

# Seyed M. Marandi: Syria Unravels & U.S. Threatens Iran

Seyed Mohammad Marandi is a professor at Tehran University and a former advisor to Iran's Nuclear Negotiation Team. Prof. Marandi discusses the unravelling of Syria and US threats of war against Iran. Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glenndiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: [https://x.com/Glenn\\_Diesen](https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen) Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glenndiesen> Support the research by Prof. Glenn Diesen: PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glenndiesen> Buy me a Coffee: [buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng](https://buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng) Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

## #Glenn

Welcome back. We're joined again by Saeed Mohamed Marandi, a professor at Tehran University and former advisor to Iran's nuclear negotiation team. Thank you for coming back on.

## #Seyed M. Marandi

Thank you very much for inviting me, Glenn. It's always an honor.

## #Glenn

Well, I wanted to ask you about the threats that have been made against Iran. But before we get to that, I've also seen these gruesome photos and videos coming out of Syria. It seems there's been some renewed presence of ISIS fighters, and we're also seeing videos and pictures of Kurds being slaughtered. The media coverage hasn't been great on this, so I was wondering if you could shed some light on what's actually happening there.

## #Seyed M. Marandi

Well, it's not something very surprising. Ultimately, it was clear that the regime in Damascus, which is Al-Qaeda—made up of former members of Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and other such groups—would not tolerate the Kurdish forces backed by the United States. We've already seen what they've done on the coast to other minorities—the Alawites and the Christians—and in the south to the Druze. So the images coming out of Syria, though very disturbing, are not surprising. What's most important, I think, is that the United States did not support its ally. And that, of course, once again shows something the Iranians have been telling the Kurds in Iraq and Syria many times: that the United States is simply not a reliable partner.

And that even if you're bound to the United States and faithful to it, when the time comes, they'll dump you. We saw that when ISIS was taking over Iraq—the city of Erbil, where the local Kurdish government was based in northern Iraq, was about to be captured. The government asked the United States for support, and Obama refused. When the city was about to fall, they made a desperate call to General Soleimani, and he immediately sent troops, weapons, and ammunition, saving the city. So the United States, when the time comes, will betray its partners in this region very easily. The only partner they won't betray, of course, is the Israeli regime.

Everything is done more or less for them. But now the news coming out of Syria is that the ISIS prisoners have all been released—thousands of them are now free. And it's clear what that means: there will be much greater instability in Syria and possibly Iraq. Now, since both Jolani and the Kurdish groups in the northeastern part of Syria are allied with the United States, it's unclear which side released these ISIS members. But in any case, whoever released them is aligned with the United States—that's for sure, because both sides in this fighting are now in the American camp. So the question is, why were the ISIS troops released, and what project lies ahead for these ISIS members to carry out?

## **#Glenn**

You mentioned Iraq before, in terms of the U.S. not assisting the last time, but there seems to be some—if not panic—at least some precautions being taken by the Iraqis, as they're now securing the border with Syria. Is it possible that these U.S.-backed jihadist forces—ISIS, that is—are going to spill over into Iraq, or will they go the other way, into Lebanon? What do you think the consequence of this will be?

## **#Seyed M. Marandi**

Well, since ISIS and al-Qaeda have never worked against the Israeli regime, and they've never worked against NATO or Turkey, the only thing that comes to mind is Iraq—possibly Iran, Syria, and Lebanon. We know that Jolani has been trying very hard to put pressure on Hezbollah in coordination with the United States. And we also know that the United States is unhappy with the election results in Iraq, because in the recent parliamentary elections there, allies of Iran did very well. The turnout was high—unexpectedly high, at least for many. Apparently, polls taken beforehand did indicate that the turnout would be high, and the allies of Iran did much better than they did in the previous parliament. So some believe that this ISIS force, or these ISIS members, could be used to put pressure not only on Lebanon but also on Iraq, so that the Iraqi government doesn't tilt closer toward Iran.

## **#Glenn**

Well, what does this mean for Iran? How will it, I guess, respond to this? It obviously doesn't have the same presence in Syria that it did in the past, but it does have allies in both Lebanon and Iraq. So will this pull Iran in somehow, or not at the moment?

