

Iran STRIKES CIA, Destroys THAAD: Has Trump LOST the War? | Marandi & Escobar

Mohammad Marandi joins from Iran alongside Pepe Escobar to break down the latest developments in Iran's historic retaliation to US and Israeli aggression, and what the latest hits on both side mean for the future of the war. Follow Pepe Escobar: <https://t.me/rocknrollgeopolitics> & <https://x.com/RealPepeEscobar> Follow Mohammad Marandi: https://x.com/s_m_marandi FOLLOW ME ON RUMBLE: <https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong> FOLLOW ME ON TELEGRAM: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> SUPPORT THE CHANNEL ON PATREON: <https://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong> Support the channel in other ways: <https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhaiphong> Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: \$Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: <https://paypal.me/spiritofho> Follow me on Telegram: <https://t.me/dannyhaiphong> #iran #trump #israel

#Danny

Welcome, everyone. Welcome to the show. It's your host, Danny Haiphong, and I am joined by two very dear friends of the show. We have Professor Mohammad Marandi from Tehran, and we have Pepe Escobar, both here to talk about the latest developments in the war. Thank you so much, gentlemen, for joining me today.

#Marandi

Thank you.

#Danny

Our pleasure. Well, let's get right to it, gentlemen. There are major updates in this conflict. Iran is getting very strategic— incredibly strategic—with its retaliation: hitting a CIA base station, hitting multiple THAAD air defense systems in the UAE, especially one in the UAE. As of the last 24 hours, I think there are only 11 of these in the world. But I wanted to ask you, Professor Marandi, if you could put this retaliation in the context of what's also happening in Iran, and how you think this is going at the moment, given that the situation, I know, is quite dangerous in the country, but also that Iran's retaliation has been quite furious, and many have been taking note of it.

#Marandi

Well, ironically, the war has. And Iran, despite the bombings and the slaughter—the bombings of schools and hospitals, and the bombing of IRIB, the Iranian National Radio and Television—I went

there the night before last. I usually don't go on Iranian TV, but because of the war, I said, "I'll go." I mean, I have nothing against it, but I just don't want to be a public figure in Iran. I'm already doing enough abroad. But I went the night before last, and when I got to the studio—because I'd been there a couple of years before—it was destroyed. They said, "No, you have to go to another building." So I went to another building and did this interview until midnight. Then I left, and one hour later they bombed IRIB again. So, you know, they bombed Iranian radio and television. You don't hear about this in the Western media. They bombed apartment blocks, they flattened homes—and it's quite stunning.

But aside from that, and the criminality of the Epstein regime, we see people very united. I'm sure you've seen footage of this, but I post it on my Telegram account. Every night we have gatherings across the country, in different cities. In Tehran, they don't have a single gathering—they gather in different parts of the city, like in twenty different squares—and each of them has, I don't know, hundreds of thousands or tens of thousands of people, depending. Huge crowds. So there are millions on the streets of Tehran, even though a lot of people have left because the government shut down schools after they slaughtered the little girls in the elementary school. They closed all schools and universities and asked people to leave if they didn't have work to do in Tehran. But the people are still on the streets, and you can see them in some of the clips I've put on my Telegram channel.

People on the streets are chanting, and you can see the anti-aircraft defenses working because they're under missile attack. And people don't budge. They won't move. They won't run. Men and women, huge crowds in different parts of the city. I've never—I never thought I'd see that sort of thing in my life. So the mood in Tehran is very defiant. People are united. Actually, I told an anecdote on the judge's program about three of my own students—well, not exactly mine; they're students from my faculty. A couple of them I never had in class before, but apparently, from what they were saying, they were involved in the riots we had in January.

Not with knives or weapons or guns—just some of the young people who were with them, who weren't foolish enough to believe the propaganda coming from the Western Persian-language media outlets funded by Western intelligence agencies. These three people contacted me, and two of them were very emotional. They were asking me, "How can we help? How can we make up for what we did?" It was quite moving, actually, speaking to a couple of them. And it just shows that what Trump and Netanyahu and these barbaric regimes have done is teach the younger generation in Iran what we could not teach them—because they didn't witness the revolution. They didn't experience the Shah, the SAVAK, his secret police, the brutality, the slaughter on the streets of Tehran during the revolution.

They didn't experience the U.S.-backed war of Saddam Hussein. They didn't experience chemical weapons. They didn't see these things. So now they're experiencing firsthand what the United States really is—what the regime in Washington, what the empire, what this evil empire, what this Epstein regime really is. And it's united people in a way that not even the 12-Day War did. This is just

something different. As I told you, the scenes on the streets of Tehran—you've seen some of the footage of the vicious airstrikes—these people are sick barbarians, these Americans and these Zionists, just destroying neighborhoods. But you see the people on the streets, and when they see the surface-to-air defenses, they don't move. They say, "We're ready for martyrdom." They chant against the United States.

