iran overnight. And after Trump announced that he was planning on an eye for an eye—that any missile, rocket, or drone that hits a ship in the Strait of Hormuz by Iran will be answered with a bridge or a power plant hit, even in the capital city of Tehran. So, how do we start with you, Colonel Wilkerson? What do you make of the latest developments in this war? And now, even though we have evacuations not just of King Faisal Air Base, but even of Al Udayat Military Base, the hub of CENTCOM now also being evacuated, still Trump is talking about escalating further. What do you make of all this?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I think it's the desperate moves of a desperate man. The question is, does he know he's desperate? And to a certain extent, the people around him, particularly the Secretary of Defense—he's having his own problems over on the Hill, even with his own political party, defending all this money that he's asking for, with apparently, according to my information, not a whole lot of rational reason being provided for why he wants it, or what he's going to do with it, or why he needs it so desperately. So I think we've got an administration that is trapped in a war that maybe it doesn't know the significance of, and doesn't know the significance of the fact that it's being defeated roundly and soundly.

But even worse, it wants to extend it, expand it, and maybe even, as Rubio has been suggesting, we're going to take a little excursion down to Cuba in the midst of it for a diversion or whatever. But nonetheless, I fear that too. All to say that I think what's happening right now is what I was talking about several weeks ago, and that is that Iran is proceeding very decisively and very carefully and very prudently along a list—you might call it an escalation list—of targets that they have. And those targets heretofore have been targets directly associated with the genocide of the Palestinians by Israel, directly associated with those crimes and ravages of Israel and those supporting her.

But now I think they are going to make some decisions to go further. And by that, I mean they're going to start hitting targets that really do disrupt and make difficult the global economy. And those would be targets in Saudi Arabia and targets elsewhere in the region that are economic in nature and will, as I said, really expand this conflict. I don't think they want to do that. I think they like the fact, they enjoy the fact right now that, according to most reports, two-thirds of the world's opinion at least is neutral, if not on their side. Even more important than that, in the same report, you see that probably 65 to 66 percent of the world really detests the United States of America, and that detestation grows daily.

And it has a number of components, some of which are what's happening in Israel with all that Israel is doing in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and Gaza and Syria and Lebanon. But it also has to do with the fact that they realize that what the empire is doing is prejudicial to their lives and to their countries and states. This latest excursion to Mali is an example. We are not the world's friend anymore. And this war is deepening that feeling and making it more profound. Iran, though, I think, does not want, as I said, to go to this second and third and even fourth tier of targets, which are principally economic, though they have done some, like, for example, Fujairah. I understand that's being hit again.

And they're probably going to unleash the Houthis to make sure the Saudis can't get anything into the Red Sea. We've already been there. We've already seen what that does. We've seen us retreat from the Red Sea. I don't see any expectation whatsoever that we will be any more successful this time. Sixty percent of the world's commerce passes through the Bab al-Mandeb in the Red Sea. Sixty percent of the world's commerce—much more than oil, gas, diesel, helium, and all that, commodities, foodstuffs, you name it—goes through that area. So this has every prospect, if Iran

does go further and hits with the devastating accuracy and intelligence that they have to this point—check out Sulaymaniyah, for example—then we're going to have real problems in the global economy.

#Danny

Yeah, and Yemen has reportedly announced via radio to a Saudi vessel today that they'd better turn around or get ready to face God.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

So the blockade is very real, very real. How do we justify or how do we explain what Trump has said today alone in press conferences about, for example, nothing's going to move in the Strait of Hormuz? "I'm going to kill anything in the Strait of Hormuz." That's your problem, dude. That's your huge problem. You want to kill anything that moves in the Strait of Hormuz? Okay, really smart.

#Danny

Yeah, well, Larry, I want to just, before I get your comments, show this contrast. These were his comments today—Donald Trump saying that if Iran shoots at a ship, whether it be a missile, rocket, drone, or any type of weapon—then the United States will bomb and destroy one bridge or power plant, including those located next to or in the capital city of Tehran. But yet we see here Al Udeid Air Base, the hub of CENTCOM, has moved all of its aircraft out because of Iranian missiles. And even as we speak, Iranian ballistic missiles are reportedly headed toward Jordan now, and U.S. air defenses are active in Iraq. So obviously, Larry, there are consequences to this. What do you make of this contrast between what the reality is on the ground and Donald Trump's threats here?

#Larry Johnson

You know what it's called when you abandon a base and remove your personnel and equipment and go somewhere else? That's called retreat. Victorious, winning forces don't retreat. There can be a tactical retreat. But we have to go back to early April when Iran submitted its 14-point plan to the United States, and one of those points was basically "get the hell out of the Persian Gulf." The United States declined to negotiate on that, so Iran said, "OK, we'll make you get out." And that's exactly what they're doing. They are forcibly removing the United States. The Al Udeid Air Force Base in particular—it's not just that the aircraft have been removed.

