

Jeffrey Sachs: US & Israel Attack Iran - War Is Spreading Across the Region

Prof. Jeffrey Sachs discusses the US and Israeli attack on Iran. Trump has made a huge miscalculation as the war is spreading fast across the region, and could also destroy Israel and the US. Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glennDiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: 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://www.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 are joined today by Professor Jeffrey Sachs to discuss the war being launched in Iran. We see that CNN reported a deal was within reach, and then a few hours later Israel and the U.S. attacked Iran. Attacks are reported to have been carried out across Iran, and Iran is now retaliating in a very big way, hitting American military bases and targets across the region. We see attacks on Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Iraq, perhaps Saudi Arabia, and, of course, several cities in Israel. I was wondering how you read the situation. What are the objectives of the United States, and how do you explain the, I guess, fierce response from the Iranians?

#Guest

Well, the objective is clear: it's regime change. This has been an Israeli dream for 30 years. Israel has caused wars across the Middle East using the U.S., and using its effective control over Washington—which it holds for a variety of reasons—in conflicts stretching from Libya, Sudan, Somalia, Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. And Iran has always been the big prize. So this is part of a long-term Israeli plan. The plan is Israeli military hegemony in the region, backed by the United States. The basic goal is Israeli dominance through its nuclear arms and U.S. support, the suppression of the Arab world, and effectively the expulsion of Russia and China from the region.

So this is a geopolitical move. This is, of course, an attempt to overthrow Iran, but it's part of a push for global hegemony—have no doubt about it. This is part of a world war that the U.S. is waging. The war is in Venezuela. The war is going to come to Cuba, or is already in Cuba. Yesterday, the president said that the U.S. would make a "friendly takeover" of Cuba. The war is in the Middle East.

Europe is already a vassal region of the United States. So this is the U.S. attempting, even in what is actually a multipolar world, to maintain its global hegemony. Of course, when you operate with such extraordinary violence, recklessness, lies, and delusion...

The results could be completely catastrophic. We're in the first hours of something that will trigger chain reactions across the world. I don't believe this will go well. I think this is extraordinarily dangerous activity. By the way, the United States is a non-constitutional regime ruled by a small gang—by Trump and his circle. There's no congressional authorization, no legal basis for any of this. Israel itself is near civil war. The Arab states are... unpopular, let's put it that way. European governments are all unpopular, with leaders commanding only 10 to 20 percent approval ratings. So this is a war marked by a tremendous amount of political instability among the warring nations.

Things can crack anywhere. My point is, this is not for any of the reasons alleged—that there was some imminent threat from Iran. Exactly the opposite. As the Omani mediator said repeatedly, even after the launch of the war, the negotiations were proceeding, making progress, and moving in an orderly way. I speak frequently with the Iranians. They were not only ready to negotiate; they had already negotiated, ten years ago, all of these arrangements. So this has nothing to do with imminent threats, provocations, or nuclear weapons, actually. This is just about hegemony and regime change—regional hegemony by Israel and global hegemony by the United States.

#Glenn

All these comments about Iran—threats, nuclear weapons, helping protesters, freedom. You probably saw Trump's war speech this morning. It's quite extraordinary, because it says a lot about what Marco Rubio spoke about recently—the need to restore the dominance of the West. And I think you're spot on. There's a lot of uncertainty and insecurity right now, with this sense of relative decline.

#Guest

What I'd just say, if I might add—there's an old movie I'm sure a lot of people have seen, *The Wizard of Oz*, a famous movie, where at the end the great wizard is exposed when the little dog pulls the curtain back and shows it's just an old man speaking into a megaphone. The odd part about American propaganda these days is that the curtain was pulled back long ago. In fact, last month our Treasury Secretary—who's kind of a thug—explained that the aim of U.S. policy last year was to crush the Iranian economy and bring people out onto the streets. He explained it step by step. He said that last March Trump gave an order for "maximum pressure." The idea was to bring down the currency. He said that in December this worked: banks failed, there was a dollar shortage, the currency collapsed, people were suffering.

They came out onto the streets, and he said things were going in a very good direction. So the curtain was pulled back. This isn't a protest against a regime; this is an American regime-change

operation. The propaganda is so brazen—they don't care whether they're believed or not, really. They just care that they have a narrative. And this is the situation we're in right now. There was no threat. There's been an attempt to bring the regime to its knees economically. The negotiations were phony, because both last year and this year, when the negotiations were making progress, the U.S. attacked. This is premeditated aggression without any justification of the kind the U.S. government gave. It doesn't even have the moral veneer of being a covert regime-change operation.