Now, I think if anyone wonders why people chant "Death to America" at these ceremonies in Iran—do they still wonder why? The Islamic Republic of Iran today is stronger than it was, much stronger than it was a week ago. And Ayatollah Khamenei, who has always been popular—and Pepe has been to Iran—Ayatollah Khamenei is a popular figure. Administrations come and go; some become popular, then unpopular, then popular again. But he's always been popular. Yes, he has his opponents. Some people despise him, some are indifferent, but he's popular. And when he was targeted, his image became even greater in the eyes of all different sectors of society. He refused to leave his house and office because he said a lot of people are struggling and have nowhere to go.

And since they have nowhere to go, he said, "I'm not going anywhere." He was very clean. None of his children have businesses, not even a small shop—not because he's against business, but because he says that since they're linked to him, they shouldn't be in business. So they're all educated. They either teach at universities. His son-in-law, who was martyred, taught at Tarbiat Modares University, which is near the University of Tehran, near where I teach. His children are all highly educated. They either teach at seminaries or universities. He was also someone who was imprisoned multiple times during the Shah's reign and tortured. And then, after the revolution, he was the youngest among the leadership. When the war started, he immediately went to the front, even though he had never held a gun before, never been trained before.

He learned how to fight on the war fronts. Later, he became president. He survived an assassination attempt—that's why his right arm is disabled. During the last months of the war, when the United States entered the battle alongside Saddam, the U.S. began bombing. They shot down an Iranian airliner, killing 290 people. They destroyed several Iranian naval ships, destroyed oil facilities, and killed many Iranians. So the war with Saddam Hussein became unstable. He went to the front as president, and I saw him there. He was a target, obviously, but he had no fear. This is an intellectual who speaks four languages, who's fluent in four languages, and he's a scholar of Persian literature. His knowledge of Persian literature is enormous—when he speaks Persian, it's remarkable.

It's perfect. Perfect. He speaks eloquently. His Arabic, and his knowledge of Arabic culture and literature, are enormous. His father is Azeri, and he's very fluent in Azeri. Khamenei is an Iranian Azeri. He was a close friend of the most famous Azeri poet of the last few centuries, Shahriar. He also knew English—he read novels in English, including, I think, his favorite, **Les Misérables** by Hugo—which, I think, reflects his personality to a degree, because he was always the kind of person who, just like when he refused to leave his house and said, "I'm staying put," even though everyone knew he would be the first target.

So he's always emphasized, under different administrations—whether leftist or right, liberal or whatever—that we have to take care of the marginalized, the underclass, the oppressed, those who've been left behind. We've had administrations with very different worldviews over the years, but he always stressed that point. And that's one major reason why he was so insistent that we support the Palestinians and the Southern Africans during the resistance against apartheid. He traveled to Southern Africa as president. Nelson Mandela, very soon after his release, traveled to Tehran to meet him and called him his leader. He also supported Nicaragua, Cuba, and Venezuela because he saw them as the oppressed.

He was a unique person. I've never known anyone like him in my life—no one close. He was an amazing person. But regarding the military, he organized the state in such a way that, even after his death, the armed forces are working around the clock. Iran is firing missiles and drones at American assets in the Persian Gulf and at the Israeli regime day and night. And since the Americans are unable to destroy any of these underground bases—which was itself an act of genius—the whole idea of setting up a defense system, creating your own drone industry and technology at a time when the world was still focused on airplanes and that sort of thing, was remarkable.

Remember, the Russians needed Iran's help. So this was his policy—developing missiles and building them deep underground. And since the American regime and the Israeli regime can't destroy any of these underground bases, they take it out on people. They bomb schools, hospitals, local police stations, cultural centers. They carry out double-tap attacks across the city of Tehran and in other cities. A friend of mine was in Ferdowsi Square—a place I think Pepe has visited—Ferdowsi Square in central Tehran. They bombed Ferdowsi Square. My friend was there; he witnessed it. He didn't just hear about it.

And then, when people rushed to help and first responders were trying to find people under the rubble, they struck again. They've done this in different areas of Tehran. A journalist who I think works for Dropsite News told me himself that he went to one of these public squares, saw the devastation there, and people were saying they did the same thing there too. So the Americans and the Israelis were trying to take revenge on people because they can't access these underground bases. So, you know, their viciousness aside, their medieval character aside, the brilliance of this military structure, I think, is extraordinary.