Previously, it was the center. It was called the Combined Air Operations Center, the CAOC, for Central Command's Air Force branch. And it monitored. There was a billion-dollar-plus radar there in Qatar and at least two other radar systems that I believe cost between \$300 million and \$500

million. And those radars were active. They were in such an array that they could immediately identify a missile launch from Iran, track its trajectory, know where it was going to land, and provide warnings to Israel as much as 30 minutes in advance, which is extraordinary. Can't do that now.

In fact, the military personnel—two of them were women. One of them was a guy who died at Muwaffaq al-Salti Air Base. It's believed they got less than a minute's warning. Iran has effectively taken out well over 19 different radar and satellite communication systems. They did that in the first three or four weeks of the war, so since then they don't have to worry about early warning radar and the use of those radars integrated with their defense systems, which makes the air defense systems even less effective. They were already ineffective, but now they really suck. So you've got that on the one hand.

They've abandoned Muwaffaq al-Salti, which is in Jordan—the King Faisal Air Base. I don't know why they keep saying it's in Jordan. All the information I have says it's in Saudi Arabia near the Jordanian border. Interesting. But in any event, they've evacuated that. So where are they going? Well, they're going to Israel. So what's building up in Israel now is a U.S. presence that, once the rest of the Gulf is cleaned of the U.S. presence, then the United States will face attacks in Israel. Now, if you've noticed, the Israelis, despite a few individuals talking tough, have tried to stay out of this war. Even Ben-Gvir said, oh, we don't—you know, Ben-Gvir said he didn't want to get involved.

Well, why is that? Well, the reason is the two key refineries in Israel—one's in Haifa and one's in Tel Aviv, I believe—that process oil, the high-sulfur-content oil that produces diesel and jet fuel, both of those are damaged. If they suffer further damage, it shuts down completely Israel's ability to produce jet fuel. Guess what? If you're not producing jet fuel, you're not flying jets. And if you're not flying jets, you're leaving the people in Lebanon the hell alone. So Iran's in a position to press this war in directions that the United States, frankly, can't counter. And it's going to be also to the detriment of Israel.

So I think we're going to be seeing at least another week of the United States trying to escalate these strikes. The other problem the United States runs into is the depletion of its precision missile force, whether we're talking air defense, SEAD with the HARM missiles—SEAD is Suppression of Enemy Air Defense—or the offensive long-range missiles from the PRSM, which they're out of now, that's fired by HIMARS, or the Tomahawk and the JASSM. They're running at critical levels that don't sustain operations. They are going to exhaust their supplies. And that means no supplies for PACOM, no supplies for EUCOM. CENTCOM will have used it all up.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Just to emphasize what Larry said, Danny, what you're looking at is a very exquisite campaign plan by Iran just in that one aspect. Imagine consolidating—and I think Netanyahu is getting really worried about this—consolidating the predominant strike capability, aerial strike capability, or at least much of it, in Israel, U.S. and Israeli. And that tiny little space, really somewhere between Tel Aviv

and Nazareth. And imagine the target-rich environment that creates, and imagine these extraordinarily fast and very, very accurate, and some even maneuver in the last stage, ballistic missiles coming in on that. This would be an operational level of warfare campaign plan, in other words, that would stagger the minds of those in the Pentagon because we're doing everything that that requires for maximum devastation—consolidating our combat power in a narrow, very confined, crowded space with many, many missiles capable of hitting it. Disaster.

#Danny

Yeah, well, I wanted to pull this up and you guys can comment on it. The U.S. has reportedly notified Israel of a plan to intensify attacks. That includes impending plans to intensify military aggression against Iran, introducing heavy bombers like the B-1 and B-2 into the ongoing campaign for the first time. Talk about that, Larry or Colonel Wilkerson—maybe Larry, you can start. You know, Israel has not been taking part in these strikes. Actually, there have been some reports that Israeli officials have said that this is favorable to them, that they would rather the United States engage with Iran while they take care of other fronts. But maybe you can explain what exactly is being referred to here when the U.S. says that it's going to intensify strikes and use heavy bombers to do it.

#Larry Johnson

Well, they're using B-1s or B-52s to drop what they call the mother of all bombs. They're going to go after nuclear sites. They're going to go after Pickaxe Mountain. They're going to go after Fordow, Isfahan. And if they do that, Iran's already made it clear it's going to strike nuclear sites in the Middle East. Well, there are only two. The UAE has a nuclear power plant, and then there's Dimona in Israel. Those are the two major ones. So Iran, you know, Iran's not being cowed by these strikes, and it's made it very clear it will retaliate. It has retaliated so far. It's inflicted massive damage on the United States, probably on the order of \$40 billion alone, from the damage done to these bases in Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and now Jordan.

