

'Crown Prince' Reza Pahlavi calls for bombing his former country

The Grayzone's Max Blumenthal and Aaron Mate discuss the unprecedented call by self-styled Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi, son of the former Shah of Iran, to bomb the country he fled as a young boy, and what it says about the desperation of his movement. ||| The Grayzone ||| Find more reporting at <https://thegrayzone.com> Support our original journalism at Patreon: <https://patreon.com/grayzone> Facebook: <https://facebook.com/thegrayzone> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/thegrayzonenews> Instagram: <https://instagram.com/thegrayzonenews> Minds: <https://minds.com/thegrayzone> Mastodon: <https://mastodon.social/@thegrayzone> #TheGrayzone

#Max

So, this has been stopped. Trump has said that Reza Pahlavi, the Potomac, Maryland-based fail son of the former king—who's never worked a day in his life and came out of Iran with millions of stolen dollars to fund his wealthy lifestyle, which is presumably being supplemented by Israel—is frustrated, and he's now pushing, for the first time, for a U.S. bombing campaign. He's openly calling for U.S. bombing.

#Reza

When he says there has to be a change of direction, that's exactly what the Iranian people are asking for.

#Speaker 03

But if the Iranian people now have the president's support for that idea, will that encourage them to take to the streets in even greater numbers and put more pressure on the regime from within?

#Reza

Yes, and I think the decisive factor is that the instrument of repression unleashed against our people is the ultimate obstacle to overcome. What changes the odds in favor of the people—so they can finally take over the system and push it to a complete collapse—depends on calculated strategic strikes against these institutions. And those would be American strikes? It could be an American strike, it could be an Israeli strike, it could be whatever. The Iranian people now are looking to the cavalry coming, because we can only hold the fort up to a point.

The cavalry can help us overcome the odds. This is a regime so desperate that it has to import elements from Lebanon, from Afghanistan, from Iraq as instruments of repression, because they're running out of their own people to do the dirty work against them. This is what's at stake. The regime in Iran now is on its last legs. It's on the verge of collapse and will try every possible means to survive. That's why a decisive strike would completely reverse the odds in favor of the nation and its defenseless people. That's what we need in terms of real support. So, what do you strike?

#Speaker 03

Well, so what do you strike? Do you hit the command and control facilities of the IRGC? Do you launch a decapitation strike to take out the IRGC leadership? Multiple choice question: either the United States, Israel, or whoever is willing to do it—take it on.

#Reza

I think if you're asking from the perspective of the people on the streets, you have to neutralize every element that's been unleashed against them. So anything tied to the regime's mechanism of control is divided. Well, it could start with targeting, of course, the IRGC, which is the main culprit here, or any other instrument of the state apparatus of control or violence. That's already a big plus. And that cannot come through diplomacy or negotiation. This is where the promise the president has given has been very heartening to the people of Iran. And if that's carried out, then it changes, as I said earlier, the whole complexion.

#Max

So he actually called for a systematic collapse of Iran to be brought on by airstrikes. He called the U. S. military the cavalry and said, you know, "We can't do it on our own," which means they don't have popular support. He lies and claims that Iran is importing Hezbollah and the Popular Mobilization Units from Iraq. I've seen that on monarchist accounts, and it's just completely fabricated. They're publishing photos from Iraq and claiming it's Iran. They're the biggest propagandists and liars surrounding his public relations apparatus.

#Aaron

Yeah, they're taking what the U.S. did in Syria—sending in foreign fighters from around the world to destroy the country—and he's falsely claiming that Iran is doing the same inside its own borders. And, you know, the Fox News anchor talking about "command and control," what that really means... they love to use that term, "command and control." It was the same thing with Iraq: "We're bombing command and control." What that actually means is infrastructure—energy infrastructure, sanitation infrastructure. That's what the U.S. did in Iraq, and that's what the U.S. would do here too, because you need to do that to destroy the government, to make things so

miserable that people join you, or at least accept your destruction of their country because they can't take it anymore.

So that's what he means by "command and control." And again, look, I'm sympathetic to people who have criticisms of any government—like all of us living under any form of authority have problems with our government. And Iran is no exception. But why is it never talked about? Why don't we stop suffocating Iran? Iran's been under some form of U.S. aggression for the entire existence of the Islamic Republic. I mean, go back to the '80s—supporting Saddam Hussein as he attacked Iran, killed tens of thousands of people, used chemical weapons, bombing an Iranian civilian jetliner, the sanctions that destroyed the middle class of Iran, which traditionally has driven social change.