And the fact is that, despite all the difficulties and maximum-pressure sanctions, right now in Iran you don't see people standing in long lines for bread or anything like that. They had already gathered supplies for this day long ago. So for the next few months, there won't be any real crisis—unless the Americans start targeting other things, which isn't impossible. But I'm sure they have answers for that too. The point is that Iran is stronger today. True, they're murdering people, destroying public facilities, murdering children, murdering men and women—and the Western media is completely indifferent. They're like cheerleaders for war. And it shows there's no real difference between any of the Western media outlets.

Although we all know this from Gaza, from Lebanon, and from Yemen. There's no difference between CNN and Fox News, or The Guardian and The New York Times and Breitbart. They're all the same. One is more bombastic, one may be a bit more sophisticated or subtle—but they're all the same. So they start the war. We were negotiating, like last time, and they start the war. That, too, in Iran, was an element that strengthened national unity. Because even those who were naive and thought maybe we could do a deal with the Americans saw once again—like eight or nine months ago—that the Americans are liars, that the Americans are deceitful, that they have the worst qualities possible, these elites.

And so this strengthens the nation—each of these elements: the fact that Western media isn't different, the fact that Iran was negotiating and the other side tried to deceive Iran. Of course, this time around, no one was deceived. We were all expecting an attack. In fact, the night before the attack, a few friends and I were talking, and we all said the chances it would happen that night were very high. So all of this—the march of the Mubayatullah family, the fact that they began with the slaughter of children, just like when they shot down the airliner, which in my opinion was intentional—and the bombing of this school was definitely intentional, without a doubt. Without a doubt.

You can find this school on Google Maps. How could they not know where they're bombing? In any case, national unity today is much stronger—it was always strong, but now it's even stronger. Some of those people, at least from my own anecdotal experience and from what a couple of my colleagues have said—some of those young people who got caught up in those riots—their views have evolved. They've woken up. We couldn't have done that with a hundred years of textbooks, philosophy professors, and political professors. We couldn't have convinced them to change their views.

But Trump and Netanyahu, within 24 hours, taught these kids what we learned when we were young—what we experienced. When I survived chemical attacks, I'll never forget it. These kids are witnessing the true America. They're witnessing the essence of the Western Empire, the essence of Zionism, the essence of the Epstein class. They're feeling it. When you see all these dead kids or families screaming from under the rubble—just like in Gaza, in Lebanon, or in Yemen—you understand it in a very different way. And so the United States, at least for years to come, has shown younger Iranians what it really means. And hopefully, by the time the next generation grows up, the empire will be gone.

#Danny

Yeah. Well, Pepe, I wanted to get your reaction to Iran's retaliation—how you've seen it in response to this aggression—given all these great points by Professor Marandi.

#Escobar

Can I ask my oldest question in the world, just a little bit, to Mohammad? I want to be the interviewer for ten minutes, if that's OK. Go right ahead.

#Danny

Go right ahead.

#Escobar

Okay, and then you can ask me something, but I think we need to get from Mohammad, because he's in the battlefield—in the theater—a few clarifications. Mohammad, I have two sets of questions, three or four in each, let's say. First, is Tehran being carpet-bombed day and night? Is it out of revenge, spite, impotence, pure perversion? Because they know the only weapon they may have now is to intimidate the civilian population, considering they're being hammered across the spectrum—from Israel to all the bases across the Gulf. And related to that, the air defense network in Tehran, as you see it—is it working properly? Is it so-so, or has it been disabled? That's the first set. What's really happening in Tehran on the ground now, please?

#Marandi

No, air defenses are not disabled. But the United States Air Force, which is much larger than that of the Israeli regime, combined with the Israeli regime, is very large. So a lot of the air defenses have been working very hard to protect the country, but some strikes still get through. Most of the attacks are with missiles. They're fired either from jets over Kuwaiti airspace, Saudi airspace, other areas in the Persian Gulf, or Iraqi airspace. Of course, the Iraqi government is opposed to this, but they can't do anything about it. Sometimes, from my understanding, they do enter Iranian airspace, where they're met with air defense and Iranian jets. It's a very complicated battlefield, and the Americans have lots of jets. I'd say the major improvement in Iranian air defenses has been against drones.

And also, Iranian intelligence has been much better. We don't have the sabotage at all that we had eight or nine months ago, which is a big deal. The drones that the Americans and Israelis used to define targets are being shot down very regularly. And of course, we know that three American jets were shot down over Kuwait. The Iranians say they shot them down; the Americans say it was friendly fire—which I think is even worse, in a way, because if you're going to shoot down your own jets, that doesn't say much about your technology. But no, it's not as if the air defenses have collapsed—that's not the case. They are heavily bombing Tehran. Sometimes they strike particular targets, but often they're just hitting neighborhoods—for example, the Gandhi Hospital.