When you add up the radars lost, the equipment lost, the munitions expended, et cetera, I think you get up quickly to the \$30, \$40 billion range. So now, notice Israel has really been trying to stay out of this. Remember, two weeks ago, the Minister of Transportation told the United States, get your KC-135s out of Ben Gurion. We don't want you here. The United States is going, what? You know, we're funding everything you've got, and you're telling us to get out? It took about two days for Bibi Netanyahu, I guess, to get engaged and reverse that order. But that was telling.

And what it tells me is the Israelis are basically frightened that they're going to get targeted in a way that they didn't get targeted during the 12-day war with Iran in June of 2025. Because back then, the United States and Israel were spoofing GPS. Iran was using GPS to try to target its missiles at specific locations, and the spoofing activities of the United States and Israel actually diverted many of those missiles. So they were not as effective as they could have been. Not the case now. The

Iranians are using the Chinese Beidou system, their version of global positioning satellites. They are very accurate, more accurate than GPS, and they've proven to be very effective in taking out key targets in the U.S. bases in the Gulf and key targets in Israel.

#Danny

Hmm. Well, this is what the IRGC reportedly said in response to these threats. Here it is. It said, the IRGC warns that if recent strikes on U.S. bases are insufficient and American aggression continues, it is preparing, quote, "an unfortunate military operation to be followed by an official declaration of mourning in the U.S." It added that the punishment operation against the aggressor will continue, unquote. Colonel Walker, any idea what would cause such mourning for the United States, given that, as Larry said, we're already looking at tens of billions, \$40-plus billion of lost equipment? Of course, ordinary Americans won't necessarily cry about this, given that a lot of that money is spent on this equipment, maybe at the expense of people's needs here in the U.S. But your thoughts on that?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Your thoughts on this? I have no idea what they're talking about. I could conjure some things, but I have no idea what they're talking about. I'd be lying if I said I did. I will say this, though. I think the greatest indication of the peril we're in is the fact that we just, and MBS agreed to it, agreed on a nuclear program that, in my mind, will unquestionably have military dimensions on a faster timetable than you might think, with Saudi Arabia, for a nuclear program. This is something we have been thinking about, we have been looking at, we've been wanting to do, but we've been wanting to do it much the way we did it initially with India, with all the protections for proliferation.

I think the wrappers are off now. And I think this is a sign of desperation, and not just the desperation of the United States wanting something it can cling to and testify to the fact it isn't being kicked out entirely from Southwest Asia, as Larry just suggested, which I think it is being. And the same thing for MBS, who wants desperately to hold on to the old world, if you will, at least on an interim basis, and to gain something from it. And what he wants to gain from it is nuclear technology from the United States, which he will quickly convert to whatever he wants to with regard to a military program.

And we will be off to the races for yet another nuclear power in that region. We're looking at the possibility of having two new nuclear powers in the region, nuclear weapons powers in the region, very shortly — Iran, which might already be there, and Saudi Arabia. And that's notwithstanding MBS's agreement with Islamabad on getting a weapon should Iran get one. So he's sort of doubling down on his bets. But I think the primary reason is he's trying to keep the United States in the region, and we're doing it because we're trying to stay in the region. We're that desperate.

#Larry Johnson

You know, Larry, one thing I know—let me comment on that. Sure.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

To build an enrichment facility—

#Larry Johnson

You're talking minimum five years, and it can take up to ten years, number one. And the five years assumes that the country providing the advice and guidance has experience. The United States is grossly inexperienced in this area. There was a time maybe fifty years ago when we might have been the leader in nuclear energy facilities, but not today. I mean, the last one we built from scratch was, I think, in Tennessee. It took about nine to ten years to build. So the countries in the world that have the actual expertise on this front are Russia, China, and France.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

North Korea. Don't forget North Korea. They did it in sixteen months.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah, yeah. But I think they did it with assistance, didn't they? With Russian assistance?

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Yeah, but they also gave assistance to Iran.

#Larry Johnson

So, yeah. But my point is, the United States—hey, it's like a Ford automobile mechanic who's used to working only on gasoline-fired engines offering to help a Tesla dealer repair his car. OK, not really having the expertise. Yeah, generally knows how a car works, but not necessarily that particular expertise. So I agree in general with what Colonel Wilkerson is saying, that, yeah, this could introduce another destabilizing dynamic into the region. The only good news is it ain't going to happen anytime soon, simply because even once you get the enrichment facility, then they've got to come up with, well, where are they going to get that enriched uranium to start with? Who in the world produces that? Oh, that would be Russia. So there are—but I think Colonel Wilkerson nailed it. This is an act of desperation by the United States to try to remain relevant when, in fact, it's no longer technologically relevant in this area. That's the really surprising thing.

