



Col. Wilkerson: U.S. Attacks Iran — Are We at War Again?

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Zain Raza (ZR): Thank you for tuning in and welcome to another episode of The Source. I'm your host Zain Raza. This is part one of our discussion with Lawrence Wilkerson on the latest developments in Iran. Lawrence Wilkerson is a retired army colonel who served in the US Army for 31 years. He was also chief of staff for then Secretary of State Colin Powell from 2002 to 2005. He's now a senior fellow at the Institute for Responsible Statecraft. Before I begin this interview, I would like to remind all of our viewers to join our alternative channels on Rumble and Telegram. YouTube, which is owned by Google, not only has a close partnership with the United States National Security apparatus, but has a long history of shadow banning and censoring content of independent and critical media such as ours. In the months of March and April, we reached millions of people worldwide and won over 7,000 subscribers. However, in the last few weeks, our reach has dropped dramatically and we have won almost no subscribers. Although we cannot prove this conclusively, we suspect we are being shadow banned. For these reasons above, we ask all four viewers to visit the description of our video and click on the links of these alternative platforms and join these channels as a precautionary measure. We are not asking you to leave YouTube, all we are asking you is to sign up to these channels as a precautionary measure because if that day ever comes when we are shadow banned or censored, we won't even be able to reach you with an announcement. Also, don't forget to share, like and comment as that greatly pushes the algorithm of YouTube and helps us reach a wider audience. Lawrence Wilkerson, welcome back to our show.

Lawrence Wilkerson (LW): Good to be with you, Zain.

ZR: Shortly after the US-Israeli war of aggression against Iran began under Operation Epic Fury, you assessed on our show, which by the way was watched hundreds of thousands of times in Germany and was one of the best videos on our channel this year, that Washington and Tel Aviv had fundamentally underestimated Tehran, misunderstood the nature of the conflict and could not win this war. For the most part, based on your sources, you stated that the damage done to Israel and US assets were being systematically underreported, while Iran was strategically bleeding US and Israeli air defenses. Looking at the situation today, your assessment was more than accurate, I would say.

In recent days, however, after roughly two months of a so-called ceasefire marked by repeated tit-for-tat escalations, the situation has escalated again. Israel widened its attacks from southern Lebanon to Beirut under the justification of fighting Hezbollah. Iran, which had warned that Beirut was a red line, responded with ballistic missiles and drones towards Israel, including strikes on military sites connected to the Lebanon operation. Tehran has warned that further Israeli aggression against Lebanon could trigger additional retaliation. The United States also launched what it calls "self-defense strikes" on Iranian surveillance, communications, radar and air defense sites after President Trump claimed that Iran had shot down a US Apache helicopter over the Strait of Hormuz. Iran in turn says it retaliated against US military assets in Bahrain, Kuwait and Jordan. In Jordan specifically, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard claims it fired 12 ballistic missiles at a US air base that hosts fighter jets such as F-35s, F-15s and F-16s.

At sea, the situation has also escalated. India has summoned a senior US diplomat after a US strike on an oil tanker off Oman, which killed three of its Indian sailors. The ship was registered in Palau, a small island country in the Pacific Ocean, but carried an Indian crew. Iran's military has now ordered the complete closure of the state of Hormuz to all vessels while Trump has stated that the US will be hitting Iran "very hard" tonight, adding that they will take over Iran's Kharg island and other oil infrastructure points. Can you provide your assessment of this latest escalation and threats by Trump? And what are the underlying reasons why the peace deal cannot be reached with Iran, especially when every moment of supposed optimism from President Trump seems to be followed by another major escalation?

LW: That's a fairly good summary of where we are. I won't pretend to be clairvoyant because this administration grows more opaque and obtuse to me every day of the week on both domestic and international issues, but this war has shaped up not unlike what some of us predicted it would shape up in terms of its present situation, but it's also had some surprises in it. And I think the surprises may demarcate the consistency or inconsistency of the conflict more than the things we predicted that have come true. And let me just, for a moment, tell you what I mean by that. First of all, what has happened is we have lost sight of the principal reason that there is a war in the region. Now, I don't mean Donald Trump's, rather, in my view, idiotic decision to attack Iran. What I mean is we've forgotten about what the principal purpose in now Iran's actions, I think increasingly, but also the actions of the UN, the actions of the rest of the world that gave a damn. And that is Palestine and the Palestinians. We have completely lost sight of that.

