

Jeffrey Sachs: “US Will Fail” in Iran War | Israel, Russia & China

We interviewed Jeffrey Sachs on the ongoing US-Israel attack on Iran — and his verdict is blunt: “The US will fail.” Support Independent media to remain bold: <https://patreon.com/IndiaGlobalLeft> Link for donation: <https://paypal.me/sankymudiar> In this explosive conversation, Sachs addresses the scale of the assault, Israel’s bombing of schools, and whether the war will destabilize the entire West Asian region. He also responds to statements by Donald Trump on regime change in Iran and claims that Iran is becoming a “garrison state.” Key Questions Discussed: Why does Sachs believe the US will fail in Iran? Is Israel acting as a terrorist state? Does Iran’s political structure allow for stability despite external pressure? What kind of regional instability could unfold? How effective has Iran’s response to Israel been? Will Russia and China step in — and how? What is the mood of American citizens toward another war? Is the UN and the so-called “rules-based international order” collapsing? After the Afghanistan withdrawal, has Washington become even more entrenched in West Asia? Sachs argues that the war could backfire politically inside the United States and damage America’s global standing further. He also explains why international institutions are failing to prevent escalation. Watch the full interview for a deep geopolitical analysis of the Iran war, US foreign policy, Israel’s military strategy, Russia-China alignment, and the future of the region. Follow us on Substack: <https://substack.com/@indiagloballeft> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Indiagloballeft> Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/indiagloballeft/> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61559411353392> Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/show/69Y9iCWUv8ha3ATsPWtWk0?si=ee1f0de3de094f17> Telegram: <https://t.me/+WNlqoiv1Rhg5NjEx>

#Mudiar

Hello, and welcome to another episode of *India and the Global Left*. I wanted to discuss Iran, of course, given that the two rogue regimes—the U.S. and Israel—have once again attacked the nation of Iran. What’s your response to the attack?

#Guest

This is a strategy that goes back 30 years. The U.S. and Israel aim for hegemony in West Asia, and this has been carried out through a series of wars, with Iran as the main target—actually dating back to Netanyahu’s entry as prime minister of Israel. So this is basically a CIA–Mossad long-term strategy. It has left a trail of blood throughout the Middle East, stretching from Libya—where the U. S., Israel, and others overthrew Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, killing him and plunging Libya into turmoil—to Sudan, where Mossad played a major role in fomenting the breakup of the country.

It includes the genocide in Gaza, the occupation and annexation of the West Bank. It includes the overthrow of the Syrian government, which was a CIA–Mossad operation that began in 2011. It includes the invasion of Iraq by the United States in 2003. And the plan all along has been to overthrow the government of Iran one way or another. They've used bombing in the past. They've used assassinations in the past. They've used economic warfare in the past. Now they're trying again with another bombing campaign. This one will fail too, but I think the consequences for the world will be very serious.

#Mudiar

Apart from the bombing campaign or the use of economic warfare in the past, they've also bombed elementary and high schools, killing hundreds of girls in Minab, in Hormozgan Province in southern Iran. Can that be defined as a terror tactic meant to intimidate the citizens of Iran?

#Guest

Israel committed genocide in Gaza. It killed tens of thousands of children. So, Israel is a terrorist state. Unfortunately, that's the sad fact.

#Mudiar

Donald Trump, in his war speech, openly called for, quote-unquote, regime change. He asked Iranians to rise up against their own government. The idea is that this decapitation of the leadership would create a vacuum. But analysts on Iran have said that most likely the old guard, which is more nationalistic, would fill that space. There are also reports about Iran being turned into a garrison state like North Korea, essentially diverting important resources from civilian and economic use toward military purposes. I wonder what your thoughts are on that.

#Guest

Iran is very much an institutionalized polity. The killing of the supreme leader is an outrage. Assassinating foreign heads of state is outrageous—extremely dangerous, provocative, reckless, illegal behavior. Gloating about it is beyond vulgar, but it doesn't end a government campaign. There will not be, quote, "boots on the ground" in Iran by the United States or Israel. A decapitation strike—literally killing the head of government—is not going to change the Iranian government. It's going to basically put the policy in war mode, which means that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps will be in charge. They are not surrendering. They understand they have more missiles than Israel and the United States have missile defenses. So this idea of regime change by the U.S. and Israel is, like so many other delusional actions by the United States and Israel, essentially doomed to fail.