None of that is ever considered a form of coercion or authoritarianism against the people of Iran, when that's exactly what it is. They didn't vote to be sanctioned and have their economy destroyed, not threatened with violence. So if you actually care about change inside Iran, why don't you leave them alone and let them have an economy? When that happens, you do see societies change—and I think for the better. Even inside Iran, you've seen changes sometimes in response to popular pressure. This idea that it's just a totalitarian state, impervious to the people, is false.

First of all, they have a base of the population that supports them, which everyone wants to ignore—but you can see it in the footage. Millions of people come out to support the government. They did after those protests, and they did after Qasem Soleimani was killed. But also, after "Women, Life, Freedom," you now have the hijab decrees not being enforced, which is an example of how change from within can happen. And not only do we not have the right to impose it from outside through sanctions and bombing threats, it also undermines the cause we claim to care about—people's rights and freedoms and all that.

#Max

Well, the reason Iran can't have an economy is that it would be an extremely powerful one that would, I don't know, interfere with some hegemonic objectives of a certain country in the region. It's really Israel—that's the main obstacle here, and that's why there can't be negotiations or diplomacy with Iran. I mean, we're really at a point where the only option the U.S. is considering toward Iran is war and death. There doesn't seem to be any other option. And Iran has to negotiate away its entire sovereignty to avoid it. That's the message being sent here today, in this meeting of the Gusano Industrial Complex. I mean, Reza Pahlavi, the clown prince of Potomac, Maryland, meeting with María Corina Machado, who was supposed to be the leader of Venezuela until regime change didn't happen after Maduro was kidnapped.

And now they're just kind of confined to think tanks and congressional offices in Washington, as they clamor for the U.S. to destroy their former countries in order to bring them into power. And Trump seems to be giving both of them the cold shoulder. So it's really unclear—without them in the picture, I mean, this is pathetic. And I think it's only a matter of time, mark my words, before María

Corina Machado goes to Israel to meet with Netanyahu. I would say she'd kiss the wall, but women aren't really allowed to; they have some tiny little women's section. Reza Pahlavi already kissed the wall. But these are figures on the margins right now, because there is no real opposition inside Iran that doesn't operate within the system of the Islamic Republic, like the reformist camp. And they're not going to support the destruction of their country. Javad Zarif—he's not going to support the destruction of the country.

What would happen? Pahlavi and his forces are calling for assassinating Iran's leader, Khamenei. What would happen? He'd be replaced. What would happen if the IRGC's top commanders were assassinated? They were replaced in eight hours by the leader on June 12th of last year. They don't have a plan for regime change in Iran that doesn't include U.S. boots on the ground. Same thing in Venezuela. The reason why María Corina Machado wasn't installed in power after promising \$1.5 trillion in plunder of her country's assets to Trump Incorporated—to Trump and his cronies.

The reason is that the U.S. determined it would be too costly—that there would have to be a U.S. occupation that could unleash a civil war and a migration crisis to violently dislodge the Chavista movement. And, as Aaron pointed out, in Iran the Islamic Republic has a vast base of support, just as Chavismo does in Venezuela, despite years and years of siege. So they can't do it. So what's Trump going to do to Iran? I think the plan is... Israel just wants them to do something, to escalate and keep escalating, because there's nothing Netanyahu and Israel would like more than U.S. body bags coming home—U.S. service members—which would entrench the U.S. presence in the region and create an escalatory cycle where the U.S. has to keep escalating and pour more bodies in until there's some kind of resolution.

Netanyahu needs the U.S. to be increasingly involved. And what is Iran pledging to do? This time, according to Foreign Minister Araghchi, Iran will use all the weapons at its disposal and go after the choke points of the global economy—the Strait of Hormuz, for example. And the world will financially suffer for this psychotic Israeli regime-change war. So what's the next move? What's Trump's next move going to be? I think he either has to stand down or send us all into catastrophe.

#Aaron

We played the clip last time of Mike Pompeo on Fox News last month, where he basically said we cannot let Iran rebuild its air defenses because Iran's air defenses could take down Western aircraft. So Iran is not allowed to have means of self-defense. I think that's at minimum what Trump and Israel are going to target. That's what prompted Netanyahu to bomb Iran last time—because Iran was rebuilding its air defenses. This claim of a nuclear weapons program was just a complete fake. So at minimum, I think they'll be doing that, and I wouldn't be surprised if, as they did in Iraq with Shakana, they go after more civilian infrastructure, as they also did last time in June, when they hit civilians. I suspect there'll be more of that, because all they can do, from their point of view and their strategy, is make life increasingly miserable for ordinary people inside Iran.

#Max

Who's calling for this war in the U.S.? Outside of Reza Pahlavi's office, who's calling for it? Who actually wants this war?