In that loss of sight and focus, the Palestinians are dying at the rate of 20 or 30 a day. They're even being viciously exploited in terms of the quote "humanitarian" unquote assistance coming into them with Egyptians, Israelis – yes, you heard me right, Israelis – probably some Americans, probably some British and others making huge profits off what it to get even a dozen eggs inside Palestine right now. It's horrible what they're doing. So we've forgotten that. Well, one of the things that Iran has not forgotten and is using increasingly in the region is it is the only entity really caring about – and one doesn't need to debate whether they really do or not, it's the fact on the ground – the Palestinians and their ultimate status. Even MBS

has said "no deal until you have a viable route to a viable Palestinian state", meaning Donald Trump and all the people in the West who are with him in this conflict. So that's the first thing.

The second thing is that no matter what Donald Trump says to Bibi Netanyahu, probably a short-lived leader now, because it looks very much like he may lose this election coming up. You've even got polls showing that Israelis who supported him in the past don't even want him to run. So what Netanyahu is doing is using this situation in Gaza, which he is still exploiting to the maximum extent he can to kill people. Hamas in the meantime has regrown itself in the region. So he knows he's got to go after them very shortly, or he's going to have a conflict as soon as other things settle down a bit – if they do. But what he's doing is using the situation in Gaza and the situation in Palestine as a low burner killing machine to continue what he wanted to do while he thwarts the president of the United States with regard to Lebanon. And what do I mean by that? He's using Lebanon as a reason to get reelected. Because the opposition to him in the upcoming elections is criticizing him for not being tough enough in Lebanon, and in fact, bowing to the president of the United States and stopping doing what Israel's security demands. So that's the second dimension of it, and that is the trap that Netanyahu's got himself caught in.

And then the third dimension you highlighted in your opening remarks, we simply did not assess the nature of this conflict the way we should have, and what's developing, I think. There was an article in the Jerusalem Post recently by a historian in Israel that sort of hinted at this, but what is developing is a landmass state, if you will. Not a state as in the US or France or Germany, but a state of condition, a landmass condition that expands on and extends Mackinder's original theory of the heartland. And this goes with my constant statement that power's eking out of the West and it's being drawn by a magnet named China into the East. And what's happened is, this war has compelled that landmass to sort of shift a bit from Mackinder's days, and it now comprises almost all of Russia, all of Central Asia, Iran and China. And one wonders about the subcontinent, how long it will take before they realize where their dollars are really going to be made the best and their lives insured the best, and join it. I mean, they're already a member of BRICS. That's what the "I" stands for, right?

So you've got this incredible conglomeration of power developing, which is in its essence going to be dependent on land routes, pipelines and other accouterments of a land power, as McKinder talked about. And it's going to be opposed to essentially a maritime power on the other side of the Atlantic. It is going to develop such a capacity through its railroads, its highways, and other ways of delivering goods, if you will. Now if you look at the railroads that China has built, they're incredible. Commerce can flow along them better and cheaper than it flows over the maritime environment. So they are taking the world and reshaping it there. And most of what they're taking is coming from the West. And that's what we're fighting. I think that's what we are fighting.

And I don't know if Trump is even remotely aware of this, but the Deep State underneath him is aware of it. They are aware that the struggle is with China. The struggle has been forced by

us and our stupidity in the Ukraine conflict and elsewhere to join ranks, if you will, with about 60 % of the world and about 60 % of the GDP of the world. That is increasingly the growing component of the world, the growing power of the world, and we're opposing it tooth and nail on two theaters and two fronts – largely in Ukraine focused there for now four years, right? But threatening to spread at any moment, at any moment. If you've listened to Sergey Karaganov, for example, he's insisting – and his voice is becoming more and more vibrant and more and more listened to – he's insisting on Putin doing more. In fact, he is insisting on Putin striking NATO countries. And we all know what that will probably lead to, very likely lead to. And that is war with NATO. That will be a disaster because NATO is going to turn to Donald Trump and say, we're invoking article five in Brussels and Donald Trump is going to say, hoot on you, I'm not joining you. If he's sane, he's going to say, I am not joining and he's going to leave Europe to stew in its own juices, which might go nuclear. That's the real fear that I have in that theater.

