

# [***Retaliatory U.S. Strikes Begin In Iraq, Syria; Now: U.S. Launches Strikes After Three Soldiers Killed; WH: U.S. Response Will Not End Tonight***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B7V-8M41-F072-X0KV-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

NEIL CAVUTO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: There had been talk that by going to their financial epicenters beyond Iran, that that would be a sort of powerful one two punch. We got the one today, some people are waiting for the two, the three, the four.

We'll see you tomorrow at 10:00. Here's THE FIVE.

DANA PERINO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Hello everyone. I'm Dana Perino along with Judge Jeanine Pirro, Richard Fowler, Will Cain and Greg Gutfeld. It's 5:00 in New York City and this is THE FIVE.

This is a Fox News alert, the United States has started carrying out a wave of retaliatory strikes in Iraq and Syria. It comes five days after a deadly drone attack launched by Iran backed terror groups that killed three American soldiers. Today was the dignified transfer of their remains.

Let's go right to National Security Correspondent Jennifer Griffin. She's got a live update from the Pentagon. Hi, Jennifer.

JENNIFER GRIFFIN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL NATIONAL SECURITY CORRESPONDENT: Hi, Dana. Well, at 4:00 p.m. Eastern, the USBM carrying out airstrikes on six to seven locations I'm told in both Iraq and Syria. U.S. Central Command just put out a statement in which they said that 85 targets had been struck at those different locations that were used by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps. 125 munitions were dropped. We've reported and we've heard from U.S. defense officials that two B1B Lancer bombers flew from the United States to the region and carried out some of these strikes. Targeting I'm told multiple multiple targets inside the six to seven locations used by the Iranian proxies.

Some of the locations are weapons storage facilities, and included underground bunkers, headquarters command and control nodes that have been used for the Iranian backed proxies to store their drones and ballistic missiles and fire on those U.S. bases. As we've reported, 166 attacks on U.S. bases since mid-October. The one that turned deadly on Sunday killing three Americans is was the trigger for this response.

We're told that this is a campaign that has been drawn up by U.S. Central Command that it will last for days. And that this is the first round, the first round of strikes. We reported in the -- at about 3:30 today that there were explosions inside Syria at some of these sites. We're told they weren't airstrikes at the time, but that they were explosions. It was part of the preparations being made for the strikes on these targets.

So, a little bit of confusion earlier today. But we know for certain that the first airstrikes began at 4:00 p.m. Eastern, Dana.

PERINO: OK, we're going to take it around the table here. Will, you want to go?

WILL CAIN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: I'm curious, I know Jennifer asked this earlier today in speaking to the Pentagon, but how much heads up Iran had that the strikes were headed their way? How much they were able to evacuate from the targets? And then what -- if that is the fact, is what is left from at least a personnel standpoint as who was actually the target in the strikes?

GRIFFIN: Well, Will, I think it's been the worst kept secret in Washington that this campaign was going to begin in the coming days. You heard the president talk about it. You've heard Pentagon officials talk about it yesterday here at the Pentagon.

I asked Secretary Austin that very question, here was the question.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GRIFFIN: Has there been too much telegraphing? Or is the point not to kill any Iranian commanders?

GEN. LLOYD AUSTIN, DEFENSE SECRETARY: In terms of telegraphing about strikes and whether or not people leave or what have left, you know, I won't speculate on any of that.

I would just tell you that, you know, we will have a multi-tiered response.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GRIFFIN: So, Will, I think it would be safe to assume that given the time of day when they struck after mid night, local time, and the telegraphing that had taken place, we had seen reports that Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps commanders had been called back to Iran. I would be very surprised if any of them had been at these spaces. There may have been a few people left behind, but not the senior commanders.

And I think perhaps that was by design. Again, you've heard the Pentagon and others say that they're not seeking a war with Iran. That's why U.S. officials are ruling out any strikes inside Iran at this time. But again, this is the first salvo, they're hoping that Tehran gets the message without this having to escalate.

PERINO: Great, Judge Pirro.

JEANINE PIRRO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL LEGAL ANALYST: You know, Jennifer, I understand that the United States is saying they're not seeking war. But at the same time, there are those who believe that if you just hit the proxies in Syria and Iraq, that it's not going to matter to Iran. And that when Iran can separate itself from the proxies, saying, you know, they go rogue, when the truth is the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps both trains them and pays them. You know, it's kind of disingenuous. And then, what is the point of hitting the proxies?

GRIFFIN: Well, it's a very good question. And certainly this shell game that Iran has been playing in the Middle East by arming and supporting and training these proxies, whether it's in Lebanon with Hezbollah, whether it's these various groups in Syria and Iraq, whether it's the Houthis in Yemen, whether it's Hamas in the Gaza Strip, there is a common thread here, and it is Iran, and it is Tehran. And the U.S. has not figured out a way to put enough pressure on Iran to make it painful enough to for them to stop supporting these groups.

And in fact, there are some who believe and this is why it's a very delicate balancing act for the White House National Security team as well as the Pentagon is how not to get baited into a war with Iran, because some believe that's what Iran wants, that they wanted Israel to find itself in a war with Hamas and for the U.S. to, you know, stumble into a larger conflict.

And so, that's what people are trying to avoid. But they also believe that by striking 85 targets, as well as, you know, a day's long, if not weeks long campaign, that they can ratchet up the pressure on Iran, they're going to lose a lot of valuable property with their proxies have been using to torment and taunt U.S. bases for the last three months.

The question one should ask is what took so long? Of course, it's tragic that three Americans were killed, but the U.S. troops sitting in Iraq and Syria have been sitting ducks for months now.

PERINO: Indeed, Jennifer Griffin, thank you so much. We want to get to Mike Tobin. He's in Israel in Tel Aviv. He's got the latest with reaction there as the -- I'm sure that they are on heightened alert as well.

MIKE TOBIN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL SENIOR CORRESPONDENT: No, they're always on heightened alert at this stage, Dana.

What I can really confirm for you right now are just some of the locations. We have a source inside of Iraq, who says indeed, there have been multiple targets struck in the area of Al Qa'im, which is in the western border of Iraq, very near Syria.

And this following reports throughout the day that the al-Mayadeen, Deir ez-Zur, the Abu Kamal area were all hit. And these are areas that are kind of near the -- some of those cities are just on the banks of the Euphrates River. Al Qa'im is immediately across the border.

So, a lot of the real estate, at least where a lot of the strikes have been concentrated is not a whole lot of real estate concentrated into about a 60 mile area. We know that there were other strikes inside of Iraq, the U.S. confirming today that there were some 85 different targets hit by some 125 different munitions. And that is dramatically different from the early reports, we heard that some eight different targets were hit.

We anticipated that the numbers would change. And indeed they did change as the U.S. is now confirming that they used to of those big B1B bombers to hit some of those targets inside of Iraq, Dana.