## **#Seyed M. Marandi**

Well, Iran does have massive missile and drone capabilities, as we saw during the 12-day war. It has also used them in the past against ISIS in Syria, so that's a possibility for the future. But as you rightly point out, Iran no longer has a presence in Syria. Iran's presence there was to fight ISIS, and Iran and its allies defeated ISIS. After that defeat, Trump murdered General Soleimani. If you recall, there was a famous Newsweek cover showing General Soleimani with the headline saying he was destroying ISIS. That's why Iran was there in the first place—to get rid of those extremists. But now that Iran's not there, and a government allied with ISIS is in power, it's going to be a very different situation.

So the only thing that Iran can possibly do, if things get very bad on a particular front, is use its missile and drone capability. But it will also definitely help its allies in Lebanon and Iraq protect themselves. You also have to take into account that there's a very large number of people in Syria who have always been affiliated or associated with Iran—well over 150,000. Right now, the Iranians are not involved, but there's a potential that if ISIS becomes extremely dangerous or threatens the national security of Iran or its allies, Iran would change its position. At the moment, though, I don't see Iran being very involved in what's going on. It's definitely watching closely. But I think the most important thing to come out of this is that these thousands of ISIS militants were freed by American allies. No matter how you look at it, American allies freed these people.

## **#Glenn**

Yeah, well, there's been a lot of effort to rehabilitate—or “rebranding” is probably a better word—of Jolani. But yeah, I think it's going to be difficult to make this the foundation of a stable, prosperous, and unifying government. In terms of what's in store for Iran, though, it seems that the protests and riots ended some time ago, and the opportunity for the United States and Israel to strike Iran while there was a sense of chaos or instability appears to have passed. Nonetheless, the goals of regime change are still there. Trump even referenced the need for new leadership in Iran, saying this was his decision. And we also saw threats from Lindsey Graham about actually killing the leader, Khamenei. I think he used the phrase that he wanted the U.S. to “unleash holy hell,” which is interesting terminology. So, how do you see Iran responding to these threats?

## **#Seyed M. Marandi**

Well, Iran sees this whole episode as a joint U.S.-Israeli conspiracy in which British intelligence was definitely involved, and it's possible that French intelligence was involved as well. It began with a

sudden drop in the Iranian currency by 30 to 40 percent, and it was clear that the Americans were manipulating the currency from the United Arab Emirates, the Kurdish area in Iraq, and even from the city of Herat in Afghanistan. Since there was a sudden shortage of dollars for Iranians, the Iranian currency collapsed due to the high demand and shortage of foreign currency. Then, suddenly, right afterward, there were small demonstrations that were peaceful for a couple of days. There were no arrests.

But then we had this sudden infiltration of rioters and terrorists who were very, very well trained. Many of them had been funded from abroad through Bitcoin and other means. They were trained online, and some had also traveled abroad for training. Gradually, the protests died out. As the violence got worse, the protesters sort of melted away. During the later stages of the riots, it was mostly the rioters left, along with some young people in the neighborhoods who were looking for excitement, and ordinary people walking on the streets. These rioters were shooting at police from the crowds, attacking police stations, and killing officers inside.

They attacked military bases—took a couple of small bases in Tehran. They also destroyed many buses, both public and private, as well as private property, ambulances, and a large number of fire engines. That was because they wanted the fires to spread. In those fires, people died. In a clinic, a young nurse was burned alive. In a mosque, they surrounded two young men and burned them alive. These rioters and terrorists were just shooting at people randomly. One of my friends, a physician, said that most of the people he operated on had been shot with pistols at close range, and it was clear the shots didn't come from the police but from within the crowds.

So these people wanted chaos, destruction, and death in order to justify war. The currency collapsed, the riots started, and then there was this sudden mobilization of the Western media—and even people like AOC, the supposed progressive, and Levin. They were both saying, you know, all sides were saying, that we should help the Iranian people. So the belief here is that this was a conspiracy hatched during the New Year campaign, when Netanyahu went to Florida and met Trump.

## **#Glenn**

Well, if you look at CNN or Fox News, there seems to be a consensus among Democrats and Republicans that the objective of the United States in Iran is to deliver freedom and democracy to the Iranian people—to liberate them from their government. A more cynical view, though, looks toward the Syrian model: simply installing a government that serves American interests in the region. So what do you think the ultimate goal is here for Iran? Is it economic? Is it just about regime change—putting in another Shah, someone who can control a unified Iran under his rule, backed by the U.S. as an instrument of power? Or is that not possible? In other words, would the goal be to do what seems to be in the cards for Syria—the breakup of the country, fragmenting it into different pieces? Because you've seen both objectives floated in the media as possible scenarios for what could be done against Iran. I was wondering what your take on this is.