Most of the time, the United States acts violently, repulsively, but it pretends it's not the U.S. doing it. So most U.S. regime-change operations are covert. Here, they don't care. The brazenness may be Trump's megalomania and personal psychological instability. It may be the need for the United States to feel it has to reassert dominance. But it's not hidden. And every explanation given is a transparent lie. The explanation is clear: Israel is supposed to run the Middle East, dominate it, be "Greater Israel." Our own ambassador to the Middle East, Mike Huckabee—who represents the Christian Zionists in the United States, roughly 20 percent of Americans who are fundamentalist evangelical Protestants—said, "It's all Israel's to take."

God gave it to them. So this is another part of the story. Was he reprimanded for saying that? No, I'm sure there were cheers in the White House for it—no reprimands whatsoever. The Arab world is very sad in this. The Arab world has been essentially under imperial rule since 1517, since the Ottoman conquests of Arab lands. So the Arabs were under Ottoman rule for centuries, then under British rule. Now they're under U.S. and Israeli rule. They're pretty much supine; they don't dare speak. They have American military bases all over their territories. They're basically occupied lands. And they just go along with this. It's all very dangerous and very sad.

#Glenn

But what is he seeing as possible? Why the ramifications then? Because, well, you mentioned Huckabee. He can state openly that Israel can take half the Middle East if it wants to. That's okay. I mean, this is a country that's essentially the security provider for all these states, which are now threatened by that same power. And now we see U.S. allies across the region being attacked. This is not great for American credibility—the idea that it's all-powerful. If America fails in this endeavor to destroy Iran or carry out regime change, this could be the same thing. What are the consequences? Because these efforts to restore U.S. dominance—it appears that the U.S. has bet everything on them. What happens if it fails? There's a lot that can go wrong here.

#Guest

It will fail one way or another, because 4% of the world cannot run the world. The premise here is the same as that of the British Empire at the end of the 19th century. I recently read a speech by Joseph Chamberlain, who was head of the Colonial Office in 1897, saying that Britain would dominate the world as far as the eye could see. And, of course, 50 years later, there was no British Empire anymore. The same will happen with the United States. This is an endgame. It's not a true

assertion of global hegemony, but it's the same arrogance today. And generally, these wars—and this one has a very good chance of becoming a world war, in effect—God help us if it turns nuclear, because that's the end of the world.

But a world war, by some accounts, is already happening, because there are interconnected wars in all regions of the world right now where the United States is meddling. But again, the U.S. cannot run the world. It has neither the economic, technological, nor military dominance to do that—nor does the rest of the world want to be run by the United States. There's no way the United States can impose a stable pro-U.S. regime in Iran. It's not possible. We're not in 1953, when MI6 and the CIA did that and imposed a police state in Iran. This will not happen. Iran's internal civil society—whether they back the current government or not—doesn't matter. This is a country of 100 million people with a 5,000-year history, and it's not going to be run by the United States or Israel, with no boots on the ground, by a proxy from thousands of miles away.

The U.S. has stepped into shit today, if I can put it bluntly. And we don't know what will transpire. Maybe they'll kill a lot of people in the next few days and declare a great success. Reportedly, they've already killed 40 schoolgirls in a bombing outside Tehran. But there's no way it can actually achieve strategic objectives in the long term. The United States itself is not stable enough to do that. Trump is, of course, a highly unpopular and deeply polarizing figure. His approval rating will fall for sure in the coming months. Sometimes, after an attack, it blips up—but I don't even think that will happen here, because the American public was steadfastly against this.

We're entering our own elections in November, which Trump may try to subvert, because he's openly talking about federalizing or nationalizing the elections—which would mean, uh, massive fraud. And, um, this is a very unstable situation, a trigger—or better said, a fuse—that's been lit and will have consequences of war in many regions of the world. Think also of Pakistan, a nuclear power in open war with Afghanistan right now. What does that mean? Where did that come from? What is the U.S. role in this? I would suspect the U.S. role is quite real, in fact. So I think there's a lot that's very destabilizing here. And the idea that this is a twelve-day war and a new Iranian regime comes in that loves Israel and the United States is a fantasy.

#Glenn

How do you view the response by America's allies? Because only a short time ago, we saw the Prime Minister of Canada, Trudeau, say that the rules-based order was always a bit of a fraud—that we have several sets of rules and apply whichever ones we want. You know, essentially growing a spine to stand up to the U.S. Not so much anymore. He seems to be all on board with this war. And the European Union—you know, they've been tweeting out nothing that could even be interpreted as a criticism of the United States.