PERINO: Mike, we're going to take it on the table. Richard as a question. But let me just quickly ask you. There was talk earlier this week that there was communication about a possible ceasefire in order to get more hostages out. Do you know where that stands at this moment?

TOBIN: It stands at the point where Hamas and Islamic Jihad officials met and they set out a number of their demands, they said you're going to need to see a massive prisoner release. They want to see all Israelis withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, and a cessation of combat inside of the Gaza Strip. They also want to see some restoration, rebuilding for all the destruction that was done inside of the Gaza Strip.

So, you have very broad demands, if you will, coming from the leadership of Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Hamas. As far as a prisoner release goes, and that puts them very far apart from Benjamin Netanyahu, who says he want to see all of the prisoners released in Hamas dismantle.

PERINO: All right, Richard.

RICHARD FOWLER, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONTRIBUTOR: Thanks for joining us, Mike. Now picking up where Dana left off, how does the -- how does the ceasefire negotiations sort of interplay with this strike and the fact that we now know today that Secretary Blinken will be returning to the region to visit Israel, the West Bank, Qatar and Saudi Arabia?

TOBIN: Well, clearly, Secretary Blinken is hitting all of the key players involved in this, particularly when he talks to the Qatar because the Qataris are the primary avenue to get in and talk to Hamas. He can't discuss with Hamas directly.

So, the fact that Secretary Blinken is coming here is showing that at least there's an effort to move forward with these hostage release negotiations.

But keep in mind, you have to be patient and unfortunately, you have to be pessimistic. If you look at the example of Gilad Shalit when he was kidnapped. It took six years and a thousand Palestinian prisoners to get him released.

So, now you're talking about over a hundred that we know that are still alive, or at least we have information that are still alive in Hamas captivity. So, you can't be optimistic that you're really talking about more than and women and children and elderly being released in this round of talks.

PERINO: Right. Mike Tobin, thank you. I want to get to Rich Edson. He's at the White House with the latest there. Hi, Rich.

RICH EDSON, FOX NEWS CHANNEL SENIOR NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Hi, Dana. We've just gotten a statement from President Biden the first we've heard from him since these retaliatory strikes. He notes that he did attend the dignified transfer of the three soldiers who were killed in that drone strike over the weekend. And now the response to this, he says this afternoon in his direction, U.S. military forces struck targets that facilities in Iraq and Syria that the IRGC, that's the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps, and affiliated militia used to attack U.S. forces.

He goes on to say that our response began today, and it will continue at a time and place of our choosing, that's a line that the White House and the administration have been using now for some time.

He also says the U.S. does not seek conflict in the Middle East or anywhere else in the world. But let all those who might seek to do us harm know this, if you harm an American, we will respond.

The president as mentioned, attended that dignified transfer earlier today. He's back home at his home in Delaware today where we expect -- we weren't expected to hear much more from him today until he released this statement.

There has been plenty of criticism of the White House and the time that it has taken in this response, several days since the drone attack on early Sunday, you had a number of congressional Republicans saying that it should have been a robust response, and one that should have happened shortly thereafter that attack.

Senator Lindsey Graham had said earlier today before the details of this strike came out that the lapse of time has lessened the impact of deterrence. And by not hitting oil infrastructure in Iran, or Revolutionary Guard personnel, you will have failed to make the point.

Iran is one of those subjects, one of the many subjects that Republicans and the White House had been at odds over. Since the beginning of the administration, the White House has tried to get the U.S. back into the Iran nuclear deal. Those attempts have failed. There was the prisoner swap. And you remember the $6 billion that the administration was going to unfreeze for Iranian assets. The U.S. said that that fell apart, especially after the Hamas attack on Israel and Iran support for Hamas.

So, this continues to be a point of friction. And we'll get more updates from Capitol Hill as the details come out.

PERINO: Quick question from me and then the Judge, and Will, I just have -- has the White House called a lid for the day?

EDSON: The White House called the lid a couple of hours ago, which is why this statement was a surprise lid. Of course, meaning you're not going to hear from the president today. And then, of course, we did.

And so, as this continues, we may expect to hear more from administration officials and from the White House.

PERINO: All right, Judge Jeanine Pirro.

PIRRO: You know, it's very interesting to hear the administration say, "If you harm an American, we will respond". It appears that they harmed over 100 Americans before the United States responded. And the United States is making a clear that it doesn't want a broader war.

I mean, the Republicans obviously don't agree with the stance of this administration. I mean, does anyone think this is really going to change things based upon this kind of tepid response?

EDSON: You know, you look at the nearly 170 attacks on U.S. positions in Iraq and in Syria, and now in Jordan since the middle of October, and there has been plenty of criticism about the several attacks that the U.S. has had on positions in Iraq and Syria since those attacks began and sort of the timeline that it took just for those retaliatory responses. And now which, ostensibly the largest response that we've had to date.

The administration has justified its responses in saying that it's trying to maintain deterrence by trying to ensure that this doesn't spread wider - - the conflict doesn't spread wider in the Middle East, because you've got Israel fighting Hamas in Gaza. You've got Israel and Hezbollah and the Lebanon border, going back and forth. You've got the Houthis in Yemen, attacking shipping in the Gulf of Aden in the Red Sea. And now you've got all of these attacks on American positions on the Middle East.

But the Republicans have argued and those like Senator Lindsey Graham have argued, that unless you have something that is really robust, and shows that you mean business, you're not showing that, in fact, you're only inviting more of these attacks.

PERINO: Rich Edson at the White House, thank you. And if they populate again, let us know.

EDSON: I'll let you know.

PERINO: OK, take it around the table here. Judge?

PIRRO: You know, what's interesting about all of this is that the United States is in my last question to Rich, is the United States is not going to respond. It's not the by going into Tehran.

OK. When Donald Trump was president, he took out Soleimani, who was the head of the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Now, if the United States made a decision to go after that island, wherever that island is where they have that oil supply, then we would hurt Iran economically and hurt consequently all of the proxies.

The problem is if we did that, then the price of oil would go up in a presidential year. So, you know, the administration again is in this schizophrenic, like, we're going to let Iran sell oil on the open market, we're going to let them keep the billions of dollars that they got from our hostage exchange. But we're going to warn them not to touch Americans, but only after they touch 100 and then kill three, we will respond. It's a schizophrenic, it's not clear what we're willing to do.

PERINO: There's a huge amount of -- I mean, if they've already done 85 strikes, 85 targets, that's a huge amount of capacity that Iranian backed Houthi proxies have in order to attack our troops who are there. So, there's several more days of this, and that's a lot of capability that we've allowed them to build up.