## **#Seyed M. Marandi**

I think it's pretty clear. First of all, they admitted that Mossad was on the ground, and obviously other intelligence agencies were there too. Mossad itself put out a statement in Persian saying they were on the ground with the rioters—or what they called the protesters. The former head of the CIA also stated that Mossad was on the ground with these rioters. And Channel 14 in Israel did a piece and put out a tweet basically saying that a foreign country, or foreign countries, brought in loads of weapons, and that's why hundreds of police officers and security agents were killed. So they're acknowledging the mass murder of police officers—over 300 at least—officers of the law and security agents.

And if you, for example, look at the United States and multiply—let's say—the population, since Iran's population is roughly one-fourth of the U.S., that would be like 1,200 to 1,500 police officers in the United States being killed in two days. Imagine what the response would be. In the United States, you had this young woman who was in her car, driving to the right, and then she was shot in the face. And at least half the country, roughly—and Trump himself—said that the ICE officer was justified in shooting her in the face because she didn't turn to the right enough, whatever that means. But in Iran, they've killed hundreds of people.

And still, the Western media insists these are all peaceful protesters—hundreds of officers and many innocent people as well. So even though we have evidence from Western media saying these were peaceful protesters and that the police were just gunning ordinary people down, the Israelis beg to differ. They're basically taking responsibility for it. I think the assumption was that they expected a lot more success. What happened—and I think it surprised the Israelis, the Americans, and the British—was that the Iranians suddenly, on Thursday night, when things were getting very bad, pushed back. The real riots, the deaths, and the destruction were on Thursday and Friday night.

The numbers on Thursday night were a lot larger. On Friday night, the numbers across the country were much smaller—roughly one-third of Thursday night—but they were very, very vicious. So on Thursday night, the Iranians cut off the Internet, and literally within 24 hours, the numbers dropped rapidly. Within, let's say, 36 hours—or even less, maybe 28 hours—it all ended. I think they didn't expect Iran to cut the Internet. Then the Iranians were also able to block Elon Musk's Internet connections to the different groups inside Iran, and that surprised them. Since they became headless—because they were being coordinated from abroad—the different groups were told to go to different places.

The police were on one side of the town and were told to go to another. For example, they would engage the police in one area, then leave and burn a marketplace somewhere else. In Rasht, they destroyed an entire market—ten, eleven, twelve shops, all of them gone. So when they cut the connections, it was like a chicken without a head. The intense violence on Friday night was carried out by about a third of the people involved on Thursday, but then it just fizzled out. Since Saturday last week, we haven't had any more riots or violence. I mean, online I hear all this nonsense—now

they're even claiming chemical weapons are being used—but since Saturday last week, things have been quiet.

But the point I wanted to make is that there are different groups in Iran, and these groups hate each other. You have the MEK terrorist organization, which is extremely unpopular in Iran. These are the people who, while Saddam Hussein was invading our country, launched a military uprising against it. Then they went to Iraq and fought for Saddam Hussein against their own country. So this is one of the key groups on the ground in Iran. Is it ever going to be popular? Of course not. They fought for the enemy of the country.

Then you have the monarchists—the son and grandson of two monarchs who were very unpopular in Iran, whose family stole billions of dollars when they left the country, and who recently went to Israel, went to the Wailing Wall, and, most importantly, called on Trump to attack the country. Is the vast majority of Iranians ever going to support the United States bombing Iran? Of course not. So you have the MEK, which is highly unpopular. You have Reza Pahlavi, who has no credibility, is very unpopular, and is not a very smart person. He has many family issues that make people ridicule him. And then you have the Takfiri groups—remnants of ISIS and these people from the Pakistan-Iran border who have been active.

And you have the Kurdish separatist groups. Which of these groups would ever have popular support in Iran? None of them. So what the United States and the Israeli regime are doing is using a mishmash of different groups who cannot get along with one another. All of them are unpopular among the vast majority of Iranians, and they just want to create damage and destruction. So, let's say, hypothetically, if the Islamic Republic were to fall, that wouldn't lead to a single united country, because none of these groups have any credibility. So the assumption, I think, is that the objective—my assumption—is that the objective is to break up the country, to let the country collapse.