#Speaker 05

It's like Mark Levin and this guy—the president may still be considering military options. It would be very difficult, I think, for him not to consider some sort of major move against Iran, given that he drew a red line. The mass murder of protesters—Iran didn't just cross that red line; they jumped over it with both feet, shooting protesters by perhaps the tens of thousands in the streets. According to The Wall Street Journal, President Trump is still pressing his aides for what he calls decisive military options.

The discussions are happening while the U.S. sends an aircraft carrier and jet fighters to the Middle East. Those deployments may be the start of a broader buildup. What would happen if I sped Ben Shapiro up—even more than Ben Shapiro is already sped up? That would give President Trump the firepower to strike Iran, should he choose to use it. So a revised suite of options is being created for the president, including some that would aim to push the regime out of power. How much can be done with air power is really the big question.

#Max

Okay, we get it.

#Aaron

He's a regime-change snitch, like a tattletale. You said you had a red line and didn't enforce it, lying about tens of thousands of protesters.

#Max

How is that the red line? There's no U.S. policy of a red line in Iran. That would be like a Samantha Power red line. Since when does "America First" care about protests being repressed—except when they want to repress them in the United States by shooting white liberal ladies in the face?

#Aaron

Exactly, exactly.

#Max

And then saying, like, F-A-F-O—she was a lesbian, so she deserved it.

#Aaron

And this is also where all the people who fell for the chemical weapons deception in Syria—Obama's so-called red line—come in. They believed the propaganda that Syria committed those chemical attacks, despite the evidence and despite basic logic. I mean, why would Syria do the one thing that would invite U.S. military intervention, that would trigger the so-called red line? This is how they've all played into a hegemonic agenda far beyond Syria. Because now what people like Ben Shapiro are doing is taking that so-called red line Obama failed to enforce and trying to say to Trump, "Hey, look, you're acting like Obama here."

And we know Trump hates Obama and wants to distance himself from everything Obama did, so he wants to do the opposite—like in Ukraine, where he sent weapons that Obama wouldn't send. So this is where, if you fall for neocon propaganda, it's not just dangerous in the case where it first applies—in this case, Syria—it's now redounding to Iran. Anybody who fell for the chemical weapons deception still won't grapple with what a scam it was. You're still playing into the neocons, this time in Iran.

#Max

Great point. And Trump was already duped—he played into their hands by declaring that help was on the way to Iranians and reading a prepared statement urging them to take over their institutions. It's kind of like the same way Obama fell into the hands of the CIA and MI6 by setting down the red line, promising a response, and then realizing, after committing to arming the so-called moderate rebels in Syria—who were really al-Qaeda—that bombing the hell out of Damascus and pushing for regime change might have actually been a bad idea. So he created this sense among the armed opposition that they just had to keep fighting and that the U.S. would eventually come as their cavalry, just as there was this sense created among Iranian rioters that Reza Pahlavi or Maryam Rajavi, or whatever CIA- or Israeli-backed tool, would come into power if they just kept rioting.

And then help didn't come. What happened was, there was a National Security Council meeting at the White House last week, and Israel's missile defenses—its anti-aircraft and anti-missile systems—weren't prepared. They weren't ready for Iran's ballistic missiles, including the Khorramshahr-5, which is fresh off the shelves and is a hypersonic missile. So they said, "Oh, wait, we need time to prepare. There's not a carrier battle group there. Wait. All right, well, hope you had your fun with your riots." That was it. Trump may have just sold them out, just as Reza Pahlavi did, just as Obama did in Syria until—well, we'll talk about that later—until Ahmed al-Sham marched into Aleppo after years and years of sanctions. So the option might be, "We'll just wait and crush Iran economically, and then we'll come back in." But then again, they could attack at any moment.

#Aaron

And by the way, on the issue of Obama—Obama is the president in recent years who, more than anyone else, tried diplomacy with Iran. But even then, he never fully lifted the sanctions he promised to. The whole premise of the Iran deal was that, in exchange for caps on Iranian enrichment, Obama would lift sanctions. Iran lived up to its end of the bargain; Obama didn't. He never fully lifted those sanctions, of course. And then Trump came in and fully reimposed them. So even the president who actually tried diplomacy still didn't fully go through with it. He didn't even act in good faith, because the U.S., no matter who's in charge, is so corrupt—so entrenched in its commitment to hostility toward a government marked for regime change, especially one as powerful and influential as Iran.

#Max

They released some frozen assets that had been stolen from Iran. And then Trump said, "Oh, that money was stolen from us. We're paying Iran." Like, no—that's money you stole from them, because the U.S. controls the world financial system. But Iran never got real sanctions relief. And the lesson was: don't vote for the reformists; vote for the principalists and look east. That's the policy followed by Ebrahim Raisi, because the U.S. cannot be trusted in any deal. If you make a deal with them, they'll elect some anti-Iran psycho who will then reverse everything. That's the lesson to Iranians.