#Danny

And it completely undermines what was the sound of the alarm for the United States against Iran—this lie that Iran was building a nuclear weapon because it had this nuclear program. Right. There is a deal with Saudi Arabia that essentially codifies, despite all of these limitations you just outlined, Larry, at least that very framework which was supposed to be so villainous for Iran to engage in.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Danny, that's a very good point. We started out with a nuclear agreement with Iran that was probably in the neighborhood of 94 to 95%. And when you get that kind of percentage, you should feel assured of keeping Iran on the path that it was already on, which is to say not to build a nuclear weapon, at least for 25 years. And you could always renegotiate, and probably would have in that time span, if you had some non-insane leaders. We threw that away. We threw it completely away, negotiated with the powers in the world that really were concerned, including Russia and China, negotiated in good faith with both sides from all intents and purposes, and probably would have been adhered to much the way the Additional Protocol, the NPT agreement in general, the Safeguards Agreement, and everything else has been with Iran.

All of that we threw away. We threw it away because of an insane man who wanted to perfect a deal, as it were, that was better than the one that Black man achieved in the White House. Worse than that, he was a communist. He was a Democrat. We threw all of that away. And now what we've got is exactly what Larry just said and others have said. We have a disaster. We have an insane conflict that there's no way the United States is going to extricate itself from without great losses. It's already taking great losses. There's no way Iran is going to lose.

All it's got to do is remain—93 million people in a country the size of Western Europe, with variegated terrain you wouldn't believe if you were there seeing it, and temperatures to go along with it, and mountains and deserts to go along with it. It isn't going away anytime soon. And, oh, by the way, did I mention that it has an ally named China, the number one economy in the world, and another ally named Russia, probably the most battle-hardened military and defense industrial base in the world? Did I mention that? That's where we are with this insane president who started out wanting a better deal than the Black man in the White House.

#Danny

Yeah, I mean, that's critical context. Larry, I wanted to just read off the strikes that occurred last night—just a few examples of Iran and then a few examples of the United States. And maybe you can help us understand what the United States is hitting and why versus Iran. So here we have—let's start with the U.S. attacks. The U.S. shelled Bababan with HIMARS missiles. It struck Hamadan. It struck the Kurdistan province of Baneh City and the Kurdistan province of Iran, Bushehr Port, Tabriz, Bandar Abbas, Torbat, Chabahar, which have been subject to attacks regularly.

And then for Iran, we had—let's just look at the Prince Hassan Air Base and King Faisal Air Base—an F-15 preparation hangar, a drone preparation hangar, two additional drones positioned outside the hangar, a helicopter maintenance hangar, and accommodation facilities, which Iran says—and this is almost a daily occurrence, where Iran is announcing that its drone and missile strikes cause injuries, casualties, or deaths. So, Larry, you can always understand the contrast here: the United States simply just names broadly what it hits—air defenses, drone storage units, and the cities, towns, and provinces that they hit—while Iran is very specific. What do you make of this contrast here?

#Larry Johnson

Well, Iran is taking out offensive weapons systems or the ability of the United States to continue to carry out offensive strikes. But the United States is just pissing off Iran. You know, they're not dramatically weakening Iran's ability to launch missiles. In fact, that was one of the most interesting things out of the hearing yesterday at the Senate with Pete Hegseth and Dan Kaine, General Kaine—that the members of the Senate were generally puzzled, like, hey, you told us we had obliterated them. We destroyed their army. We destroyed their ability to attack. We'd weakened their military, their missile system. And they're pounding the hell out of us every day. What's going on?

Oh, we're winning. Just trust us, we're winning. You know, that was the answer. Ridiculous. So Iran's, you know, Iran—when you look back at it again, going back to the start of the military campaign on February 28—Iran's initial response focus was on destroying the radars that provide early warning, that provide the ability to work in tandem with air defense systems to help them target and take down incoming missiles. And then to eliminate the radars, eliminate air defense, and then bomb at-will targets on these bases, including aircraft, personnel, barracks, as well as fuel tanks and radar systems for controlling aircraft.

Anything that would enable that base to be used for offensive operations. And so Iran is effectively pursuing that. The United States keeps showing off, saying, oh, we blew up this. You know, a lot of the things that they think they're blowing up could very well be decoys, because Iran's been smart enough to put decoys out and say, oh boy, look at this fat, juicy launcher we parked out there. And the United States wastes another Tomahawk missile on a fake target and can't replace that Tomahawk anytime soon. I mean, I really don't think people appreciate how severe this depletion is.

That right now, so understand that in the first five weeks of this war, the United States shot off 850 Tomahawk missiles, over 1,000 JASSM missiles. Now the estimated inventory for Tomahawks is down around 2,000. That is across the entire United States Armed Forces. Well, Colonel Wilkerson can speak to this much better than I can. But you know what? There's this other command called PACOM that has a mission with China, and it's supposed to have an allocation of Tomahawks. And there's this other group called EUCOM, European Command. They're supposed to have an allocation of Tomahawks for dealing with the Russian horde when they come roaring across the Fulda Gap.