CAIN: I would make two points. And I would be curious actually Greg what's your response to this, but one of the micro and one of the macro. On the micro, I don't see that much has actually happened. In terms of some strikes, yes, that has occurred. What has it done to deter Iran? If they have the heads up warning to pull their people out, then I don't know that anything message has been sent that would deter them in the future.

But the macro is, and forgive the not so subtle plug, but I had Senator Rand Paul on my digital show this week, Will Cain show and he said this. He said, when it comes to the Houthi, strike them and strike them hard. They're messing with international shipping lanes.

So, when it comes to this story. And what we're looking at right now, why do we have guys scattered across Syria? Why do we have guys scattered across Iraq? Why are we leaving ourselves vulnerable to the potential for an attack to Iran?

GREG GUTFELD, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: No, I agree. I mean, I think the phrase was used sitting ducks. Why are the ducks there? Right? I think we've learned a lot in the last couple of years that we shouldn't be there.

I mean, look, this will be the first time in my life that I agree with Joy Reid, not another effing war. Right. I'm ward out. We have Ukraine, it's two years, Gaza, Iran. You know, one day, they're good guys, the next day, they're bad guys, then they're good guys again, then we're not sure then we talk.

You know, a wise man once said, and I wish I remembered his name. It's big if we make it big. And that's what we do. We take things and we make it big. And why is it that we only have consequences for actions not in the United States? Like you said, if we harm -- if you harm Americans, there will be payback.

Well, there are Americans being harmed in the United States every damn day. We don't do shit about the border. We don't do anything about crime. We -- when will we send a message to the illegal immigrants or the fentanyl suppliers or the smash and grabbers or hell, why not send a message to the people who assault cops.

I'm not saying bombing, I'm saying actually creating disincentives, actually punishing people who deserve punishment in the United States and protecting millions of Americans here. I don't want our troops getting bombed over there. I prefer that they be home here.

So, you put the sitting ducks out there, then we got to go send some virtue signaling message to show that we're doing something and that we know is not doing anything. And then we got to sit here and act like armchair experts talking about this crap for 17 minutes. I'm sick of it.

PERINO: All right. I'm not sure where to go with that.

PIRRO: Richard, go ahead.

FOWLER: All right. No, there's actually something you said, Greg, that I actually agree with that. And I think if you study the history of how we got here, and the idea that decades ago, a group of folks sat in a room and took Crayola and draw drew lines throughout the Middle East. And then to your point, one day, they were our friends, the next day, they were enemies.

The weapons that we sold them when they were our friends, they use them to kill us when they were our enemies. And now we're here.

And I think the -- and I think that's what's the sad part here. I think the one thing that I would add to this conversation when it comes to some of the news of the day, which we haven't heard much about is that today the Justice Department did announce that the United States government has seized a half a million barrels of Iranian oil that was internationally sanctioned. That was being illegally traffic to sellers in China, Russia and Syria.

So, just adding that to finally. So, I'm just adding that because I think that news is important, given the fact that we're having this conversation around Iranian containment.

PIRRO: But the question is, what impact does that have on Iran, just like we won't hit Iran, we won't hit that island where the oil is, we won't hit any infrastructure in Iran.

But the thing that I want an answer to is that drone that went into Jordan that killed three of our servicemen and injured over 40, they couldn't track it. I want to know if it was an American drone from Afghanistan, is that the reason that our system defenses didn't recognize that drone that came in and killed three and injured at least 40.

PERINO: But the other thing is that happened this week is that the Biden administration, it was late last week, decided to answer to the TikTok crowd and McKibben and cancel liquid natural gas -- liquefied natural gas exports to Russia or I'm sorry, to Europe.

So, where do you think they're going to get it next? I mean, they have to heat their homes. So, we are basically bombing them at the time that we're also cutting off the nose to spite our face and our allies. So, there's a lot to make sense of.

We're going to keep going with this because we have retired Army Lieutenant General Keith Kellogg, he's also a Fox News contributor. He can give us his thoughts and tell us where we are right or wrong. But mostly, I'm sure we're right, as you will say.

LT. GEN. KEITH KELLOGG (RET.), FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONTRIBUTOR: Yes, thanks for having me. I'm not going to go where Greg was out, though.

Look, here's one of the things that the reason why you want to get to a level of deterrence. And deterrence is based on credibility of what you're doing. And I know it feels good that bomb 85 targets with thousands of pounds of munitions on it, and you rip your shirt off and pound your chest. But if you don't establish deterrence with credibility, it's just going to continue.

And my concern is that we haven't really gone to the root cause. And the root cause is Iran. And that's where you have to go, you have to go downtown to establish that.

And why is that important? Because when you look at the Middle East, I'm looking at the Middle East when the people have talked, well, it's most dangerous has been since 1973.

Now, I think the world's approaching the most dangerous day since 1938, when the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain went to Munich, and he came out of Munich after talking to Hitler, and he said, all peace in our time, then he started World War.

Wars generally start by big mistakes. And this is getting to be a big mistake area, you're looking at Iran that is getting ready to go nuclear, they're already enriching, almost at 90 percent, of uranium. And when you get to 90 percent, you can create an entire nuclear weapon.

And if they get that, and totally destabilizes the Middle East, you react differently to a nuclear power than to a non-nuclear power. You see all the destabilization there.

And we're not forcing ourselves and forcing the rest of the world to understand this is gone about as far as we want to go, stabilize the region. And we're not going there.

And so, we're leading the Chinese get involved, Chinese make a deal, a peace deal between Saudi Arabia and Iran, that would have never happened previously. And you'll look at what's happened in Ukraine and Russia, in the forest with China, and this whole impacts.

And I think what we're doing right now is we're feeling good. We're bombing a lot of sand and a lot of asphalt. But we're not going after the root cause. And I hate to say it, but we haven't gone into Iran. And I know that if you do that, the risk goes up. I've got that. But you've got to get uncomfortable when you do something like that to make the other side uncomfortable.

Iran does not want to go to war with the United States of America. They're afraid of the United States. They know what we can do. And we should make them understand that we are going to take a step that is going to prevent you from doing anything further. That means take out their economic facilities, like the oil fields, and he's taken out their leadership, either Ismail Qaani, the leader of the Quds Force, you're talking about Khamenei, the Supreme Leader, you're talking about taking out all the their military facilities, you've got to be willing to go there.

And when the other side realizes that you're willing to step up and go there, they're going to back down. Right now, we have not sent that message at all. And I don't think this campaign has a good end state to it right now.

PIRRO: Judge?

PIRRO: You know, there, there is no question general that we, I believe, have the military ability and capacity to be able to have a war with Iran. I'm not promoting it. I'm not interested in that. I'm not interested in World War III.

But to continue to say we don't want a conflict with Iran, if they don't want to conflict with us. And if that is your opinion, why are we so afraid to at least threaten them, to at least take out some infrastructure, to at least take out some of the oil fields? Why are we so afraid?