They struck this hospital, and it's been evacuated. It's a private hospital, so it has nothing to do with the government. They also hit the IVF clinic, so a lot of women who wanted to have babies will probably not be able to now. The infant ward was particularly badly damaged. They've struck many hospitals across the country, and police stations too. When they bomb the police, they bomb the

neighborhood. You've been to Tehran—it's not as if there are these separate buildings; it's all part of the city. You strike one place, and the buildings around it are damaged or collapse, or they just miss. What they're trying to do is destroy the social fabric of Iran. They want to demolish that fabric to create chaos, and in the process, they carry out massive airstrikes.

When you see these neighborhoods, it's like hell. So I'd say it's a combination, but mostly it's meant to intimidate. I think the real reason behind these airstrikes on civilians and civilian targets is frustration—they haven't been able to weaken Iran's missile or drone capabilities. They also underestimated those capabilities. Iran has many underground missile cities that they don't know about. The Iranians aren't using most of them; they're using the same missile cities they used in the previous war, and the others remain untouched. Iran's factories for building missiles and drones are all underground, so Iran keeps producing new drones and new missiles of different types. And the Americans can't do anything about it.

So that angers them. Iran has now been able to, as both of you know, weaken the air defenses of both the Israeli regime and those in the Persian Gulf. They've been using older missiles for the most part—almost exclusively. These missiles were made 20 years ago. So the Iranians are firing them off and emptying the air defenses, both in the Persian Gulf but mostly in Israel. In the Persian Gulf, they've been using older drones for the most part, again destroying and depleting air defenses. But there, they're doing it very effectively. As time goes by, Iran can use fewer missiles to do more, and they haven't even really touched their newer technology. They can also use fewer drones to do more, and they still haven't been using their newer technology.

And one reason that shows Iran's strength is the fact that the Americans can do nothing about the Strait of Hormuz. Trump said he was going to send in the Navy to escort the ships—let's see him do it. He can't. Those ships would all sink. In fact, one reason the airstrikes in Iran have been less effective across the country is because the Americans have to keep their jets and naval ships far away. So when the planes come, they have to refuel in the air, then strike, then go back, refuel again, and then land wherever they land. Apparently, a lot of them go to Cyprus. From what I've heard, many of the jets have left Saudi Arabia and Jordan because Iranian missiles have been striking them, and they've moved to Cyprus. That's where they take off and murder women and children.

#Escobar

Thank you, Mohammad. Now, the short second set, which is about Mostafa Khamenei. He hasn't been officially confirmed yet as the new Supreme Leader. But if he is, the best information I had at the beginning of the week was that he was the frontrunner, and today there are some indirect confirmations that he's already been chosen. If that's the case, give us your personal analysis of Mojtaba, who seems to be extremely competent—tough as nails—with an excellent relationship with the leadership of the IRGC. What can Iran, Russia, the Gulf, and the Global South expect from him if he really becomes the new Supreme Leader?

And just to complement what you told us about the situation on the ground in Tehran and the apparently indiscriminate attack on civilians—which seems to be the new strategy, especially over the past 48 hours or so—we can read the initial attack on day one, on the elementary girls' school by the Abstinence Syndicate, as a ritualistic murder. It totally fits their mindset. It was an act of intimidation right on day one, meant to throw society into total convulsion—an act horrific beyond belief—which, of course, as we all know, didn't merit a single word of condemnation from NATO or the entire collective West. So maybe they're trying to apply the same methodology, let's put it that way, to the civilian population in Tehran and some other major cities. Thanks, Mohammad.

#Marandi

You know, the first day I did it—I think I tweeted—I said that these Epstein-class murderers and rapists, you know, are now bombing girls, and that's to be expected from these people. And just as I don't believe the downing of the Iranian airliner was an accident—we had eight years of war with Saddam Hussein and never accidentally shot down a plane—the only time we did was the Ukrainian plane, which was tragic. But this was very different. The Americans were not under duress. The Iranian airplane was flying from Bandar Abbas to Dubai, a very short flight, and it was flying in its corridor. It was as clear as day what was happening, and the Americans wanted the war to end.

They were bombing Iranian facilities, and Iran didn't have the naval capabilities to really fight back effectively because they were busy with Iraq. So I believe the downing of that plane was intentional, especially since the United States never apologized. And the U.S. vice president at the time, Bush Sr., said, "I'll never apologize for anything that the Americans have done." But with regard to the leader, so far no announcement has been made, and I don't—I can't really comment on individuals, because some people abroad and some people in Iran, for some reason, no matter how much I say this is not true, the more some people are convinced that it is true. But I'm not in government, I'm not part of the state, and if I comment on any of these issues, it could lead people—push people—in the wrong direction.