Come back to the Southwest Asian theater and I have the same fear. I just reread yesterday, when I was waiting at the DACOR House, the foreign service house downtown in Washington, I got there a little early – they have a fantastic library there – I sat down and reread a chapter in Sy Hersh's book about Jonathan Pollard. When you read that, and I had just listened to the testimony of this man from the USS Liberty, whom we got to be interviewed by Tucker Carlson here very shortly, he's a riveting speaker and he was literally on the bridge when the torpedo hit, the one that almost sank her. And his story is all about essentially what Sy is writing about in the broad chapter about Jonathan Pollard with regard to Israel – a traitorous dog is Israel. I mean, dealing with the Soviet Union, dealing with China, doing all manner of things to protect its own interests while it was stealing top secret and higher code word intelligence from the United States, not just through Pollard, but other ways too. Footnote there for a minute, because Tom Cotton is in our Senate right now trying to get a bill passed in the National Defense Authorization Act amendment process that will make this relationship with Israel in terms of intelligence sharing even more deadly and more constant than it was when Jonathan Pollard was the conduit for it. No question in my mind, Pollard is a traitor, an absolute traitor. He should never have been pardoned. If anything, he should have been taken to Fort Leavenworth and hung by his neck until he was dead.

So that's where we are now in both of these conflicts. We got this incredibly difficult situation in Southwest Asia that we didn't need to create. This was a war of choice, a pure war of choice. We didn't need to create this situation. And we're showing daily that we don't really know what to do about it. And Trump's words coming out of his mouth are different every day with regard to diplomacy, with regard to the war being back on, with regards to the Strait of Hormuz, with regard to the stock market – all confusing matters. And Ukraine sitting there simmering away with Trump paying no attention to it now at all. No attention whatsoever to Ukraine because all his attention is on Southwest Asia. And people like Sergey Karaganov saying with a receptive audience in Russia, "you're not being tough enough, Mr. Putin, you need to take more drastic action. You need to strike targets in NATO countries that are helping Ukraine send drones and other lethal equipment into Russia". So we're in a pickle

right now and a pickle which either one of which could produce a use of nuclear weapons. And the one that frightens me in that regard, in my face frightens me, is Israel.

ZR: You talked about the broader geopolitical goal that Washington might have and this usually comes into conflict with another issue that I'm going to elaborate on now. When I look at what is largely left out in the German media, it's the role and extent of influence of the pro-Israel or Zionist lobby in shaping US foreign policy, especially in the Middle East. In the current escalation, the question has become even more relevant because much of the public narrative portrays President Trump as a reluctant actor trying to restrain Netanyahu. For example, on June 8th, just before the US became more directly involved, Axios published an article by Israeli journalist Barak Ravid, who by the way served in Israel's military intelligence unit called Unit 8200. The article framed the crisis with the headline that Israel and Iran had nearly "pulled Trump back to war," and described Trump as scrambling to avoid a full-scale resumption of the conflict.

As I see it, there are two major views on the US-Israeli relationship. One view is associated with scholars such as Prof. John Mearsheimer and Prof. Stephen Walt that argues that the Israeli lobby has a major influence on US policy and often pushes Washington in direction that harms US national interests. Another view, which you describe right now, is that the US has a geopolitical interest in the region, this is also reflected by independent journalists like Dimitri Lascaris, who states that Israel has long functioned as a strategic asset and projects US and Western power in the region. Ironically, even German Chancellor Friedrich Merz put this very bluntly in a 2025 interview with one of Germany's largest public service broadcasters called ZDF, where he said what Israel was doing was "dirty work" for the West in relation to Iran. In your view, is U.S. Policy being captured or distorted by the Israeli Zionist lobby and Netanyahu's agenda? Or is the US primarily using Israel to project hegemony and geopolitical goals onto the Middle East?