KELLOGG: Why is capa -- we've got the capacity and capability that's without question. It all comes down to leadership. And there's a commander- in-chief, Article 2, Section 2, there's the president. And it's his decision making as it his advisors as well. And I really think they're risk averse.

You know, what your adversaries do, they read your leadership, they do that. We do that as well. We say, OK, we know this leader is probably going to react this way. This leader is going to react that way.

And they look at somebody like President Biden, who has traditionally been risk averse, we all set patterns, you set patterns, I set patterns, you go to the same service station, you go to the same grocery store, you set those patterns as leadership as well. And they see a leader who's very risk averse, and doesn't want to go there. So, they're going to push the envelope, you've got to break that, you've got to break away from that. That's the only way you reach your conclusion.

There's nothing to do with capacity. We got plenty of that. And I think the Iranians have said, I think we can push this guy and that's exactly what they're doing. I understand that's a harsh assessment. I know that but I think it's true.

CAIN: If I heard you correctly, what I heard you described as something akin to what Lindsey Graham might have tweeted the other day when he said, bomb Tehran, they might have not targeted Tehran. But you talked about oil fields, you talked about a direct hit on Iran. And you suggested that any type of hit like that would back Iran down from this aggressive stance.

I'm just curious, what would be your historical precedent, if you're selling that to the American people that we're going to take an aggressive action against some nation state and they will back down and this will not metastasize into a greater war, can you give me that when that happened in American history that was a great success?

KELLOGG: Oh, sure. I give you a lot of it. Most of with the Civil War.

CAIN: The Civil War was a success?

KELLOGG: -- and they burned Atlanta, you come, you can breed, keep coming towards us towards this way. When the United States of America sent a clear message in World War II, when we firebomb Dresden into the ground, when we bombed Nagasaki and Hiroshima with an atomic weapon instead of invading. Those things happened all the time.

CAIN: But what I'm curious about, General, I'm sorry to interrupt, but I'm curious about the two examples you gave us of the Civil War and World War II were clearly wide, worldwide metastasize actions that resulted in millions of death. I thought you were describing an aggressive attack in Iran to avoid a greater war.

KELLOGG: I'll give you one simple example. It happened during the administration with President Trump when we killed Soleimani. Very clear, we killed Soleimani. And things quieted down, we took out one key leader.

I'll give you another a good example, when we -- when we were having peace discussions with the Taliban. And President Trump and I was in the Oval Office when he talked to Mullah Buradar, who was a leader of the Taliban, it was translated and I sat there wondering boy, how is this being translated.

But we said very clearly what we were going to do to him and the Taliban if something happened. And after that discussion, not a single American was killed in over a year in Afghanistan. You send a certain message to certain people, they receive the message because they believe you're serious.

So, I can give you -- we can spend an hour if you want to. Well, I can give you a historical example -- from historical example, from the Third Punic War to currently, learn what you do with leadership.

But it makes a hard decision to do it. But you got to make that call sometimes. That doesn't mean you totally bomb Iran. But you are very selective in your targeting, and it needs to be done.

FOWLER: So general, thanks for joining us. So, I guess my question to sort of pick up where we left off, is this idea that if we decide that we're going to preemptively strike in Iran, right, are you saying that we do not -- you do not believe that the Iranians would retaliate in some sort of way, given the fact that we have a lot of troops in that region?

And I think we said earlier in the show, many of them, are there in bases that we already lost three there, 40 injured, are we saying that there's not -- there's no potential for the Iranians to strike back and hurt American troops on the ground there?

KELLOGG: Of course, there is Richard, but I'll take issue with one word you use. For us to preemptively attack Iran, they've been attacking us for the last 90 days.

(CROSSTALK)

And we -- and we would go after them, of course, we would have to accept that. That's the risk level, not a gamble.

But there's a risk level you take, but you make sure they understand. If you want to dance with the bear, United States being the bear, we will decide when the dance stops, not you. And you make that hard call.

Look, I'm not big on starting a war. I've had kids in the military, I've been in the military. But I also understand what you have to do to establish some level of deterrence in the world and in the region. And we're not there yet. And you have to establish that.

If not, you're heading for a larger war, more conflict, more deaths, more Americans have been lost. We've been dodging a bullet for the last 90 days, it finally hit home with a depth of three good great Americans and that can continue into the future.

This thing has not stopped. Not at all. And I would like to know what is the end state of this contingency plan that the United States has established with all this bombing. I don't know where they're going to. They need to tell us.

PERINO: Well, they call the lid. So, I don't think we're going to get that tonight. Thank you, General Kellogg.

Let's bring in former CIA Station Chief Dan Hoffman. He's also a Fox News contributor. And I'm curious what you think about that leak from last night that came out from the administration suggesting that Iran really had nothing, no idea that this was going on, and it was almost as if they were trying to give Iran cover that they didn't know that they allow -- as I said on Martha's show, they let the kids have a kegger and then pretended to know nothing about it.

DAN HOFFMAN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONTRIBUTOR: Yes, well, that's a distinction without a difference because none of those proxy terrorist groups would exist without Iran support. Iran provides them with military equipment with all the missiles that they need with intelligence support, with financial support.

And so, Iran might not have told them when to strike but Iran was certain really providing them with all of that support because those groups intended to strike us. And let's just be clear, we are at war with Iran. It's a proxy war right now. But there is a war going on. And it's happening because the Houthi, Lebanese Hezbollah is targeting Israel.

And remember that this all started 40 years ago when Hezbollah, the predecessor terrorist group. The Hezbollah, launched an attack on the Marine barracks and then our Embassy in Beirut. That's the way Iran operates. That's the way they conduct war.

PERINO: All right, we got a question for Dan Hoffman.

CAIN: I'll follow up what we talked about earlier, we talked about all these guys scattered around all these bases in Syria and Iraq that are the target of these attacks. What are they accomplishing having a presence in Syria and Iraq?

HOFFMAN: Well, look, we've got a couple of interests, important national security interests in the Middle East. One is freedom of navigation. There's a lot of trade that happens through the Red Sea.

And then in Syria and Iraq, very small numbers of U.S. troops. 2500 in Iraq, just a few hundred in Syria. They're there to do counterterrorism operations.

They're not there to bring democracy to the Middle East. They're not there to build girls' schools, but they are there to protect us here at home because there are terrorists, al-Qaeda, and ISIS terrorists there. And if we don't target them way out there left of boom, then they're going to target us in the region and potentially here at home.

Look, I served in those places. I served in Iraq for a year. I served in South Asia as a station chief for two years.

We were always perfectly fine serving in harm's way, as long as we had the right equipment to keep us as safe as possible, as well as the right policy. And that's what has been lacking over the past certainly few months where 160 plus strikes against our people and we've lost escalation dominance to Iran.