#Mudiar

The last time the U.S. carried out a full invasion in the region was in Iraq in 2003, which led to massive destabilization, including the creation of forces like the Islamic State—groups that have now, paradoxically, become allies of the U.S., or maybe even were before. What kind of instability do you see in the region, given that Iran’s response has been quite extensive, largely targeting U.S. military assets in the Persian Gulf? Iranian officials have said that in defending their country, there would be no red lines—or fewer and fewer red lines—suggesting this might escalate into a direct confrontation with the GCC countries. What kinds of destabilization do you foresee?

#Guest

Well, the first point, obviously, is that the Gulf states are semi-vassal states of the United States—or in some cases, essentially full vassal states. They house the U.S. military, and this is always double-edged, or maybe even single-edged, with the blade at their throat. Housing the U.S. military doesn’t mean you’re protected by the United States; it means you’re a vassal of the United States. You can’t object to the U.S.—they’ll overthrow you, they’ll create a regime-change operation in your own territory. Having U.S. military bases means having CIA operations actively running on your soil. So, unfortunately, this is the state of the Gulf region. The Gulf region cannot speak its mind—and doesn’t speak its mind.

And Iran is attacking these U.S. assets and showing the Gulf region that, basically, Kissinger’s old adage applies: to be an enemy of the United States is dangerous, but to be a friend is fatal. And that’s what’s happening right now. I recommend to any country, by the way—if you don’t have a U.S. military base, don’t think about getting one. If you do have one, invite them to go home so you can have sovereignty. I always tell India, on every occasion: get out of the Quad, for God’s sake. It’s absolutely self-destructive for India’s interests to be playing games with the United States this way. India is too great a power to be playing U.S. games. So this is what the Gulf countries are seeing right now.

#Mudiar

And what’s your sense of the impact of Iran’s response on Israel as a state and as a society?

#Guest

We’re in the early days, and a lot will be decided on the battlefield. I’m not an original expert on such issues, but the people I listen to say that Iran has more missiles than the U.S. and Israel have missile defenses. If that’s the case, then what we’ll see in the coming days is a war of attrition between missiles and missile defenses. And since the United States will not knock out Iran in this process, it means Israel will be very vulnerable to Iranian attacks—maybe not in the next week, but in the next few weeks. This is predominantly a military question. If the analysis is correct that Israel

and the United States are not able to destroy these heavily bunkered, underground, mobile missile systems—and they're not able to end the regime itself—it means there's no game plan beyond a couple of weeks.

By all military accounts that I hear, the U.S. has two or three weeks' worth of munitions in the region to carry out this bombing. After that, who knows? The United States already had a pretty bare cupboard after all the other wars it's been engaged in—the Israeli campaign in Gaza, which put a lot of stress on U.S. inventories, and the war in Ukraine. So there's a lot of bravado, but quite possibly there's going to be a moment of clarity in two or three weeks, showing that if the first strike didn't do it, this has been a losing proposition. That's what we hear Trump was advised. We'll see.

#Mudiar

One of the objectives, apart from breaking up Iran, is to diminish the rising influence of China and Russia in the region. There are two questions on that front. One is, what kind of support would Russia and China give Iran, given that Iran has been attacked? There's talk about Russian missile defense systems that have already been transferred—S-300s and so on. There are also reports about Chinese radar systems to counter U.S.-Israeli stealth missiles. What kind of support would they give? And secondly, would the U.S. and Israel be able to diminish Russia and China's growing influence in the region?

#Guest

Well, again, China and Russia will definitely support Iran in a number of ways—some that we'll know about, others that we won't. In terms of munitions, intelligence, raw materials, and finance, Iran will get support, no question about it. That's because the flip side of this is that part of the U.S. aim of hegemony is to commandeer Iran's oil exports, which go heavily to China. The United States is basically trying to break the flow of oil to China, whether from Venezuela, Iran, or Russia. So this is part of a crazy U.S. game plan that really has China in its sights, not Iran. Let's just say the U.S. is in way over its head, in my view. China's general approach is to keep its powder dry. It doesn't get directly involved in wars. It lets the United States spend trillions of dollars on wars, get entangled in all these events, and fall through its own devices. So China won't openly fight, but it will definitely support Iran.

#Mudiar

I wanted to ask you about the mood in the U.S. regarding this war. We've read about protests in Times Square, in New York City. Could you tell us more about how people in your country are feeling about it?