And I think that's in line with the Israeli regime's interests, as we've seen in Syria, as we've seen in Iraq, where they tried to weaken the central authority after the invasion and create a constitution that doesn't allow Iraq to be very strong. I think the whole objective of the Israeli regime is to break up countries across the region—West Asia, North Africa—so that it can rule supreme. I think it's clear that when you're using unpopular groups—Takfiris, ISIS, Kurdish separatists, terrorist groups, the MEK, which fought for Saddam Hussein against its own country, and the son of the Shah calling for the bombing of the country—none of them are credible.

And therefore, I think the objective is just to destabilize the country, find an excuse to strike and bomb Iran. And then, if they get the upper hand, just keep bombing Iran like the Israeli regime bombed Syria. But what we saw last Monday was very interesting. During the riots, we saw many counter-protests against the rioters, and they were much bigger in the different cities where the riots happened. Then, last Monday, we had a national day of demonstrations against the rioters, and they were massive—unprecedented, really. In Tehran, there were between 2.3 and 3 million people there. And when I was leaving—because I went—people were still trying to get there.

They were stuck in traffic—it was amazing. It took a couple of hours to get there and a couple of hours back. A lot of people are struggling; we have sanctions. Still, many people went there and spent half a day, even though it was a workday, not a weekend. So you had these massive pro-Islamic Republic, pro-constitution, pro-state institution rallies in all the cities. It wasn't just one place where people from other cities came and joined—each city had its own event. The crowds were perhaps unprecedented, and it's quite clear that popular sentiment is with the Islamic Republic.

It doesn't mean that all those millions of people—maybe tens of millions across the country—who went into the streets all share one vision of the future. Some may not vote, some may vote for one party, some for another. But in any case, it was a vote of confidence in the state, and it was a condemnation of the rioters. It was shown live on different TV channels and radio. Press TV, for example, had rolling coverage throughout the day in Tehran and elsewhere. Al Jazeera was there, RT was there, CGTN and CCTV were there, Turkish media too. Al Mayadeen was there as well. So it was clear as day where people stood. But again, Western media just kept repeating the same narrative.

And they were using—by the way, Western media, after those massive rallies on Monday, began using those images when they were talking about the rioters and the so-called protesters. And I say "so-called" because the rioters and the protesters weren't the same. The protesters were peaceful; when they were protesting, no one was arrested. The rioters—well, that was a completely different story. Just now I was watching Iranian television before our discussion, and they brought on a woman who had been shot in the face by the rioters. Her husband was right beside her. They used, I think, a pellet gun, and there were all sorts of fragments in her face.

She and her husband said the person who shot her was very professional. He shot her—and he shot him too. I didn't watch the whole thing because I was getting ready to speak with you, but I think he also shot the husband. The husband said the shooter was very calm and very professional, and he knew exactly what he was doing. This happened in the Narmak neighborhood, in eastern Tehran. In any case, the point is that Western media still pretends this was all just peaceful—like there were these peaceful protesters walking down the street and the state just gunned them down. That's the narrative they want, because that's the narrative that helps them.

And it's a narrative where, in mainstream media, few will resist because those who are in the mainstream—usually those who are opposed to war—what they'll do is say, "Yes, yes, they're evil, but let's not bomb them. Maduro is evil, but let's not attack the country." And I find these people to be just as evil, if not more evil and harmful, than the neocons because, in an indirect way, they legitimize—or try to legitimize—war by demonizing the other side. Whereas, in fact, those who are sinister are the ones who impose sanctions, whether it's Iran or Venezuela. Those who are sinister are the ones who send in terrorists or bomb boats of—who knows if they are fishermen or smugglers? No one knows. And so on.

But in any case, the point is that Western media will continue with the same narrative. The reality is that this has been a very painful episode—many people died, and many others were injured. But ultimately, I think the rallies last Monday showed that the nation is very united. And that's probably one reason. I mean, I think there are two reasons why the Americans are cautious about attacking Iran. One, they saw the massive anti-riot protests across the country. And two, from my understanding, the Iranians have informed the Americans through multiple channels that if they launch an attack on Iran, it would mean all-out war. And if we have all-out war, that means there will be no more oil and gas from this part of the world for global markets.

And I think it's clear that that would lead to a global economic meltdown, and that's probably what has made the Americans very cautious. But here in Iran, no one believes anything that comes out of Washington or from journalists or media close to the White House. First of all, because Trump is unstable—he flip-flops. We just saw his letter where he told the Norwegians, "Now that you haven't given me a prize, I'm going to become more warmongering and kill more people." I mean, that's Trump. So the Iranians are preparing, and they're prepared for the worst. They're getting ready for major strikes against targets across the region. And those tiny countries that have U.S. bases—the Iranians consider them complicit. And that does not bode well for any of them.