PIRRO: You know, Dan, Jeanine Pirro here. The whole idea of our policy, you know, of allowing how many, I think it's like 80 or a hundred who were injured, somewhat traumatic brain injuries in Iraq and Syria before this last attack where three were killed and 40 injured. How much influence has the commercial interference of shipping had on the American policy?

I mean, because it's almost like you see the commercial Maersk apparently is not going through the Red Sea. Now, they're going around the Cape of Africa. I mean, isn't it -- do you see policy changing when it comes to commercial vessels, and countries getting a little more aggressive then as opposed to when Americans are injured? Because I'm not convinced this administration is so concerned about Americans, and we allowed 160 attacks on our servicemen in Syria and Iraq.

HOFFMAN: I'm sure the administration and I'm sure that those who are serving in the administration are very concerned about U.S. servicemen and women and others who are serving in harm's way. I think they're also concerned -- overriding concern for them as not to escalate and result in a -- in a war with Iran. And I think that they've overplayed that by a lot.

For sure, there's interest in freedom of navigation. You're absolutely a hundred percent right about that. The world economy will suffer greatly because of these Houthi terrorists.

And one more thing that I would add is, if you don't strike back early, then the price of deterrence just goes up. And so, the price of deterring the Houthis has gone way up over the past couple of months, as well as dealing with those Iranian proxy terrorists in Syria and in Iraq, who were targeting us there.

PERINO: Dan, the ten bill --

HOFFMAN: We pay a much greater price today.

PERINO: Dan, the $10 billion waiver that the Biden administration gave to Iran is still in effect tonight.

HOFFMAN: Yes. And we know where the money goes, Dana. It's straight to Iran's ballistic missile program.

PERINO: Right.

HOFFMAN: It's their nuclear program, and it's the proxy terrorists. So, it's got to be an all-of-government approach here. The DOJ seizing of the - - of $500,000 worth of Iranian oil is a good first, albeit small step, but there's got to be a lot more.

They've got to cut off Iran has access to funds because we know what they're doing with it. Unfortunately, Russia and China as well as North Korea and Iran make up this century's axis of tyranny. That's been one of the results of the war in Gaza and Russia's brutal, barbaric war in Ukraine.

And that's just another wickedly complex challenge for this administration.

PERINO: Dan, thank you. It's also another reason why I brought up -- anybody, I'm just putting this out there to the table, this decision by the Biden administration to stop all permits for liquefied natural gas, that is actually cleaner burning and that our allies need in order to prevent them from dealing -- getting their energy from China and Russia doesn't make any sense.

PIRRO: You know, I refer to with, Dana, as a schizophrenic approach. But I mean, that's been -- that's a benign way to describe it. It really is an approach that is political.

So, you're able to say to the Americans, I'm doing this or I'm supporting Israel or we're attacking them, or you know, we're -- we hit them 65 times or 85, whatever the number was. But at the same time, saying to Iran, look, we're going to let you have that $10 billion waiver and the six billion dollars for the hostages, and we're going to let you sell oil on the international market. And that's what's so frustrating to me. I don't want to have a war many more than anyone else.

But I think Iraq is right. We've got Americans all over the place, all over in Iraq and Syria, and I understand, but you know, we do -- we need to keep an eye on al-Qaeda and everybody else. But when Donald Trump was president, and I don't want to make this political, but you had a leader who said, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corpse, I'm going to kill their leader Soleimani. Took him out. That was it.

And then Joe Biden, he leaves Afghanistan. Now, how many billions of dollars worth of armaments are in the Middle East? And I believe they're using them against us now.

So, you -- the administration is not stupid. There is some other agenda going on, where it's not just yes, we have to do this, but we got to let China do this, we got to let Iran do that, and we don't want to fight them.

And we got to get morning. And we want them to know, we don't want to have a war. Hey, you kill an American, you should have a war.

CAIN: You know, Judge, you and both the general, General Kellogg, brought up the instance with Donald Trump making a threat to the Taliban and then striking Soleimani. And that backing off the power.

What I would offer up is this. Donald Trump is an exception to the rule. Donald Trump is one of the reasons -- he was so hated by both the -- with the machine that exists within Washington, D.C. that is now gearing up for yet another war. Whether or not it was left or right, Republican or Democrat, there was enmity towards Donald Trump.

And I think it's important because it stood in the way of moments like this. When you need some sobriety to say, if I'm connecting the dots correctly, we have presence scattered around this area for counterterrorism. Those targets then get hit. Then we now, too.

I'm just listening to the conversation throughout this first 35 minutes, Greg. Then we have to go hit the people that hit us. And we live under this delusion, that's just going to stop them.

One big stop and they're not going to -- of course, that set against the backdrop of about 50 years of talk of regime change in Iran. And we have a great history of regime change. That's worked out really well in Afghanistan.

Of course, now a regime changed in Afghanistan. And it feeds instability and chaos across the greater Middle East, everywhere we go in to set stability. And before you know it, we've seeded the ground for more terrorism that comes back and hits us, which undercuts the original purpose of putting troops in the place -- in the Middle East in the first place as counterterrorism.

I just think we might need some sobriety before we fire up the war machine on this cycle that seems to always end up in American death.

PIRRO: And why? Why was it that there was so much going on with al-Qaeda and all the beheadings and the bombings, and then in six weeks, you get rid of the caliphate when Trump came in? He gave the generals full authority to go in there and get rid of it. He got rid of them.

FOWLER: But to Will's point, and I think you're speaking to something that's absolutely right because I think you have to rewind the tape before you get to Donald Trump, right? Because you're absolutely right. When we talk about putting the -- when you talk about the caliphate, when you talk about al Qaeda when you talk about Afghanistan, we talk about the death of our troops, and you talk about how our troops died. And I think that's the hardest part about it, is they died with weapons that we sold to the people to begin with in the 80s. and then this --

PIRRO: Or that we gave to them.

FOWLER: No.

CAIN: Or the one let set --

FOWLER: No, but listen --

CAIN: Or the one we let set in the desert.

PIRRO: Right.

FOWLER: But I mean, let's go back to the 1980s when we were literally selling weapons to many of these places that use those weapons and then kill American troops in the history of this region. And this is not the only region where this is the case. Anytime America goes into places and says, we're going to build a democracy here, right, or we're going to make this place better and we're going to sell weapons to this place and give them a chance, what ends up happening is Americans that have dying as a result.

It might not happen in that decade, it might not happen -- it might happen two or three decades later, but it's the weapons that we sold them the decade before.

GUTFELD: Hey, we did a great job of regime change in Ukraine. That worked out really well. I know -- I'm sorry.

I'm like -- I'm sitting at home watching THE FIVE right now. And I've just gone like, don't lecture me on deterrence. We don't have any deterrence anywhere, especially in the United States.