What I can say is that there will be continuity. The Council of Experts, which is an elected body that chooses and removes the leader according to the Constitution, will vote for someone like Ayatollah Khamenei, with the same worldview. And what I'd add here is that a lot has changed in Iranian politics. A lot has changed. Many of the differences that existed until recently no longer exist. Views on the United States and the West are now much more similar among the political class and those involved in politics than they were a few years ago.

I don't want to mention websites, but some of the media outlets in Iran that I really dislike, and that have been very pro-American in recent days, have now been very critical of the West. So I see a new awakening in Iran—like those anecdotal examples I gave earlier. I think it's not just the youth and ordinary people, but also the political elites. So whoever becomes leader, I think that person will pursue similar policies to what we've seen in the past. And that's not good news for the United

States, especially since, as I said, those in the—let's say—the more, I don't know if I can even put it this way anymore, but the more liberal camp in Iran, many of them have shifted their views.

You know, when you actually see the slaughter, when you actually see them targeting women and children—when you see them—the first hospital they struck in Tehran was the Gandhi Hospital, ironically. Yeah, these people are... I mean, the Indian government, which is so much in love with Israel—the Gandhi Hospital is a private hospital—and so this has changed the way people see things. Some of these, I mean, these so-called Iranians who live abroad, many of them, by the way, are on the payroll. Tens of thousands of Iranians abroad are on the payroll in one way or another. You have four thousand Iranians just in Albania, in a troll farm, and then you have thousands in other troll farms. You have hundreds of Persian-language media outlets, television stations—all of these are funded by Western governments. They're not making money from their expensive studios or using satellites that cost money. Western governments pay for it. They have staff, they have people, they have websites, they have Telegram channels, they have Twitter accounts. And then you have all these elites cooperating with think tanks. There are probably ten, twenty thousand so-called Iranians on the payroll. And these people outside of Iran—they portray an Iran that... you've been here, so it's not—I'm not saying this to you, I'm saying this to the audience—these people are portraying an Iran that exists only in their imagination.

It's a completely different Iran. It doesn't exist on planet Earth. No matter how much they try, you can find people in Iran who think like them—although an increasingly smaller number—but that's not Iran. That's a small segment of Iran. Just as we saw during the anniversary of the revolution: the millions who came to the streets in Tehran, tens of millions across the country. But during the last few nights, it's been stunning—millions of people under threat of death and destruction, and they won't budge. So whoever comes to power has a very strong mandate and has the Iranian population behind them. And Iranians want punishment. And they are going to punish the United States.

And what they're doing in the Persian Gulf—whatever harm they cause to Iranian women and children—what Iran can do to them there is enormous. Right now, the Iranians are only beginning to show what they can do. They've shut the Strait of Hormuz, but they're not destroying the ships. They've badly damaged ten or fifteen—roughly fifteen—tankers that disobeyed orders and tried to cross the Strait of Hormuz, and they struck them hard. Some of them have sunk. But most of the ships are staying put, and the Iranians are waiting. Some installations in the Persian Gulf are being destroyed—those linked to U.S. interests, however that's defined. Hotels that host U.S. forces are targets.

U.S. bases that are linked to ports—those ports where, right now, a lot of U.S. forces are in civilian areas—those civilian ports are targets. None of these Arab dictatorships are in a position to complain. These family dictatorships have allowed the Americans to set up bases, conspire against Iran, and launch a war. They're all complicit. They can't have their cake and eat it too. They are murdering Iranian women and children. So Qatar, which is an American proxy, has no right to complain about it. The Qatari foreign minister—apparently, I heard from someone that he said, "We

will not stay indifferent." If Qatar tries anything against Iran, that will be the end of Qatar. It will be finished in a day.

If Iran wants, they can destroy all these oil and gas facilities, and it would take years to rebuild them. And if Iran wants all the Americans to leave, all they have to do is destroy the desalination plants, and it'll be over. They can also destroy the tankers. If that happens, there'll be no oil to take out of the Strait of Hormuz, and there'll be no tankers to carry that non-existent oil or gas out of the Strait of Hormuz. So right now, the Iranians are telling the Americans, "This is up to you. We did not want this war. We want to live and allow people to thrive. We want this genocide in Gaza to come to an end—this Holocaust. But we don't want to create a third world war, and we don't want to bring down the global economy."