## **#Glenn**

In regards to the media coverage, I did see some strange reporting. There were pictures of some Iranian political leaders walking with the protesters, and this was then sold as, "Look, the political leadership is already defecting to some extent. They're hedging their bets, showing loyalty to the protesters." But the protesters weren't anti-government protesters. As you said, these were the unity rallies that took place afterwards. So, either they don't know or they're being deceptive—I'm not sure which is worse—but either way, it wasn't very good coverage of what was happening.

## **#Seyed M. Marandi**

And I also have to stress that the protesters we saw on day one and two, especially, passed off peacefully. The government stated that, and so did the leader—both the president and the leader, the government spokesman, and others, including the Speaker of Parliament. They all said that the protesters' grievances, their concerns, their protests, were legitimate. So we have to separate them completely from the rioters and the terrorists who were on the streets later, who gathered some young kids, teenagers, around themselves—which I think was itself very criminal. And there's evidence. It's clear.

I put out footage on my Twitter account showing shots from within the crowds. There are many such images. I've also uploaded clips where they gunned down police officers and beat ordinary men walking down the street. They take them and kill them. They were trying to create maximum damage and chaos, to kill as many people as possible, because they wanted to prepare the ground



for military conflict. And as I said, the fires were raging, and whenever a fire engine moved in that direction, they would destroy it. Some of those fire engines are very expensive.

And under sanctions, it's not easy for Iran to purchase so many fire engines again. But in any case, the protesters are one thing, the rioters are another—and you're absolutely correct. The government officials were on this Sunday march. They were participating in these huge crowds, these seas—you know, the sea of people in Tehran—which I heard Musk was trying to claim was AI or something like that. But, you know, that's just not doable. People were there. People saw it. There was rolling coverage. Americans, you know, can't hide that.

## **#Glenn**

What you said before, though—I think this is so important—is that there's no one to unify, essentially, whoever would carry through with the regime change. Now, I think that's very important because this could be seen as an indicator of intention. That is, if there's someone who really wants regime change, but it's for, well, let's say, the altruistic intentions they suggest—call me a skeptic—but let's say that was the case, then you would have needed someone actually capable of unifying and stabilizing Iran afterward.

The fact that you have all these different groups that don't get along well is a good indicator, I think, that the objective wouldn't be to create a stable, prosperous Iran, but rather one you can break the back of and fragment. Now, if that's the goal, you'd hope that people taking part in these riots would think twice, because I've seen—well, as you said—they're very spread out. Some of them, of course, talk about restoring the monarchy, which is hard to believe would have much support. But even the Nobel Peace Prize winner of 2003, Shirin Ebadi, said, in the spirit of the Nobel Peace Prize, that the United States should take military action against her own country.

This is, you know, if their goals are altruistic—if they genuinely believe that U.S. military power can deliver freedom and democracy—then I guess they should look at what would actually be possible in this vision of theirs, because it doesn't seem likely, as you said. But yeah, let me just ask one last question here: how do you see the likelihood of a war on Iran at this point in time? Because, as you said, this could have spooked the Americans—that they weren't able to sow the divisions required—but there's also the concern about how Iran could possibly retaliate.

## **#Seyed M. Marandi**

It's hard to say. And by the way, I think this says everything we need to know about the Nobel Peace Prize—not just this year, when you have a Venezuelan calling for the bombing of their own country, but also that the Iranian Nobel Peace Prize winner from years ago is demanding the same thing. The Nobel Peace Prize was always a tool of the Western empire. Every now and then they may have given it to someone decent, but that was just to maintain credibility. The Norwegians are deeply embedded in the empire.

Of course, now what happens to the empire, and Greenland, and the war in Ukraine—and what sort of map we'll see, how things will play out in Europe in two or three years' time—that's another question altogether. But I think that in Iran, the assumption is that there will be a strike, an attack, a war. I'm not saying that's necessarily going to happen, but the Iranians are not going to risk anything; they're not going to be complacent under these circumstances. After all, the 12-day war—the Blitzkrieg attack—did catch Iran off guard, and the Iranians want to make sure that never happens again. And by the way, Glenn, Iran's capabilities against the United States are far greater than its capabilities toward Israel. And Iran defeated the Israelis, even though they were caught off guard.