LW: My answer to that question in a general sense is that Israel has been, since the end of the Cold War, a more strategic liability to the United States than an asset. But let me hasten to put a number of footnotes to that. Your question is a good question, and it is answered in a bifurcated way. There are people in the United States who are using Israel, and there are people in the United States who are doing, they think, what the United States national security interest demands, and then using Israel to do it. So you've got some who are letting Israel use the United States, much the way Jonathan Pollard did, for example, and you've got others who think, at least, that they're using Israel with respect to their interests in the region. They are so colluded, though. Especially contaminated by what I call rabid Zionism and by Christian nationalism in this country – a really contorted relationship where the one knows the other is going to kill it if Armageddon does come and the other says, that's all right, we'll use you until Armageddon and it ain't going to be your version, it's going to be ours. So, this is a very contaminative elixir in this country, that mixes religion with state policy. And let me tell you, the Israelis have exploited that to the maximum because I can't find a single Israeli diplomat or intelligence or military person who really believes the religious crowd, but they're using it. So that contaminates everything we want to talk about with regard to the

Israel-US relationship. The bottom line is, it works both ways. And I've been very difficult to convince of that until the last year or so. I think it's right, it works both ways. It depends on which clique in which country you're talking about.

However, all of that said, it is becoming, because of the legislature of this country, a very contaminative relationship because of what we're doing. And that relationship has been crafted largely in the halls of AIPAC. Steve Walt and John Mershammer loaned me a great paper at George Washington University before the book even came out, and I got to show my students – and George Washington University at that time was about 52% Jewish students and my seminar was just like that. So I've been involved in it ever since then trying to figure some of this out, as have many of my students. What we see with that, I think, is Mearsheimer and Walt were right about the impact for the Jewish lobby, but it's not everything. And neither John or Steve would say it was everything, I don't think. It's so much more complicated than that when you try to sort things out. And this war in Southwest Asia is demonstrating that full blown. I could even bring Ukraine in it too because the Israelis are selling lots of weapons to Ukraine and Ukraine is selling lots and weapons to Israel. So, there's a connection there too.

And one of the things you learn from reading Sy Hersh – and I think it's fairly accurate, the chapter on Jonathan Pollard – is that the Israelis have no compunction. You can say, well, that's the way states are. We have no compunction either. Britain, France, they got no compunction, either. And by that, I mean, "we'll do anything that's in our national security interest and totally violate the national security interests of our allies". Now, I've been there. I've seen that done. I know it is possible, but I'm really stunned after rereading Sy's chapter on Pollard, how badly we allowed it to get during that time when he was spying. And I use that as a reflector of where we headed now. And where we're headed now is to institutionalise, legalise, and put into Congress this relationship that was so heinous, that Pollard had with Israel and with all the things he was doing. And the revelations that came out of that were that Israel was dealing with every country in the world that it felt it needed to deal with for its own survival, often at counter purposes to Washington. In fact, even during the Cold War, working at counter purposes with Washington, hoping that they would survive even if we didn't. I mean, you can't make this stuff up.

And I hesitate to say that you have a constant, consistent leadership that feels this way in Jerusalem or before Tel Aviv, but it looks like it. And I don't think it's changed at all. All to say is that Israel is a mercenary power in addition to being genocidal, in addition to being brutal, in addition to killing wherever it has to kill whomever has to kill, in order to keep its state intact. And this is a change. This was not the point, I don't think, in '48, maybe not even the point in '67 or '73, but it is certainly the point now. Now they are an aggrandizing power. Their sights are set – it's not just Bibi Netanyahu – the ruling clique in Israel and by polls 80% of the Jewish citizens of Israel, their sights are set with sites on Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and points West and East. I mean, you can't make this up. It's "Greater Israel", and there are people who are very much interested in it. That changes the whole dynamic of what you want to say about the relationship between Israel and the United States. And I've got to

say Donald Trump doesn't understand this one iota. I'm not sure anyone in the US Congress understands it either. I'm not sure that too many people in the US foreign policy establishment at the Council on Foreign Relations or wherever understand this either, but it has become an incredibly contaminative relationship.