But there's nothing the Americans can do to stop Iran if Iran decides to do that. Trump just said he'll open up the Strait of Hormuz—let's see him do it. He can't. So this is where things stand. And I think that, as things stand, we're heading toward a much more dangerous situation. But again, both of you know—we've discussed this before, in person and online—these are things we've been saying for years. I mean, when Trump says he was surprised that Iran struck in the Persian Gulf, well, he's an idiot. And his advisors are idiots. It was obvious it was going to happen. I've said it on Danny's show, I'm sure, multiple times. Right now they're bombing Tehran. I don't know if you can hear it.

#Danny

No, I can't.

#Marandi

Their defenses are working, so obviously the bombs are going to explode any moment. Can you hear? Anyway, it was as clear as day. I mean, if they had been watching Danny Haiphong's show, they would have known that the Iranians are not going to sit back and allow the Americans to destroy Iran's civil society from bases in the Persian Gulf, and let the Qatari dictatorship or the Emirati dictatorship just sit there, have their cake, and watch it on CNN. It's not going to happen. That's not how it's going to happen. And I've been warning about this. Some of these Qataris even complained to the Iranian government about me last year. The Wall Street Journal said that when Trump comes back to power, he's thinking about bombing Iran. And I wrote a tweet saying that if he does, that'll be bad, because Santam is in Qatar, near Doha, and it'll be destroyed.

And then the Qataris were very upset, and I'm not even in government. So some people—the foreign ministry—called me and said, "Can you delete the tweet?" The only time in my life that I've ever deleted a tweet was then. I mean, I may have deleted some before because of grammar mistakes or something, back in the day when you couldn't edit, but the only time I deleted a tweet for political reasons was when the foreign ministry asked me to. The spokesman is a friend, so I did it because he's a friend, and that's it, basically. But I was telling facts. It's obvious what would

happen. And then, when the Americans bombed Iran last time around, Iran struck Doha—exactly as I said.

And this time around, when the Americans are waging war against the Iranian people with all those bases in the Persian Gulf, what do they expect from Iran? And why should the Saudis, the Emiratis, or the Jordanians complain? The most disgusting thing of all—and this doesn't reflect on the people in the region—is to see Turkey, the regime, allow U.S. bases in Turkey to be used against us, to allow AWACS jets to fly over Turkish airspace to gather data for the United States to bomb us, while they're transporting the Aliyev regime's oil to Netanyahu—discounted oil. It's despicable. It just shows the AKP is fake. They should go and start thinking about football, the economy, television, and movies, and stop talking about Palestine, because it's all fake. It was all just to build up their own image.

When they allowed Hamas to go there, it was because the Americans asked them to. And the Israelis—just like Doha—and the same is true with Doha. Doha is a proxy. The Emirates too. But all of these countries are helping the United States, some more and some less. In the Persian Gulf, they're all in. Jordan's all in. They're all in. Turkey's more subtle, but they're helping, and they're cooperating with it. So it's basically Iran against the whole West and these proxy regimes. And what is Iran's sin? Two things. Iran wants to be independent, and Iran can't accept genocide and ethnic cleansing in Palestine. That's why we're so horrible. That's why we're the evil regime. That's why for 47 years they've been demonizing us. And one final note—poor Danny, it's his show and he's not even talking. I love it.

#Danny

Sure, Danny Haiphong, go ahead.

#Marandi

One final note. I've been doing this program on Al Mayadeen every week for a few weeks. It's not really my thing, but I was sort of pushed into it, and I'm not very good at these things. But last week—well, I'm not doing it now, starting this week, because of the situation. Things have changed, at least until the war ends, I guess. Anyway, last Friday I did a program, a monologue, about the “forever collapsing” Islamic Republic—how, in the West, the Islamic Republic of Iran is always supposedly collapsing. I did some research—well, thanks mostly to DeepSeek. Actually, I didn't really do the research; DeepSeek gave me a lot of the information.

I just put it together. The headlines in the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, and so on—if you take those headlines and the key phrases and sentences from the articles and put them in today's New York Times or Washington Post, you wouldn't know the difference. Anyone can check for themselves—go look at my program. I quote them. “The revolution is failing.” “The youth, like in the 1990s—the late 1990s, I think—the youth who don't have memories of the

revolution don't want it anymore." "The 1990s—a second revolution is brewing." That was back then, and nothing has changed.

So every time they say people are protesting—of course, it's an evil regime, it's unpopular, they gun down peaceful protesters on the streets, and all that nonsense, all those lies. And many in the West believe it because they've been brought up with this fake narrative. But when they act against Iran, their head hits a brick wall. Why? Because the reality is one thing, and their fake narratives are something else. It's an alternative Iran—it's a fake Iran, their imaginary Iran, created by these Iranians in exile who are on their payroll, and some who aren't but left Iran with the Shah, or with the MEK, or—you know, I know Iranians. I mean, I know quite a few Iranians in the West.