Why do I say that? Because, well, first of all, the Israelis lost the war—they were the ones seeking a ceasefire. Steve Bannon pointed that out the day after, saying the real story was that the Israelis were in trouble, especially in the last days, and they needed a ceasefire. The United States pushed to get that ceasefire, while Iran never asked for one. But why are Iran's military capabilities directed toward the United States much greater than those directed toward the Israeli regime? Because for decades, Iran has been preparing itself for war—against U.S. invasion and U.S. hostility—especially since the U.S. took Afghanistan and Iraq. If you recall, a senior American official once said, "Real men go to Tehran."

Iran was constantly threatened. "All options are on the table" was a phrase that many American leaders would use. "Axis of evil." Yes, the axis of evil. So Iran began building underground drone and missile bases back then. The long-range missiles we saw used during the 12-day war can be used against Americans and against the Israelis, but the medium- and short-range missiles, and the medium- and short-range drones, are much greater in number and much easier to move around, stored in many different bases deep underground. They're all directed toward the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. So the firepower that Iran has prepared for a potential war with the United States is massive. And the Persian Gulf is not very wide.

And it's very sensitive. You have all this oil and gas coming out of the Persian Gulf, and then, of course, Ansarullah is very influential in the Red Sea. We saw them defeat the Americans, and they're upgrading their technology and capabilities as we speak. Iran's allies are also empowered in Iraq. So if Iran wants to halt oil and gas, it has the excuse, because all the Emirates, Qatar, and the others have American bases. If the United States strikes, they're complicit. So for Iran to destroy all U.S. interests across West Asia—and the oil and gas that are used daily to run the global economy—it's very easy for it to do so.

And there are so many capabilities that Iran has been building up across the south of the country—the southwest and the south—that they could act within hours. In my opinion, if there is a war, countries like the Emirates and Qatar will fall very swiftly because they have very small populations, and the vast majority of people living in these tiny countries are foreigners, many of them indentured servants. They may even take over the country. It may become a non-Arab country, or

non-Arab countries. So what Iran can do to the Israelis is one thing; what Iran can do in the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, the Sea of Oman, and the Red Sea is a completely different thing altogether.

And if a war happens, the global economy will collapse. And already, the global economy is in very bad shape. I think it's then that MAGA supporters will be seeking out Trump, because right now MAGA has basically put aside all of its principles. You can now shoot white women in the face—it's okay. You can now be a warmonger, and whatever Epstein did is fine. It's no problem anymore. But when the Trump supporters—the hardcore supporters—can no longer pay for gasoline at the gas station, and when their businesses go bankrupt, then I think Trump will feel very differently about initiating a conflict with Iran.

## **#Glenn**

Thank you. But actually, let me squeeze in one last question. I heard some rumors about Elon Musk's Starlink—that when it was shut down, there were also speculations that Iran might have received some assistance from Russia. Have you heard anything about this, or do you know anything about it?

## **#Seyed M. Marandi**

I've heard this, but I don't know. I have no idea how it's done. Obviously, the Chinese are the most technologically advanced country in the world now, and it's possible they may have had something to do with it. They may have helped the Russians, who then helped the Iranians, or maybe they helped the Iranians directly. Or maybe the Russians, through years of conflict with NATO in Ukraine, achieved some technological breakthrough. Or maybe it was Iranian scientists. I don't know, but whatever it was, I think it really surprised the United States. There's no doubt that Iran, Russia, and China are growing closer to each other, and it's clear why—because Americans are threatening everyone. And Trump, you know, his letter to the Norwegian leader is an indication of which way the United States is going. So I don't see Trump's policies ending well for anyone. I think it's definitely not going to lead to making America great again.

## **#Glenn**

No, but I think some of the Europeans will still follow him. I guess you also saw the message Trump posted from Macron—it was supposed to be a private message where he said, you know, "We're all with you on your policies against Syria and Iran." But, you know, I don't understand the Greenland part. It's like they're hoping that if they just show enough loyalty, he'll spare the Europeans.

## **#Seyed M. Marandi**

Yeah, so basically what the French president was saying was, "Look, we've destroyed Syria together. We can bomb Iran together, but just leave Greenland alone."

## **#Glenn**

Yeah. Well, again, I think in these efforts to create a safe space for themselves, they're ignoring that they've helped fuel this monster, which will come after them as well.

## **#Seyed M. Marandi**

Thank you so much for taking the time. Thank you, Glenn. It's always a pleasure. Thank you very much for inviting me, and I hope we all see better days.