Now, Israel and Europe are making it no better but worse, particularly Germany. And I'm hoping, I'm praying, that if Alice Elizabeth Weidel and the AfD come to power in Germany, which it looks like politically they are going to ultimately, that they have a sense of how harmful it is to Germany to be antagonistic towards Moscow, and that Germany leads Europe out of this morass it has put itself in with its Russophobia and its absolute desire to destroy Russia. Because they're not going to do that. They simply aren't going to do that. If anything, they're going to lead the world into nuclear war. And we're going to be right there with them. So all, all a long story to say, I think there is poison in both relationships for Europe and the United States, more poison in the Israeli relationship, but still, for Germany in particular and other European countries. They seem to be waking up a little bit, but I'm not sure how fast that awakening is going to be. But there's poison in the relationship with Israel, certainly for the empire, for the United States, and I think for Europe, too.

And there's a double shot of that poison in Ukraine, especially now that the only person, single person, who could probably negotiate as he claimed he would do in 24 hours some sort of reasonable end to this Ukrainian conflict is not focused on it at all, period. I doubt Ukraine crosses his mind because he's so fixed on Southwest Asia. All to say we've got a real problem in the world, not just in the United States or in Europe or in Southwest Asia, because any one of these places, any one its adjacent crisis areas, like Kaliningrad, for example, or the Arctic, for example, or let's say the Bab el-Mendeb in the Red Sea – any one of these places, this thing could get much bigger, much quicker, economically catastrophe for the world and we could have a much wider conflict, one that in several points has nuclear potential.

ZR: You mentioned that there's a political interest in Israel, due to the election season, to continue the war with Iran and to continue their military operations, the war on Lebanon. And to add to that, as I mentioned in the introduction, Donald Trump recently announced that he will strike Iran very hard tonight and that he would try to take over Kharg Island. I mean, we've seen the reports and it took some while for them to come out, that Iran really caused massive damages to US military sites in the Gulf region. Let's say the situation escalates as we're seeing it unfold right now before our very own eyes. Do you think the US has replenished its interceptor stocks and it will be able to defend against Iran? And does Iran even have the capability to conduct the amount of strikes, the damage that it did? What situation are we in? And can you comment on what would happen if this escalates as we saw in the two months prior?

LW: Those are critical questions, and I don't pretend to have answers to them all, nor do I pretend to have answers that are 60 or 70 or 80 % correct. But I do have answers, and they come from my military expertise and from talking with a lot of other people who have other regional expertise and so forth. I go back to a headline in Haaretz, which I have cited many

times on many occasions, and that was a headline that essentially said, all Iran has to do – this was about a week into the war, which was going to be over instantly, as you recall – all Iran has to do to win is not lose. All the United States and Israel have to do is produce a spectacular victory. I think that's still the opposite. I think that's still a good condensation of the situation. Iran has been battered, no question about it. We've dropped tons and tons of bombs and precision munitions on them. And Iran has responded. And we are probably now not able to use most of our base infrastructure in that region, whether it be in Jordan or it be Western Iraq or it being Kuwait or be in Qatar or you name it, we probably can't use it now, either because it's been destroyed or damaged or because the state won't let us use it like Riyadh.

So, I don't know where we're going from here. I do know that Iran has a second echelon, if you will, of ballistic missiles, which I'm told are still relatively intact and fireable, that we haven't damaged the transporters and the firing mechanisms and the missiles themselves, because in some cases we haven't hit them because we didn't know where they were, don't know where they are. Or the Iranians have been very good about taking it back underground like the North Koreans do. So I'm not exactly sure what Iran's got left, but I'm hearing and feeling in my bones that they have enough left to really do considerable damage in the region, as we've called it, in a second tier of strikes. And those second strikes would hit things like Ras Tanura in Saudi Arabia, maybe even a facility that's even more important than Ras Tanura that has something like – oh, I think Ras Tanura is up to about 500,000 barrels a day or something, and the other ones well north of that. And it constitutes about 7%. 7% of some of the best oil the world gets. And other targets like that around the region that would probably do extreme damage to the world economy. Wouldn't even take the Strait of Hormuz to do it because you've taken out the facilities themselves. There's no need to pump oil and put it on a ship because there's no oil to pump or no pumps to pump it, no refineries to refine it, whatever.