If you speak in favor of Iran, it's not going to do you any good in getting a job or being employed. I mean, if someone like me went to the United States, they wouldn't even let me teach in a kindergarten class because of my political views. So obviously, people are conditioned to think in a certain way as well. But in any case, those segments of the diaspora—if we can call them the diaspora—that advocate war, death, and destruction have nothing to do with the reality in Iran or public opinion in Iran. Nothing is going to change in Western media because it's Epstein-class control. Just like Trump is Epstein-class control, the media is Epstein-class control. That's the narrative. And anyone who thinks otherwise is a fool. I mean, Gaza was evidence enough.

And then, in addition to the Western media, there's the Arabic and regional media. They're the same, because these oil- and gas-rich despots—proxies of the West—their media, whether it's Qatar or others, each one of them has an empire. It's not just Al Jazeera or Al Arabiya or Sky News Arabia. They have all sorts of funding for websites, TV channels, and these Wahhabi and Salafi clerics, their centers, and so on. They've been doing the same thing—demonizing Iran, telling everyone how evil the Iranians are, how evil the Shia are. They've always been telling the Palestinians how evil the Shia are. And then the Persian-language media empire that the West created—whenever they say these things, they translate them into Persian and then broadcast them.

So Iranians would see—wow, they hate us. They hate the Shia. They want us dead. And then if a Palestinian said something about Iran, which some have, they would focus on that, so Iranians would say, "Well, why are we helping the Palestinians when they want us dead?" You know, because some of these people are Takfiri—Salafi, Wahhabi, Takfiri. I know some of these people. They have TV. I know people with TV stations in London—they're Takfiri. But Ayatollah Khamenei, he didn't care. He wouldn't allow this sort of thing to change his or his supporters' view of the Palestinian people. He would say they are oppressed, they are being ethnically cleansed, and we have to support them.

And that says a lot, by the way, about Iranians in general—those who support the Palestinian cause—because they're being told day and night that the Palestinians hate them, that the Arabs hate them, and so on and so forth. But a lot of this isn't true. Much of it is exaggeration, and that's the objective—it's divide and rule. And it's not as if, I mean, right now you've seen how much support he

has across the region and what people are saying about him—scholars, Sunni, Shia, Christians, Jews, and so on. But the point is that these regimes, and those on the payroll like the Western media, have been trying their best to create division. But despite that, Iran—the Islamic Republic of Iran—has been steadfast in its support for the Palestinian people. And I think that’s a very big thing. If you’re still there, Danny, you can join the conversation.

#Danny

Yeah, no, I’m still here. It’s an incredible analysis, Professor Marandi and Pepe. Incredible questions—thanks so much for bringing those in. You know, my only question, if Pepe wants to join...

#Marandi

Maybe we should just take over the show and call it the Pepe–Mohammad show, and just remove you from the YouTube channel.

#Danny

And it would work because your names are all in the title, so it would totally make sense. It would be convincing. No, but Pepe, if you wanted to chime in here—your reaction to, you know, I named just some of the developments at the beginning of the show: Iran hitting the CIA station in Riyadh, they’ve hit this absolutely critical radar in Qatar, Qatar is shutting down their gas trade now. There have been so many developments rolling in on Iran’s retaliation. I wanted to ask you, what have you made of it? And maybe you can help the audience understand just how big in scope it is, because now we also have Hezbollah back in. I don’t think we’ve mentioned that—maybe Professor Marandi, you did earlier in the program—but there are so many elements to this. So, Pepe, if you could help the audience understand it.

#Escobar

Yes, I was putting together a very long column before our conversation, so it’s going to be the middle of the night here in Southeast Asia, trying to piece all these interlocking elements together to give an overall view of how this decentralized mosaic strategy—which is the official Iranian term for what they’re doing—is evolving, and how immensely sophisticated it is. From the beginning, starting today, with the fact that the counterpunch to the decapitation strike began just half an hour after the strike—and it was relentless. It was multi-vector, simultaneous, across the spectrum, hitting Israeli and U.S. interests throughout the Gulf. And that continues.

Maybe in the past, okay, less than 24 hours, the Iranians are launching fewer missiles. It doesn’t matter. And as Mohammad was saying, very correctly, these are the old ones. So they still have a lot of old missiles to launch, because they haven’t even started with the new ones—and with the ones we don’t even know they have. This is going to be for the next stage, when we’re going to have the

interceptor crisis, especially after four or five days, like at the beginning of next week. Then we're going to be in interceptor crisis hell for Israel and for the U.S. But the timing of the escalation, the way it has been planned—this was obviously months in the making.