So just do the division with just 2,000 of those Tomahawks left. If you allocate them evenly, which I'm sure the commander of PACOM would argue is a minimum, and the commander of EUCOM would argue is also a minimum, that means you each get 800. Okay, so we've just seen a real-world benchmark example that in five weeks of an intense bombing campaign, the United States used up 850 in five weeks. Oh, okay. What that means is if they go back to that kind of level of operation and CENTCOM's sitting there with 800, they've got enough for about four weeks and two days. Hello? We cannot sustain intense combat operations really beyond three to four weeks. At that point, we do reach a critical deficit.

#Danny

And that is also taking into consideration that this latest round of strikes has not been as intense as the first 40 days, 39 days, whatever it was to begin with. That is the case. Here, I wanted to show this, Colonel Wilkerson, before you start commenting. You know, these civilian fishing boats came under attack last night by the United States, and CENTCOM claimed these were speedboats. So this is also another element to this, where the U.S. says they're hitting military sites but actually are not only hitting civilian sites but are trying to paint these civilian sites as, you know, war crimes essentially—as military targets. Danny, we're very good at hitting fishermen at sea in small boats. Yes, this is one of Trump's crowning achievements of his latest administration.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I think Larry's right. I think we are in excess frustration in front of the appropriators that he was having, even Republicans, that he was having to explain why he's asking for this money and can't really give them the ingredients of what he's going to do with the money, except to say, trust me, I need more munitions or whatever. And at the same time, looking at the fact that he's already had close to \$1.5 trillion, and he needs even more. And this morning I was hearing another figure that he's just added to it, another \$38 billion. And he did his press conference with the President when the President turned it over to him and just did his usual about how, you know, we're destroying everything. We're winning. Just keep looking. Keep watching.

You know, we're winning. We're winning. This rhetoric is getting old, even with the legislators, and even with the legislators who are ostensibly on the administration's side, because they just see the money disappearing with no real evidence that it's disappearing for a strategic, operational, or tactical purpose that makes any sense to them. They just have to take X's word for it. I don't think even these braindead people in Congress—and I include in that some Democrats, like my own Senator Mark Warner, whom I heard the other day talk about it—and I was stunned at the... well, I shouldn't have been, but I am every time I hear someone like Warner or Kaine or someone on the Democratic side who is joining in this revulsion of both Russia and Iran.

I mean, you can see it. You can hear it in their voices that one of the reasons they're going along with this insane war in Southwest Asia is because they hate the bejesus out of the Iranians. And I'm

not talking about Lindsey Graham types or Ted Cruz types or Tom Cotton types. I'm talking about Mark Warner types and Tim Kaine types, people who are supposed to be sane and on the Armed Services Committees, are supposed to be sane, and the Intelligence Committees are supposed to be sane. They hate Iran, and they hate Iran. Russia—where did this come from? And why is this fueling much of this insane provision of money to the Pentagon when the Pentagon cannot tell them chapter and verse, or even the book they're operating from, in terms of these conflicts?

#Larry Johnson

Hmm.

#Danny

Yeah, well, Larry, I wanted to shift to the blockade that Yemen has instituted. According to reports, the Yemeni armed forces said that a Saudi vessel received a VHF radio message: "Brothers, turn around or face God." Yesterday, there were six vessels, I believe, that were turned around. And I'm wondering, Larry, if you believe that this is going to make an impact on the overall war, especially given the fact that it hasn't received that much attention and Trump is blowing it off, saying, "Oh, well, we'll take care of them if we need to."

#Larry Johnson

Oh, yeah, like we took care of them last April and May. They capitulated. We won. Let's go home. And they hadn't capitulated. So it's important to understand that they have not blockaded Bab-el-Mandeb. And I learned that Bab-el-Mandeb is the word for... It means gate of tears, gate of lamentation. Not exactly a welcoming entry place.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Right out of The Odyssey.

#Larry Johnson

Yeah. So, what Iran has done is they're being blockaded, both an aviation blockade by Saudi Arabia. So they've now imposed a blockade. They have not launched ballistic missiles at Yanbu, which is the major oil terminal in the Red Sea for Saudi Arabia. And so they've said, we're going to blockade it. That means any ship trying to enter or exit Bab-el-Mandeb that's connected to the Saudis will be turned back. And if they decide to try to go, then Ansar Allah will attack them. This leaves the Saudis the option to go through the Suez Canal. Egypt's more than happy to collect the fees there.