#Guest

Just before the war started, opinion polls showed that around 20 percent of the public supported it. The overwhelming majority opposed the war. Trump campaigned against regime-change operations, so what's happening right now—this longstanding CIA-Mossad program—is not what Trump told his own supporters. Trump himself is unpopular and becoming more so. This war will accelerate the decline of his popularity unless, against all reason, the U.S. somehow manages a so-called “influence win.” Even then, the boost would not be significant. It's very unlikely there will be any boost at all; rather, there will be negative political fallout from this.

And if the fighting goes as widely anticipated—that Iran holds its ground and actually gains an edge over time as the anti-missile systems are depleted—Trump will likely see his support plummet. So what you have is an unpopular regime already in the process of losing support. If we have open elections in November—and Trump may well try to stop that—but if we do, on schedule, he will lose them. That would be another major political blow because he would then be impeached by a majority in the lower house. So this is a failed presidency, in my view. I've said that from the very beginning. I've told my Indian friends: don't cater to this man, don't trust him, don't make concessions to him, don't be part of the Quad with him. Just be careful, watch your ground. This is a failed presidency, and I think that's how it's going to play out.

#Mudiar

We saw massive protests during the genocide, particularly on U.S. university campuses. In contrast, during the kidnapping of the Venezuelan president, there were very muted demonstrations. I wonder—are these demonstrations widespread in the U.S., or is it not even an issue in domestic politics? In other words, is the Middle East simply not an issue within domestic politics?

#Guest

I'm sure this is an issue, but the way it will become one is through events in the coming days. If there are American losses of life, if Iranian missiles pierce Israel's Iron Dome—which is very likely—if there's a big spike in oil prices, which is also very possible, that will give the issue immediacy. There is opposition to what's happening. I don't know, as of Sunday morning my time, whether that's showing up on the streets across the U.S. I spent much of yesterday at the U.N., not really observing what's happening inside the U.S., so I can't give you a definitive account. But it will likely unfold over days or weeks rather than hours in this case.

Just to say, there was a Gallup survey released a few days ago that showed, for the first time in history, more Americans side with the Palestinians than with the Israelis. This is a very important change. If I remember correctly—and I may have the numbers slightly wrong—41 percent said they are on the Palestinian side, and 36 percent for Israel. This is a swing from something like 60 percent pro-Israel and 15 percent pro-Palestinian a few years ago. This is a momentous change. Israel is, in my view, committing a kind of political suicide through its really fascist practices.

#Mudiar

Talking about the UN, large sections of people around the world have rightly, in my opinion, come to see the UN and the international rules-based order as very, very ineffective—especially when the U. S. decides to invade or bomb countries unilaterally. I wonder what your thoughts are on any mechanisms within the UN that could be used to counter this kind of criminal and illegal action.

#Guest

I was at the U.N. Security Council yesterday. Actually, the British stopped me from testifying, even though I had been invited to do so. But the British—because they are such lovers of free speech and open debate—stopped me from testifying. They held the presidency of the council until yesterday. By the way, as bad as the United States is, in my opinion, the English are worse. I used to say the British are worse, but I got an email from somebody in Wales a few months ago who said, “Mr. Sachs, don't blame the Welsh. We haven't done anything. It's the English.” I think the English are the worst, actually—the most violent, arrogant, empire-obsessed people on the planet.

They don't know they lost their empire to this moment. In any event, they stopped me from testifying, so I'm just ranting a little bit. But what we saw at the Security Council yesterday was a big division. Most of the countries blamed Iran—they blamed Iran for being attacked. It was extraordinary. But when you looked at it, it was very simple: if the U.S. has a military base in your country, you go with the U.S. propaganda line. And there were, by my count, eight. I actually have the list here: Bahrain, Colombia, Denmark, Greece, Latvia, Panama, the U.K., and the U.S.—countries that either have U.S. military bases or give the U.S. military rights to local bases. Those countries essentially blamed Iran.

Because they're vassals of the United States. It's very hard to be a sovereign country with the U.S. military on your soil. This has been the U.S. trick all along—and it's the trick in Europe, which is a vassal region of the United States. It's the trick in the Gulf. And so we had the absolutely stunning fact of Latvia and Denmark—I'm looking at my list—speaking harshly about the “unprovoked attacks” by Iran. You know, through the looking glass—completely the opposite of the truth. Yet that's what happens when you become a U.S. vassal state. The U.S. is today's British Empire. It is a violent, rapacious empire that rules by decapitation strikes or regime-change operations.