We have no idea what an incentive or disincentive is. Obviously, I've become very cynical about this. I mean, I spoke out about Ukraine the first week it started.

PIRRO: You did.

GUTFELD: Just called a Putin puppet. And now, we're two years into it. We've got what, 70,000 to 80,000 Ukrainians dead? And that all could have been prevented. But no, we had to have a war, you know.

Anyway. I have no -- you know, I'm no expert on this. But I know if I were sitting at home right now, I feel like all of this information and all of this speculation, you heard it before, you're going to hear it again, we're just filling a bucket.

PERINO: All right. Well, let's bring in a "SPECIAL REPORT" Anchor Bret Baier to help us fill the bucket. Bret, you've been watching this. You know that --

BRET BAIER, FOX NEWS CHANNEL ANCHOR: That was great to photograph.

PERINO: You know the region well and the issues well. And catch us up on what you think tonight.

BAIER: Well, a couple of things. One is the White House put out a statement saying that the president making the statement that this afternoon he, at his direction, issued this order for U.S. forces in response at the time and place of his choosing. Kept on saying that the White House said -- the Defense Secretary said at the State Department said it today was the time and the place, to place Syria and Iraq in these Iran proxy groups on the ground, some 85 targets, 125 precision munitions.

Interestingly, it happened just moments after the transfer of the American bodies, the three sole troops who were killed in that base in Jordan by drones that were funded by the Iranians. You know, whenever anybody takes this, if we can't prove that these proxy groups are tied directly to Iran, you talk to experts in the Intel world, it's direct.

There are hundreds of millions of dollars that are going to these proxy groups They don't fire a BB gun without getting the blessing essentially, of Iran. Interestingly, in the White House statement and the CENTCOM statement, it says and mentions the IRGC, the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, as being part of this, saying that those were part of the targets.

And it goes on to say. The United States does not seek conflict in the Middle East or anywhere else in the world. But let all those who might seek to do us harm know this. If you harm an American, we will respond.

Well, already, there has been response from some Republican lawmakers who are very critical of how long this has taken. Mike McCaul, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee saying almost a week after today's strikes, it's long overdue, following the delay that allowed our enemies to prepare. So, there will be criticism about how long it takes.

But to Greg's point, it is a deterrence when the U.S. military is fully engaged. When you fly B1 bombers from the U.S., the Middle East pays attention. And whether it's right or wrong in response to an American soldier being dead, this is a big response.

We don't have all the targets yet. And we'll see more as the hours progress.

PERINO: Right. You interviewed the Prime Minister of Qatar earlier this week. You know, what would -- what would he be thinking about this tonight? Do they welcome it?

BAIER: Well, I asked him specifically, when -- if and when the U.S. response to this attack in Jordan, the killing of three American soldiers, what will Qatar say? Wow -- well, the response depending on what the attack was. And he said the U.S. will do what the U.S. has to do.

And I think that that's the message you're going to get from many of the Middle Eastern countries that they respect power and strength, and they understand if you're attacked, there's likely an attack coming. There was nobody in the Middle East, Tehran to Damascus to Riyadh, who didn't think that this was coming. Just didn't know exactly where it was coming.

PERINO: Go ahead.

PIRRO: But we gave them warning.

BAIER: Yes. You know, a lot of warning, and a lot of time. And that's McCaul's criticism, Judge.

PIRRO: Yes.

BAIER: And, you know, all these people, you know, scatter to different places. Again, we don't know the targets, but there's 85 of them. And that's more significant than an ammo dump in the desert.

PIRRO: Well, they say storage facilities and weapon --

BAIER: Command and control.

PIRRO: Yes.

BAIER: IRGC. I mean, it suggests more significant targets. But we don't know, you're right, until we find out where they are.

FOWLER: Bret, do you think that there's a possibility -- besides the 85 targets that have been announced, pumped -- to public and there's a good report, do you think there's other targets that are sort of covert -- that were covertly struck that we do not know about?

BAIER: Yes.

FOWLER: -- that we're not getting about tonight?

BAIER: Yes. There's a couple of undisclosed locations, we're being told. And they're -- it's not inside Iran. I know there were some lawmakers who were suggesting that including Lindsey Graham, and John Cornyn. That's not going to happen, I'm being told.

It is the first wave of these strikes, and there will be a series of them is what we're being told. And how long this lasts? Where exactly it goes? We don't know.

But inside Iran is probably not one of them. They're not talking about a couple of them, though.

PERINO: Will?

CAIN: Do you think -- to the point of deterrence, Bret, do you think that will accomplish the goal of deterrence? The general, General Kellogg, who just had on, I think seemed to suspect it wouldn't. I think that's why he was suggesting there's a necessity to strike within Iran.

So, if we are giving Iran a warning, and they are pulling personnel out of the target areas, will this bombing in effect do anything? Will it accomplish deterrence?

BAIER: I think it's a great question. It's a question I'm going to pose to General Jack Keane in just a bit on "SPECIAL REPORT." And I think that that is the heart of the matter.

Like, can they stop these Iranian proxy groups? When you have 166 attacks on U.S. forces in the Middle East, in just since October 17, that's really significant. And someone will die and someone did. Three American soldiers did. So --

PERINO: Well, plus the two Navy SEALS.

BAIER: And the Navy SEALS who are going in the Red Sea. That's right.

PERINO: What about the President of the United States? I mean, part of the issue that we were talking about is that if you go back -- we could go back decades, and the ideological struggle is what it is. And they think we should die.

They don't want Western civilization to survive. We love life. We try -- so we have this ideological generational struggle. And you do not have the president of the United States -- perhaps not capable, perhaps not willing to lay this out for the American people to say, here's what I believe. Here's what I can assure you of, Americans, or here's we're -- here's where we're going. This is why you should stick with me.

That's why you know, you have confusion because the leadership seems to not be able to drive. They're not in the driver's seat.

BAIER: I mean that's a fair criticism. And you know better than anybody that the bully pulpit with the White House carries with it a lot of power and the ability to make the case to the American people. To Greg's point, the American people are frustrated with wars overseas. You see that on every poll.

But you have to make the case. If you're going to be aggressive in foreign policy, why that's important for the U.S.? Why the U.S. being engaged in the world is an important thing? Why it keeps areas safer?

Otherwise, you're going to get a lot of political fallback of people saying just come home. And that hasn't worked in the past broadly, in history. But that's part of the problem is the president's not making the case.

FOWLER: And, Bret, speaking to the ideological differences that sort of exist in Washington, D.C., right? And my question to you is, do we think -- what is the -- does we have a sense from this White House, from this Pentagon of how they define deterrence? I think there seems to be some ambiguity from White House to White House of what deterrence actually isn't, isn't it?

PERINO: That's true.