You know, it helps, you know, it helps them. But if those Saudi ships are headed for Asia, they've now added an additional 40 days just to get to Asia. As you know, they go out through the Med,

then they turn south, go down Africa, then they come up around the Horn of Africa and then out through the Indian Ocean. So it adds 40 days. So this confronts the Saudis with a choice. If they want to respond militarily, then the Houthis will say, all right, we'll respond militarily. We will now blow the hell out of Yanbu. We'll blow up your oil terminal so you won't be able to pump any oil at all. It'll all be on fire.

So if you're the Saudis, you sit back and say, are we better off going through the Strait of Hormuz and delaying payment for 40 days, or having everything completely cut off? Well, if you're sane and rational, you go with the 40 days. Or even better, you turn around and you negotiate with the Yemenis. Tell you what, this blockade stuff is nonsense. We'll lift ours if you lift yours. So they could actually have a diplomatic solution to this. Now, are the Saudis smart enough to do that? I don't think so. I think they're dumb as camel dung. But, you know, that's where this stands. And the Ansar Allah, as manifested by the Houthis, they hold the cards.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Just to reinforce what Larry's saying, Danny. A few years ago, I participated in a tabletop game at what was then called the United States Institute of Peace. Two days, everyone was there. When I say everyone, I mean every sector of DOD was there for us. The Europeans were there in configurations of individual countries like Britain and Germany and France. They were there in terms of the EU, and they were there in terms of humanitarian organizations that had great concern about the title of the two-day exercise. And the title, best summed up, was: has the Red Sea replaced the Persian Gulf in Southwest Asia as the strategic cockpit of competition?

The conclusion of the tabletop exercise, overwhelmingly—Mercy was there, for example, a big humanitarian organization—the conclusion of everyone at that exercise, military, civilian, and across in between, if you will, insurers, shippers, all of them, was that yes, the answer to the question was yes. And the reason was the incredible statistics that were briefed in working group after working group, which boiled down to basically 60% of the world's commerce—not just oil and gas and diesel and helium—60% of the world's commerce. This included foodstuffs, it included corn, it included soybeans. I mean, you name it, it goes through the Red Sea. It is the number one area in the world for traffic.

And when you, as Larry was intimating, and we were shocked when we saw this because we had just done another one on the Strait of Malacca, we found that the Strait of Malacca was somewhat exaggerated, that you could find workarounds. They're difficult, but they're not that expensive. They may be two or three more days of shipping time, but you could find workarounds and get into the South China Sea. There aren't any workarounds that are cheap, as Larry just suggested, for the Saudis going through the Suez in 40 days' transit. When you go around the Horn, even when you just come out and go around the Horn, you increase your shipping costs by two to three percent or more.

And that's prohibitive if you're going to maintain the prices and the price level and the competition and so forth. It's gone. Now, think for a moment. What is China doing? China is replacing these strategic choke points that are maritime with railroads—railroads that encompass the entire region of the world that is so successful now economically, including incredible success in Central Asia itself—and sending commerce and wealth in commerce, if we stop these stupid wars, at a greatly reduced cost and incredibly faster times, to include the one coming into Iran, not just at the top and running to Tehran, but coming in at the bottom.

These railroads are going to revolutionize the economy of the world, and they're going to shift the dynamic from a maritime-dominated world, which Britain and the United States established—thank you very much—and they're going to shift it to land. And there's going to be tremendous struggle over this. Of course, there already is. We're seeing some of the manifestation of it right now. But all to say that if you get in there and you do some real damage to traffic going through the Red Sea, you are going to impact the entire globe, and you're going to impact it significantly.

#Larry Johnson

And just to add to that, again, let's recall the oil coming out of Saudi Arabia. It's not just oil; it's sour crude. And sour crude is a critical ingredient. It is the foundation of producing diesel and aviation fuel because of the nature of the refineries that have been constructed to deal specifically with that kind of oil. All oil is not created equal. And so people need to get educated about the difference between sweet and sour crude. Donald Trump makes the mistake of bragging about, oh, the United States is, quote, energy independent because we produce all this sweet crude, and we've got enough to export. We can't use everything we produce. Well, that's true.

But that sweet crude is not easily, readily convertible into diesel and aviation fuel because of how the refineries are built. The refineries that are built to handle what's called the mid-level distillate of oil and to get out all the impurities have additional processes that carry out at higher temperatures to separate out, to eliminate those impurities, to produce the diesel and the jet fuel, basically kerosene. So if that is shut off now from Saudi, because they're contributing right now, I think, about 4 to 5 million barrels a day, it's not a game changer, but it's enough to at least keep something in the system.