Not one critical comment. So how— And this is, again, after the U.S. also has its eyes set on EU territory. How do you make sense of this? Why? Is this just pure obedience, or is it hatred for Iran?

Where are the principles? Where are the rules? Where's international law? This was supposed to be the benefit—we were told after the Cold War about the hegemony of the West. That is, we were going to have international rules, principles, values elevated above brutal power politics. Yet here we are. Is there not one critical comment?

#Guest

No, I haven't seen a critical comment yet. Kyriakides exposes Brussels again as almost fascistic, by the way. The attack is on Iran, not on the United States for launching a premeditated aggression—not a word about that. Carney frankly shocks me today. Extremely disappointing. Of course, I've only read one statement; I don't know the full context, but from what I read, at least, Carney backed the United States. Australia backed the United States. Now, I think what's true is that if you add up the populations of the United States, Canada, Britain, the European Union, and Australia, we can do it—380, 450, another 450, 900—it's maybe a billion people, the count of the "white person's world," if I can put it that way, the Western world, which is all enthusiastic in its attack on Iran today. That's about 12.5% of the world's population.

So we hear that because this is our Western world. The Western world dominates the media, especially the English-language media. But I don't think it's at all representative of world opinion. It's shocking that the basic idea of the United States is that Europe is a vassal region and doesn't have to be worried about. And von der Leyen and Kallas are vassals. They're useless spokespeople for U. S. interests. Canada had shown a glimmer of independence, but apparently it lost that again today. Australia—it doesn't surprise me. It's part of the British world, and that really doesn't surprise me. There's a lot of anti-Muslim hatred. There's a lot of anti-Iran hatred. Maybe it goes back to Herodotus and the Persian Wars. But these are stereotypes that are absolutely grotesque, yet real. There's a lot of ignorance in the white world about the rest of the world.

And that's what we're seeing right now. There's also a very strong Zionist hold over these governments. These governments are suborned by Israel—they're blackmailed by Israel, they're bribed by Israel. They have weapons systems and intelligence operations with Israel. They use Pegasus and other spy tools. So there's a military-industrial alliance at work here that's also very powerful, in which Israel is actually a protagonist, not just another member of the U.S. hegemonic club. So part of this is pro-Israel, and it's about domestic politics. When Trump gave his State of the Union speech, there was one standing ovation in Congress, and that was when he talked about how evil Iran was.

The U.S. Congress is owned and operated by the Zionist lobby. That's not an exaggeration—that's just a literal fact. Every congressman can explain it to you. If they deviate from the lobby, they face retribution. They face primary opponents. They face vilification. If they go along with the Israel lobby, they get treats, trips, benefits, campaign contributions, and the like. And this is linked to the CIA, Mossad, and the military-industrial complex, which is pervasively powerful. It runs the United States. Actually, we don't have a democratic constitutional system.

We have a military-industrial complex that runs American foreign policy around the world, and it's deeply integrated with Israel in this. So that's another reason for what we're seeing right now. But the shock is that you get this brazen, premeditated, extraordinarily violent and vulgar attack on Iran—and Europe jumps up and says, "Right on," and Canada and Australia, and I'm sure a few others, do the same. It shows the kind of world we're in right now. Apparently, there's no principle left. And Trump also wants to prove that this is a world of gangsters, and he wants to be gangster number one.

#Glenn

So how severe is it? I mean, you say internationally this could set the whole world on fire, given that it impacts every corner of the globe, it seems. But what will it do within the United States as well? There's already a division between the MAGA crowd, who don't like that Israel is put before America—Israel first instead of America first. I guess a failed and humiliating war in Iran would definitely play into this. Even a successful one would. But it would be very difficult to absorb a failure, it seems. On the international level, could this spiral out of control into World War III? It's too early, of course—the war only began a few hours ago—but what are the possible pathways you see here?

#Guest

The theory is that Iran will be decapitated—the massive attacks will subdue Iran in short order, and all will be quiet soon. Trump will declare a triumph, he'll be a hero, and things will go on. That's the U.S. view. It's possible; you might put that at 5% or 10%. No operation the U.S. has undertaken of this sort has gone that way for decades. This is the theory of the U.S. overthrowing Assad in 2011—it actually lasted 15 years. This is the theory of the U.S. overthrowing Muammar Gaddafi in 2011; that civil war continues to this day. This is the theory of overthrowing the Sudanese government, which now has two civil wars—one in Sudan and one in South Sudan. This is the theory of the Iraq War—that "shock and awe" would lead to quiet, and it did, "mission accomplished," remember? And then it led to years and years of instability. This is the theory of the occupation of Afghanistan, which lasted 20 years in failure.