BAIER: I think that's a great, great point, Richard. I think it's -- I don't think they've clearly defined it. And I think that that's part of the problem.

And if you can't define it, guess what? The people on the ground don't feel -- you know --

PERINO: Also, like, do you have to define it, or it can't -- should it just be obvious? It's like, one of those --

BAIER: No, that's why I made it --

PERINO: I mean, like I recognize -- I recognize deterrence when I see it.

BAIERl Right.

PERINO: Like killing Soleimani, like?

PIRRO: Right. Or number two, yes.

PERINO: That would be it. Any questions for Bret? Do you have a comment?

GUTFELD: I don't know if I have a question or a comment.

PERINO: OK.

GUTFELD: I think, you know, the thing is, we're -- again, we're talking about deterrence. And yet, what is more -- what are -- what is the larger risk for Americans, something over there or something to the south at our border?

PIRRO: Exactly.

GUTFELD: We have absolutely no deterrence there. And I think, you know, we're talking about -- are we talking about punishment or are we talking about deterrence? Are they the same thing?

Because what you tried to do is you try to put somebody in a deeper hole than they were if they hadn't done something, correct? That's what Soleimani was.

PIRRO: Right.

GUTFELD: So, that put a ran in a deeper hole than they were before. But the thing with strikes or the idea of this calculated deterrence is that they're just back where they started. We're just putting them back where they started.

It's like a kid who keeps doing skateboarding tricks. falls down, gets back up, keeps doing it until he gets it right. We never actually get them down, so they're below where they started.

So, that's why it's frustrating, you know, when we -- when we talk about this stuff and meanwhile, we can -- we do nothing for the immediate -- the immediate challenges and threats at our border.

PERINO: Oh, wait.

BAIER: Totally agree with that about the border. Let me just say one thing.

PERINO: Bret, we'll thank you, and we'll let you go. And -- Bret, you have an answer? Sorry.

BAIER: Oh, no, no, no.

PERINO: We have Joey Jones --

BAIER: I was just going to say --

PERINO: Not ready.

BAIER: Yes. I was just going to say listen, what isn't deterrence is saying repeatedly, don't. Don't.

PERINO: Right.

PIRRO: Yes.

PERINO: Right.

BAIER: That didn't -- that didn't work.

PIRRO: Yes.

BAIER: I want to see you at 6:00. I got a lot to prepare for you.

PERINO: Thanks, Bret.

FOWLER: We'll see you there.

PIRRO: Thank you.

PERINO: And Joey Jones is on the phone with us. Hi, Joey.

JOEY JONES, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONTRIBUTOR: Yes. How's it going?

PERINO: Let's get your take. Well, give me the floor.

JONES: Yes, listen. If this were about deterrence, it would have happened a couple of months ago. At least -- at least 150 some-odd strikes against the United States to go. This is about pacifying Americans who are literally sitting here going. Really, we're going to let someone hit us 200 times and kill three of us now, and injured dozens of us and we're just going to say that you don't, that's our best policy here?

You know, I hate to believe that presidential ***politics*** has anything to do with keeping Americans safe. And I heard the Judge talk about that earlier on the show that doing anything now may potentially affect oil prices and then escalate into a worse economic situation at home. Well, why is that?

What policies lead to that? The truth is Jordan's watching, Saudi Arabia is watching, and Israel, for a matter of fact, is watching. And I don't know that any of those countries that we want to be an ally that we want to be on our side if something were to break out, are being inspired by the United States right now.

But what is happening is that a lot of Americans are sitting here going, I don't think my son or daughter needs to serve in this military. And I'm for whatever changes our perspective on our government's ability to keep us safe, regardless of who the president is. That's not even a hit against President Biden, as much as it is an observation of where we are as a country.

Three Georgians were just welcomed home in a casket. And I can imagine their families who are sitting there going, yes, retribution. They're probably sitting there going, I hope whatever happens today and tomorrow and the next day, stop the next three families from mourning. Three more Americans that were somewhere we didn't -- most Americans even know they were doing something that most Americans aren't aware what they're doing.

PERINO: Good point. Judge?

PIRRO: Joey, you know, one of the things that General Kellogg said a few minutes ago. He said Iran does not want to go to war with the United States. And yet, we all know that we can spend all kinds of efforts going after the proxies, but Iran is in charge.

And they -- now, Iran trying to deny the connection is absurd. They supply, they trained, and they pay them. Why is -- why is Iran pushing us if they're afraid to go to war with us? Do they have -- are they close to a nuclear weapon?

JONES: This is what I believe. I believe Iran got what they wanted already. I mean, immediately after three Americans were killed, there's a dispute between the United States and Jordan as to where this happened because they don't want this mess on their -- on their doorstep. Look at what's happening in Israel.

Look -- I mean, look at the fact that America is having to excuse itself or answer for every single thing it does in the Middle East right now, among its own people with a presidential election coming up. I think for Iran, that's enough. They don't need to go to war with us to show their neighbors that we may not be as strong as we say we are, that we may not have as strong of a voice within our country, as we say we do. And I think that's the goal for them is the doubt among countries that might align with the U.S. or Israel moving forward. And I think that is where they're winning right now.

I don't want to go to war with Iran. I'm not Lindsey Graham. Listen, I spent eight years fighting two wars over there. And I know less about it today than I did when I was 18, I think.

So, the -- yes, it's not that I want us to go to war with Iran. I want a president and administration that is so decisive and so well-planned, that before our own dead make it home, we've settled the score and deterred them from doing it again. Or, you know, and this is a lot to ask for, so decisive and so strategic, that we never have folks die because there were never 170 attacks that happened to begin with.

PERINO: Can I ask you then what you think about the decision, or you know, on the -- on the timing of telegraphing that there was going to be a response for several days and that the IRGC pulled all of its leadership out of Syria yesterday?

JONES: I think that President Biden truly believes, and this is not a hit against him, but I truly believe the President Biden's administration, their strategy from the beginning, and they're sticking to it is they can buy and talk their way out of a potential crisis or war. And to date, those things have only made me feel less secure and made those friends of mine serving in the military feel less supported.

So, I believe that that is a part of their strategy. We're going to show force, but we're not going to hurt you so bad that you feel the need to retaliate. I don't know that President Trump ever had those concerns. And I felt much better about it back then.

CAIN: Hey, Joey, you're in Georgia. I spend my weeks in Texas. We come from a similar background. You, of course, have made great sacrifices for this country on the battlefield.

I'm curious when you bring in your personal experience, Joey, and everyone that you know, Bret brought up the polling shows America has no appetite for another war. You hear individuals like the general suggesting that strikes are warranted in Iran. Wars don't happen overnight. They kind of metastasize from a bunch of small decisions.

You end up in a war. You know, we don't launch wars anymore. We don't do -- we certainly don't declare wars anymore. We remember when the last time we had a congressional declaration of war. Do you think there's a case for any leader right now to be made that convinces the American public that we should be messing around with war with Iran?