You take that off the market, now what's already a global deficit is on the sour crude — the global deficit with diesel and aviation fuel — that is going to get worse. And notice what's happened even on the sweet crude front, the futures market. Brent is now almost \$90. Well, remember, just two weeks ago it was around \$70, maybe a little less. So it's gone up over \$20. The same for West Texas Intermediate. So we're in the midst of a dramatic, significant spike in the price of oil. That is, it's already been reflected in the United States. That's going to put more pressure politically on Donald Trump. He hates the higher price of oil because he knows it pisses off consumers when they have to pay more at the pump for gas.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

And we're looking at a new phenomenon that has never existed, as far as I know, in the oil markets. We have a country in the world that is so rich and is buying, and can buy, and will buy so much oil that it has the same effect as OPEC, for example, in the past when it would simply withhold production or whatever and drive the price up, but for an opposite reason — because it is consuming so much. If the Politburo were to make a decision right now to go full bore in the market and refill its strategic petroleum reserve, which is quite low right now for China and very big, much bigger than ours, then they would distort the world oil market.

And as Larry was saying, I think WTI and Brent — what I'm hearing from people who know what they're talking about — is that alone, and maybe this is a reason China won't do this because it'd be so dramatic, would drive it up to over \$120, \$130 for both benchmarks. It'd be a temporary blip, but it'd be big in terms of its distillation across the globe, if you will. And this is a new thing. This is a new phenomenon — that China consuming so much oil and making purchases with hard cash in such a short period of time could distort the market majorly. And if they wanted to, and if they really wanted to, they could do it.

#Danny

Speaking of Russia and China, you know what's so interesting? Marco Rubio made comments today as he heads to Manila for the ASEAN summit. He made comments today in reference to Russia and China's possible support for Iran, especially given how devastating the strikes in Jordan have been. But to you, Larry, we'll listen to this, but Iran made note that they received very useful intelligence in its recent strikes on U.S. bases in Jordan from Jordanians themselves, from connections inside of Jordan. I'd want you to comment on that in light of these comments and questions about Russia-China support.

#Marco Rubio

Was there an agreement on election interference?

#Danny

We didn't discuss that topic. Mr. Secretary, are China and Russia giving targeting information to Iran? These last few attacks have been very devastating to U.S. troops.

#Marco Rubio

Look, all I would say is that, you know, anytime you're in a combat zone like that, there's danger associated with it. I mean, in the end, this actually proves the point that this is what Iran has been investing its money in for the last 20 years.

#Larry Johnson

What are China and Russia giving?

#Marco Rubio

I'm not going to discuss that, other than to say that nothing that's happened, nothing that China has done, has in any way changed the trajectory of what you're seeing in terms of the conflicts we're having with Iran. And in fact, in some cases, they've actually been quite cooperative with regard to what they potentially could have done but didn't do. I think the Chinese—and I'll let them tell you—but I don't think they're big fans of what Iran is trying to do in the Straits. In fact, they've said so publicly, that they oppose...

#Danny

So that's the master of deflection. Larry, your comments, especially given the fact that Iran has said straight up that they're getting intelligence from regional countries, from partners, people that they have siphoning intelligence to them—in this case, Jordan.

#Larry Johnson

Well, let me suggest that Iran saying that could be just deflection, misinformation. You know, saying, look over here, we're getting this from Jordanian sources. Well, that'll stir up greater counterintelligence efforts in Jordan. They'll probably overreach and further alienate key sectors of their populace. Meanwhile, I believe very strongly, and with some good evidence, that both China and Russia have been providing—I mean, in fact, I know U.S. military planners absolutely believe China and Russia have been providing Iran with intelligence, specific coordinates that are then plugged into the Chinese Beidou system to target and hit these various U.S. bases.

So I don't see Iran going public and admitting, oh yeah, China's given us all this help. I also believe that China has actually provided Iran with some missiles—anti-ship missiles in particular—but also some other short-range, intermediate-range ballistic missiles that will be tested in combat conditions. Because, you know, right now all China has to go on is, oh, we run this test on a range. But had they actually fired them at a U.S. system where there's a U.S. defense system, how does that missile perform?

I guarantee you that China has been collecting intelligence in that regard, and they're there, and Iran's more than happy to cooperate in allowing Chinese missiles to be tested. Because if they work, you know, then it's going to create problems for the United States. And if it doesn't work, it tells China they need to go back to the drawing board. They don't want to wait until they get into an actual fight with the United States, which the United States is always talking about. But before they do, they try to figure out how to make these systems work.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Someone should ask Rubio the question of why are you bombing the railroad—the Chinese railroad that comes out of Samarkand and down into Iran and across to Tehran? Why are you bombing that railroad? And why doesn't China have the right to respond in some way if you're bombing their railroad? Oh, Marco, did you not even know that railroad was there? It doesn't go to Cuba, so he's not interested in it. The other side of this, too, is that, you know, if you were going to attribute any kind of strategic reason to this administration—and I do, to an extent—the people behind Peter Thiel, for example, the people behind J.D. Vance, who are worried, I think, people who are behind some of the moneyed characters that supported Trump in the first place, what we call the deep state all the time.