And if you're part of that empire because you host the military, if you're part of NATO, or if you have military bases in the Gulf, you don't speak clearly. So yesterday's meeting at the Security Council, on the one hand, was a big disappointment, because these ambassadors just cannot defend the most basic proposition of the UN Charter—Article 2, Paragraph 4—that nations may not use the threat of force or force against other sovereign UN member states. They can't defend that: the British, the French, the Latvians, the Danes. But it's a very particular group. And when you look at the world as a whole, this U.S. alliance represents about 15% of the world's population.

The other 85% are not part of the U.S. alliance. And they should say, "No, thank you." India should say, "No, thank you." The BRICS should say, "No, thank you." Because it is an absolute distortion of reality. It is an imperium—or would-be imperium—and it's a deadly one. So this is what the U.N. Security Council showed yesterday. I'm not giving up on the U.N., because I don't want to give up on 85% of the world's population. I don't even want to give up on the United States, because we can have a change when all this delusional imperial aspiration is finally exhausted. But for right now, that's the basic count: if you have the U.S. military, you're probably going to parrot the U.S. propaganda.

#Mudiar

I wanted to end by asking you a broader question about West Asia. Do you see U.S. influence and power in the region diminishing, or is it more deeply entrenched? There was a time when many journals were talking about pivoting away from West Asia—around the time U.S. forces withdrew from Afghanistan and rhetoric against China was rising. The idea then was to focus more on East Asia. But given what has happened in Syria, what we've seen in the occupied Palestinian territories, the weakening of Hezbollah, and what's now happening in Iran, is it fair to say that U.S. power and influence in the region are more deeply entrenched now?

#Guest

I wouldn't say "deeply entrenched," but the intention of the United States is to remain the regional imperium. And the modus operandi for doing that is Israel. The idea is that Israel should be the regional military power. But we can see that this is a fragile case, not a reality. For the moment, the U.S. and Israel feel that they have that. Israel has a monopoly on nuclear weapons in the region. While none of their regime-change operations have created stable puppet states, they have effectively overthrown governments from Libya to Iraq. So, in that sense, there's an appearance of continued dominance. And the Gulf region, as I've just explained, because it hosts U.S. military bases, is on the surface pretty subservient to the United States.

But all of this is quite fragile. There are very strong civilizations in the region, of course—this is a cradle of civilization. Iran is not going away, not with a two-week military strike. Turkey speaks loudly and clearly because the Ottoman Empire was a force to be reckoned with, and Turkey continues to be a force to be reckoned with. Egypt is 5,000 years old as a unified state. It's 100 million people. It is vulnerable, but it is not subservient to the United States. The Arab region feels that this is a bum deal they're getting. They had Ottoman rule for hundreds of years, then British rule, and now American rule. I think they actually would like sovereignty. So I don't feel that this is an endgame either.

My view is that the United States is fighting for its global hegemony, but it's not winning it, because the reality is we're already in a multipolar world where the U.S. has no particular chokehold on anything—though it still has a very powerful military. From my point of view, as pivotal and dramatic

as these events in Iran were, an equally pivotal event was Chancellor Merz's visit to China, and watching Merz look on in amazement at the robotics demonstration taking place there. The truth is, no Western country can do what China is doing. That's the deeper truth. China is keeping its powder dry. It's not going to war. It's not as reckless as the United States. It's not squandering its resources the way the U.S. is. So there's a deeper pattern here, and I hope that India follows that line as well.

#Mudiar

Finally, Lord, if an Iranian is listening to this program, as an American, what would your message be?

#Guest

Well, my message is, of course, sorrow, condolences, sympathy. People in Iran should understand that, as Americans, we are against what is happening. We are against the machinations of our CIA. We are against these wars. These are not wars by Americans; these are wars by the military-industrial complex of America. Unfortunately, the American people have no say in this right now, but we're working to have a say.

#Mudiar

We'll leave it there, Professor Sachs. Thank you so much for your time. It's a pleasure, as always. We'll talk again soon, I hope. Take care, and have a wonderful day.

#Ayushman

Hi, my name is Ayushman. I, along with Mudiar Jyotishman, have started this platform. Over the last two years, we've tried to build content for the left and progressive forces. We've interviewed economists, historians, political commentators, and activists so far. If you've liked our content and want us to build an archive for the left, I have two requests for you. Please consider donating to the cause—the link is in the description below. And if you're not able to, don't feel bad. You can always like and share our videos with your comrades. Finally, don't forget to hit the subscribe button.