I'm hearing that the same thing sort of applies to the fertilizer and the helium and other facilities that are necessary to the world. The World Food Program is saying, I think, fairly categorically, that we're looking at starvation in the Global South because fertilizer has not been able to get where it needed to get. Water is already a premium in the Global South because of the climate crisis and other things. Just outright drought. And so we're going to starve a lot of people in the Global South if we don't get rid of this, and we may already be doing it. We already may have made so much impact on the global system, especially fertilizer and urea and other things like that, that it will really punish the Global South. Here we go again, you know, the North being the big culprit punishing the Global South. Not going to make any friends or in that situation.

So if Iran does that, I think it will be very reluctant that they do it because they realize that will take them off the high ground that they are pretty much occupying right now with regard to this conflict. After all, we're the ones killing civilians, bombing schools, bombing water facilities, bombing oil facilities, bombing all manner of things that are war crimes to bomb. We're the ones doing that. So I think probably in 60 %, the 60 % that accounts for the world's population, Iran is not a guilty party in this. They're just defending themselves. If they were

to strike these other targets with the second round that's just as effective as the first round or even only partially as effective as the first round, and do all this global damage in terms of the trade on the high seas and elsewhere – I'm not so sure that they'll maintain the high ground they're currently on with that portion of the world.

So it's a real question as to where we're going. One, do they have the capability to do this if we really go after them again in the way that Donald Trump is sort of animating? And two, will they do it? And three, what will be the repercussions if they do do it? The world is not going to be very happy with a – what do we say, by September, by August maybe, we'll have global depression. That's an invitation to deepening these struggles, not solving them. And by that, I mean, that kind of situation tends to lead to looking for outs. And the outs in Ukraine might be for Russia's nuclear weapons use, ultimately, and also the same case in the Southwest Asian quadrant. And I don't for a minute, given Bibi Netanyahu's political problems and his desire not to go to jail and not to die in jail, I don't for a minute dismiss the fact that he might use nuclear weapons too. And that's a very frightening prospect because that's really letting the genie out of the bottle because in order to use nuclear weapons effectively against Iran, he'd have to use quite a few.

ZR: I want to turn to the question of negotiations, in particular Iran's nuclear program. Because the German and political media establishment largely accept Washington's framing that Iran should not be allowed to possess, even for domestic enrichment capability or civilian purposes, any sort of nuclear capability. And if we give them some sort of civilian use, they could theoretically expand it towards higher levels and use it for military purposes. Some background for our viewers: Under the Obama administration, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA, kept Iran's nuclear enrichment at 3.67 %. Under the first Trump administration, he unilaterally withdrew from the JCPOA in 2018 and reimposed sanctions, after which Iran gradually breached the limits and reached 20 % by early 2021.

Under the Biden administration, Iran then moved to 60 % enrichment, where it remained during the second Trump administration. While this is below the roughly 90 % that are needed to develop weapons-grade, the argument from Washington, Israel, Europe and in particular Germany is that Iran is moving in the direction of nuclear weapons since civilian enrichment is usually associated with much lower levels that we talked about, 3.67 %. What is your view of this media framing of Washington's position that the West should take all measures necessary to prevent the so-called "Iranian mullah regime" from producing a nuclear weapon, which they argue would destabilize the entire region?

LW: That position is about as farcical and illegitimate, if you will, false, as the position we have towards Russia will take Estonia, Latvia, Poland and everything else if we don't stop them in Ukraine. Those are two lamentable, stupid, dangerous interpretations of the world scene. And I don't for a moment think that many of the people who hold those views really believe them. What they want is perpetual warfare. That's what they want. Perpetual warfare that the Lockheed Martins and others can make fortunes off of and their equivalents in