You can't look at what's happening and not know conclusively that both Ukraine and Southwest Asia and Iran are part of the warp and woof of our struggle against the number one economy in the world, which is looking like it's on a march—and a march that we will have grave difficulty stopping. Anybody who tries to tell me that there isn't some of that behind all of this is smoking some really cheap stuff, because there is. That's the only thing that makes any sense in this. It doesn't make sense the way we're doing it and the way we're frittering away our power doing it, but it does make sense from the perspective of we're desperate, and we are desperate.

#Danny

Well, Larry, I know you have. So, any final comments before you depart?

#Larry Johnson

No, I just want to reinforce Colonel Wilkerson's point. The U.S. is desperate, and desperate people do stupid things.

#Danny

Yeah. Yeah. Well, I just have one. Larry, you're free to go to the next. I'll bail out. Sorry.

#Larry Johnson

It's always good to be with you guys.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Are you gracing Florida with your presence right now?

#Larry Johnson

Oh, yeah, absolutely. I'm out on my lanai. Pool's bubbling over on the side. I thought it was a portico blowing on me, so I'm good.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Catch me a largemouth bass out of your pool.

#Larry Johnson

Roger that. All right, bye-bye.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

Take care.

#Danny

All right. So, Colonel Wilkerson, just one final comment for you to comment on. You know, I've always disagreed with the assertion—I see it all the time, I get messages about it—that China has been working behind the scenes to stymie Iran's defense of itself and its escalatory ladder regarding it, based on its own narrow interests. And Marco Rubio here seems to agree with people who make this claim, that China's been behind the scenes trying to clamp down on Iran's response to U.S. aggression.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

What else can he say, though, Danny? I mean, what else can he say? He's the Secretary of State, supposedly. He doesn't act like it much, but supposedly he is. Is he going to say China's helping him? Because the United States against China and Iran together, let alone Russia too—that's a losing proposition.

#Danny

Yeah, yeah. Well, it seems like that is exactly what's going on. So your final comments on this—I mean, you know, China works in very particular ways. It does everything by trade and cooperation and development and infrastructure. And, you know, every time I go, people always say, you know, if we have any kind of security pacts with another country, that's based on each country's interests. It has nothing to do with third parties, nothing to do with whether the U.S. is striking Iran or not striking Iran. But nevertheless, it still has the impact of helping when Iran needs that satellite technology to see exactly where things are that the United States is moving around. So your final comments on this and this changing world that I think this war really does signify.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

I think to your comments there, I think the mantra for the Chinese right now, to put it in good Sun Tzu-ian style—more Deng Xiaoping style, really—is that if your enemy is committing suicide, issue him more bullets. Don't fight him. Don't try to stop him. Issue him more bullets, or better bullets, or another gun, or another knife. That's China's philosophy now, I think. They know they're winning. They know that they have the number one economy in the world in almost every factor that counts, except global currency. And they're changing that, even as I speak. They are internationalizing the renminbi and the yuan.

Same thing, really, and a basket of currencies leading the way for that into everything from the global oil markets to the commodity markets. So that's the only element of economic power that they don't pretty much own, and they're going to own that within a decade. So I understand the frustration on the part of American leaders, good ones and bad ones, although the former is very hard to find these days. But I don't understand the approach we're taking to it, which is essentially to commit suicide and to welcome the bullets the Chinese issue us for extra power to do so. It doesn't make any sense to me.

#Danny

Yeah, seems like, as Larry said, a lot of desperation going around and maybe very few options that are palatable to the United States Empire.

#Lawrence Wilkerson

And a whole lot of insanity. You know, we could very well be looking at a Putin strike on a NATO country here very shortly. That will expand things profoundly. And we could very well be looking at more parties to the conflict in Southeast Asia than we think might be legitimate, if you will, right now. Think Turkey, for example. Think other countries that don't want this destabilization to deepen, and don't want Bibi to use a nuclear weapon, and don't want Iran to use a nuclear weapon or to get a nuclear weapon, and don't want any of the dynamics that we are largely responsible for with this stupid, insane war we've started for no other reason than Donald Trump's ego.

#Danny

All right, everybody. It's been a great show. Everyone, thank Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson for sticking around to close it out with me, and thank Larry Johnson as well. Tomorrow, I'll be back on at 1 p.m. Eastern time with Pepe Escobar, July 23rd. Hit the like button before you go. The video description is where you can support this work—Patreon, Substack, and much more. I'm rolling out some new things as well for those who are YouTube members, Patreon members, Substack members, to cover things that I don't normally get to cover here on this program, and also rolling out some more breaking news kind of structure, infrastructure for all of you. So this channel will be very active in

the coming months. All right, everybody, hit that like button before you go. Thanks again to Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson. Thank you again, and thanks to Larry Johnson.