JONES: You know, my biggest concern is that I was a part of a 20-year war that ended so desperately that the American people -- I don't know if they don't have an appetite for war, as much as they don't trust their government to take them into a war, no matter how just it may appear, or how necessary the calls may be. That's what is scary.

When the American people who ultimately have to spend the money and shed the blood no longer trust their government to send their sons and daughters or themselves to war, it's not about we don't -- we don't have an appetite for war. If something like 911 happened today, we would have all the appetite in the world to go seek retribution and prevent it from happening.

CAIN: Yes.

JONES: But our faith in the system we have in play, that is broken down at every level all along the way from the taxes we pay to the borders we have to the words we use. And that is the industry of ***politics***, making its way into the minds and hearts of us to the point that we don't trust our government for our security anymore. And that's the biggest concern I have because that leads to recruiting -- well, that leads to defense spending loads, that leads to the Lindsey Graham's and Tom Cotton's calling for what may be the best strategy, but every one of us sitting here going, that's a warthog, that's someone that just wants to drop bombs.

Because that's what we've seen for 20 years. That's what they've shown us for 20 years. I lost my legs in a war that Lindsey Graham would say -- and I'm not beating up on him, he's just -- he's the most honest and vocal advocate for his position. But he would say I lost my legs because he told me, this sitting on the couch on FOX & FRIENDS and my jaw kind of dropped that I lost my leg because we did the right thing by fighting the war over there and it didn't come here.

But you know what, that's an easy thing to say when you get some of the intelligence brief. When you can't do a 60-minute piece, or a -- or a Bret Baier piece that shows I have those connections by fact that were told to disbelieve that. They were told to just believe the system that we get to be the press secretary at that moment or to give me the president at that moment.

And I think the American appetite for believing the facts of the government tells you has gone out the window with the age of information in some of the bigger voices in ***politics*** right now. Political commentary.

CAIN: Wonderfully said.

PERINO: Greg, do you have anything from Joey?

GUTFELD: No. It's always good to hear him because literally, he's the expert.

PERINO: Yes.

GUTFELD: In my mind. And I just think --- I mean, I just -- punishment -- and Joey, you can call me to shut up, but I -- punishment for me is always to put somebody in a hole that they wouldn't be in if they haven't committed the infraction. These things always seem to me as incredibly performative, not as a deterrent. But just to say we did something because the bad guys ended up back at the starting block where they just start back up.

JONES: You know, here's the deal, Greg. We spent 20 years taking out strategic target after strategic target, strategic person after strategic person, asset after asset of our enemies, and they never lost the ability to harm us at about the same rate.

GUTFELD: Yes.

JONES: So, it's hard for me to believe that these bombings today reduce the ability of our enemies in the region to attack us. And that's what's concerning. Because if you're not sending the right signal, which I don't believe this is a signal sending to anyone but the American people, at least there's something effective that stops their ability to harm us. And I don't -- I don't -- I don't have the experience that will lead me to believe that's what's happened today.

PERINO: Joey Jones, thank you. We are going to go to Rich Edson at the White House. Apparently, have some new information. Hi, Rich.

RICH EDSON, FOX NEWS CHANNEL SENIOR NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Hey, good afternoon, or good evening, Dana. What we're hearing now from the White House is that you believe that these attacks were selected -- were successful, also saying that we -- the United States selected them to avoid civilian casualties. Right now, according to the White House, the Department of Defense is in the early stages of a damage assessment, and they are unsure -- unclear of the number of militants that may have been killed or injured in this attack.

It began today, according to the White House. But officials here are saying that it's not going to end today. Again, this is something that President Biden and other administration officials have been discussing that this is going to be a multi-tiered, multi-step response to the drone attack over the weekend that killed three American soldiers. And so, this is going to be ongoing for a period of time.

Strikes, according to officials who were in Iraq and Syria that we do know that the Iraqi Government was notified. That's according to the White House. And this stuff is just coming out right now.

Again, John Kirby saying that we are not looking for a war with Iran here. And we've talked about this earlier in the show today, the administration is trying to thread that needle between deterring Iran but also making sure that it doesn't lead to a wider war. And there's a big discussion ongoing right now -- that has been ongoing as to whether or not this succeeds.

We've got some congressional reaction pouring through. Largely what you're hearing from Republicans is this just took too much time. They said that the IRGC, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, which supports a lot of these backed militias across the region, had time to move their assets out of the way that this took way too much time for the administration.

And so, that's going on right now in the debate -- the ongoing debate between the White House and Congressional Republicans. We are still getting information slowly coming out from the White House here. But that's the latest from what we've got from here at 1600, Pennsylvania.

PERINO: And, Rich, just a very quick question. When does -- is Secretary Blinken still leaving for the region this weekend?

EDSON: That's expected. Yes, it's one of the many, many, many trips that the Secretary of State has taken across the region. A lot of these aggressive trips where he ends up in a number of different countries all throughout the Arab states and including Israel. So, he's been the point person at least as far as that diplomacy is concerned for the administration.

PERINO: OK, thank you so much. And we imagine "FOX & FRIENDS" Weekend is going to be hot.

PIRRO: Yes.

CAIN: Like, that's what we'll be talking for four hours.

PERINO: Will Cain, you're -- yes, there you go. You're going to -- it's going to be must-watch television.

GUTFELD: They better not bump my show.

FOWLER: You know, Greg, I rarely ever agree with you on much of anything, but I agree with you a lot today. And I think it speaks to where the American people -- I think there's a lot of American people and why I think you see these so many American people who just been are looking at this foreign aid funding bill that sort of stalled in Congress, and they're looking around their neighborhoods and you're saying, I'm paying 24 percent for childcare, right?

PERINO: Yes.

FOWLER: They're looking around their neighborhoods, and they're saying, we have a problem at the border. There's an immigration crisis. They're looking around their neighborhood and then saying the cost of groceries is too high. And that's when --

PERINO: No, look at new -- look at New York. We just let all of those migrants who are beating up cops leave.

FOWLER: Yes. And I think what they're saying to their lawmakers is there's so many problems to be fixed in America. And we need to invest in America more so than figuring out how we fix the world's problems.

CAIN: Are you America First?

FOWLER: No. I'm saying that we need to invest in America. We need to fix the public schools. We need to build some parks. We need to build some roads.

CAIN: I will say just for the record, I think this is the philosophical underpinning of what Donald Trump presented to America. That every single calculation most especially war should be filtered through the prism of America First.

FOWLER: That's also the philosophical underpinning of Barbara Lee. So, you know --

PERINO: All right.

PIRRO: Yes, right.

PERINO: Hey, that is it for us. Our coverage continues next. We'll see you on Monday.

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