This time, there aren't even plans to put troops on the ground. How is the United States going to run Iran from afar? There's no answer to that. So we'll have the usual pattern—very short-term triumphant announcements in the next 48 hours, then a lot of propaganda over the next couple of weeks, and after that, we'll see the repercussions for many, many years. The repercussions, I think, are bound to be destabilizing. I don't see how this could possibly be stabilizing in any way. I don't see how the objectives could actually be fulfilled. I give almost zero probability to a strategic outcome—a strategic win from a U.S. point of view or an Israeli point of view would mean installing a new Shah of Iran, a new police state like the one that existed between 1953 and 1979. But I think the chance of that is zero.

#Glenn

I'll just talk about freedom and democracy, given that we just installed Jolani and his ISIS henchmen in Syria. That's not very good.

#Guest

But I think we should be very clear: there's not even a pretense of democracy. This has nothing to do with democracy. We don't have it in the United States, we don't have it in Israel, and we don't really have it in the Western world anymore. We have some trappings of democracy, but we've already become militarized states—and in the United States, this is certainly true. Our system of government is constitutional; it says Congress has the power to declare war. Yet we just had a war declared by one person in the middle of the night, against public opinion. So we are not a democracy. We have the trappings of one, but so did the Roman Empire. They still had senators in togas, but it was an empire, not a republic. And this is the reality we're in right now. By the way, this is not a stable imperium in the United States.

It's very unstable, and the internal divisions are very large. So again, the time horizon is critical here. What happens in days or weeks can be very different from what happens over the course of a few years. But Trump lit a fuse that is completely explosive, and it will explode soon, in many places around the world. And it's not going to return to stability in a day or a month, no matter what happens in the very short term. Trump lit a fuse that will absolutely end with the end of the U.S. as it is right now, in its hegemony. And I think probably, eventually, the end of Israel as it is, also within the next decade or two. This is an explosion that was set off today, and it's very big—it's not going to be put down by some quick decapitation strike or regime change operation.

#Glenn

I was on Judge Napolitano last night, and he was asking me whether I thought the war would happen. I said there were strong arguments for why it would, because the U.S. had sent too many assets to simply pull back. There had been too much chest-beating to just reverse course. And, of course, Israel wouldn't permit a peace that allowed Iran to have the pressure removed. But on the other hand, I was making the point that the case for peace would be that there's no pathway here—it's too crazy. There's no strategy, no story you can tell about how this could be a success. Essentially, it would predictably set the world on fire, and that was my argument for why perhaps this war might not happen. Yeah, I guess I was wrong on that—it did happen. But it still doesn't make any sense. That's why I had a hard time believing they would actually go through with it.

#Guest

You and I, and people who think in terms of reason and consequences, would say, no, this couldn't exist. When I woke up this morning in New York and turned on the news, I was dumbfounded—

especially given the timing, with the Omani mediator saying late last night that good progress was being made and they'd meet in Vienna next week. I think the war machine in the United States and Israel is extremely powerful. It's a kind of fascism with a different face, but it's very powerful. And the only president in my lifetime who tried to stop it was President Kennedy in 1963—and the CIA killed him after that. That's also a message to presidents that has lasted ever since: this is a war machine. You're just a temporary occupant of office, and you'd better watch yourself.

#Glenn

Well, Jeffrey Sachs, thank you, as always, for taking the time. I really hope that Trump will see this as a massive failure and just make the claim that Iran called, that they're ready to start new serious negotiations—some BS, which he's usually good at—and get an early stop to this.

#Guest

And Glenn, even more than Trump—who I give no hope for—if the rest of the world would raise its voice on the basic principle that war can end everything, and that the reason we have the United Nations and Article 2, Paragraph 4, which says it is illegal to threaten the use of force or to use force against any UN member state—if they would abide by that principle, which was established in 1945 to prevent what just happened and to stop it after it happens—this is our hope. The hope is not Trump. The hope is not Netanyahu. The hope is not from inside the United States. The hope is that most of the world—maybe not the vassal states of the United States, but most of the world—will say this is completely outrageous, dangerous, and illegal. I know it seems like a vain hope, but it's the only path right now to getting this turned off.

#Glenn

Well, don't expect a peep from the Europeans, at least. I know. This is reaching new levels of spinelessness and lack of principles, day by day. Indeed. Thank you very much for taking the time, and let's hope this does not get out of control.

#Speaker 03

Thank you. Bad thanks?