Europe as well. Now let me back up for a second and try to explain why I kind of take that tack to it. Iran has never been a threat to the United States of America, period. Never. Iran has never been a threat to the Europeans, never, at all, period. They were conjured as a threat in order to make money in order to keep the security complexes of both places including NATO itself all fired up – NATO for out-of-area operations because it had no reason to exist post-cold war. They needed one and so they got it. They got it out of area operations and "oh wow, look, down there, West Asia, oh, those Iranians are building a nuclear weapon. You know how many times Bibi Netanyahu has said that Iran is a day, a week, two years, one year, five minutes, whatever, away from a nuclear weapon? I can't count them. There's so many times he said that. Iran has not built a nuclear weapon. The JCPOA was a good agreement. It was a masterful diplomatic achievement by the Europeans, Germany, China, and the United States and the UN and others involved in it. Especially Secretary Moniz, who helped Obama really deal with the nuclear components because he knew nuclear. The JCPOA was a good deal. And Trump violated everything in the world with regard to diplomacy and agreements and so forth when he canceled it. It was a categorically stupid decision to do that.

Even with that, no one can show with flaming gun evidence that Iran has made a decision to build a nuclear weapon or has built one or is building one. But I will add to that, put the footnote there, if Iran is building a nuclear weapons and there are some like Dr. Ted Postol, an American professor of physics at MIT, who think they are underground building a new nuclear weapon – they have the capacity, they have the enriched uranium, they had the warhead technology, they have a missile, all they need to do is put it together. There are others who believe that Pakistan has promised Iran nuclear protection and perhaps even a nuclear missile should they need one, if Bibi Netanyahu uses one on them. So who has forced Iran, if they do become the tenth nuclear weapons state in the world, to do that? We have. We, and the Europeans, with our vicious attitude towards the Islamists in Tehran, who convinced me in New York when I met with President Ahmadinejad years ago at the UN General Assembly meetings, that they would not build a nuclear weapon because it was anathema, anathema – that's the English word their foreign minister used with me. He asked me, "you're a colonel, right? I know you're a colonel. Underneath that civilian suit, you are a colonel?" I said, "yes". He said, "do you know the word operationalize?" He spoke English fluently. Yes, I know that word. He said, "would you like me to go to the UN Security Council and get down on my hands and knees and operationalize the fatwa in front of them by signing in blood that we do not want a nuclear weapon?" I believed him. I still believe him. He was sincere. If Iran has changed its mind and is now going to build or has already built a nuclear – Ted Postol's prediction is 60 to 70 % chance of it – we forced them. We and the Europeans forced them into doing it. This is why we do business in the world now. We make enemies out of people who are not our enemies. We attribute to them things that make them our enemies and then, if we're really up on them, we attack them with bombs and sanctions and everything else.

Do you know that there's a report on the street right now – and the Europeans should listen to this, because they are guilty of it too – there's a report on the street that is very believable that says: Since the year 2000, the United States, through its sanctions regime, has killed 38

million people of whom 50 % or more are women and children. Think about in Iraq when we killed about 500,000 children with our sanctions during the Oil-for-Food Program. Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State, said it was worth it to get rid of Saddam. 500,000 children were worth it, to get rid of Saddam? And we know now he wasn't nearly the threat that we claimed he was. Of course, that's what we have to do when we create a threat in the world. That's rivaling Mao Zedong in the Cultural Revolution. That's rivaling Stalin in the purges. It's even rivaling Hitler in terms of direct people killed. 38 million people. And yet, we continue to do these sorts of things. We continue to sanction people. We continue to go to war with people we don't need to go to war with. We continue the back wars that are clearly, clearly deemed to be existential threats to Russia, and we won't accept that. We think Russia can be defeated. And then we'll get to China. Oh, well, I'm sorry, the world is ganging up against us, against Israel, against all the pariah states. And it's only a matter of time, probably not in my lifetime. I'm too old, but it's the only matter of time until the rest of the world teaches us a very, very hard lesson.

ZR: Colonel Wilkerson, retired Army colonel and defense analyst, thank you so much for your time and insight today.

LW: Thank you, Zain. Take care.

ZR: And thank you for tuning in today. If you like the journalism that we undertook in this video and would like to follow us going forward, then make sure to click on the subscribe button below. Also, don't forget to support our independent journalism by donating today. We don't take any money from corporations or governments, all with the goal of providing you with information that is free from external influence. You will now see a PayPal QR code appear on the screen. If you scan it with your phone's camera, you will be able to donate to us without any hassle. I thank you for your support and for tuning in. I'm your host, Zain Raza. See you next time.

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