Of course, it obviously started before the 12-day war, but they learned from their mistakes during the 12-day war. They're not repeating those mistakes after the 12-day war. And of course, now they have that extra, I would say, pigment in the whole picture—which is direct intel, satellite, and first-class information in real time from Russia and from China. This doesn't have to be advertised by anyone in this strategic triad. It's there, and it's working. And obviously everybody knows—considering, for example, Mohammad has been to Moscow many times. We even met in Moscow several times. And we know how the interaction at the highest level between the Russian Ministry of Defense and the Iranian Ministry of Defense works, and how they help each other.

And, for instance, there are some elements of almost poetic justice they discovered in some of the tones used on the current battlefield, which theoretically are Shaheds. But they're sort of upgrades of the Shaheds that the Russians bought and then started manufacturing in Russia as Geraniums—using German devices in the Geraniums, and now in the Shaheds in Iran. This is absolutely fascinating. It's a back-and-forth of technology, which implies that the strategic relationship in terms of exchanging state-of-the-art technology is very advanced. And some of this stuff people only discover later, after the fact. In fact, the comment was about the jamming device in the Iranian Shahed drones.

So now I see we're progressing along two parallel tracks, and it's very, very dangerous because they won't intersect. They're two parallel tracks running toward the—well, you know—the finishing line, which isn't really a finishing line. It's just a finishing line for the next few weeks. Can Iran hold out for the next few days until the interceptor support is fully in place on the Israeli side and the American side? Then they can move to the next stage, which is to totally obliterate all these bases, CIA cells, and American installations across the Gulf—those that haven't been obliterated yet.

And, of course, go against Israel, no holds barred, with their latest-generation hypersonic missiles. That's one thing. The other parallel track is if the Americans see that they're entering interceptor hell and this is going to be the next stage of the war, they can do what they're already doing, as Mohammad explained to us a few minutes ago—bombing civilian targets in Tehran and other major cities—and then go for a Gaza-syndrome-level attack. A great deal of Iran, out of impotence, revenge, total perversion, and because they think they can get away with it, which is even worse. So that's very, very dangerous.

And this is where we are in the next crucial, I would say, five days—one week from now. Is this going to change the world? Everything behind the decentralized mosaic strategy and the Iranian strategy—which is essentially death by a thousand cuts against the U.S. and against Israel at the same time—no, it's not going to change. So if we follow the logical conclusion of these two parallel tracks advancing like crazy on both sides and never meeting, it's really an existential war. It's a do-

or-die war, especially for Iran. And, of course, Iran now is representing the whole Global South. That's my personal thesis.

This is a war not only against Iran, but against the three top BRICS members—Iran, Russia, and China—against BRICS as a whole, against BRICS partners, and against the Global South as a whole. This means it's against 88%, 89% of the global population. That's why this is the war that's going to define geopolitics for the rest of the century. And this is not hyperbolic at all. These are the facts now. Iran is on the front line. What I find particularly touching—and it's not a stretch at all—is that we owe this to three things, to Shiite martyrs, in fact. We owe this to General Soleimani, to Sayyed Nasrallah, and to Ayatollah Khamenei.

This is the triad that was martyred, that was killed by the Empire of Chaos and that death cult in West Asia. And now Shiite Islam, with its leader—the leader of more than 300 million Shiites around the world—was killed by this genocidal empire. And, of course, their aircraft carrier in West Asia is defending the whole of the Global South, which is something that a lot of beyond-stupefied and brainwashed so-called leftists across the West—from France and Germany to Brazil, for that matter—still don't get. They can't, because they've been completely brainwashed. That's why we're in the middle of the defining moment of the 21st century, geopolitically. It's as clear as... it cannot be clearer than that.

And we all hope Iran is not going to be destroyed—which is something the Empire of Chaos and the death cult in West Asia wouldn't even think twice about doing. If Iran is destroyed, then the rest of the century, in terms of real freedom for the Global South as a whole, is destroyed. At the moment, these people have already managed to blow BRICS from the inside, blow the SCO from the inside. The SCO just launched an absolutely ridiculous communiqué a day or two ago. They're two crippled, crypto-walking-dead organizations right now. A great deal of the Global South is too apoplectic to organize any sort of reaction. The United States—well, it was six feet under; now it's twelve feet under. And it's not going to resurrect. So there's not going to be a return of the living UN dead.

So it's terrible. The only thing we see—the only glimpse of possible light at the end of this very dark tunnel—is that series of phone calls Vladimir Putin had earlier this week with everyone that matters in the Persian Gulf. In fact, they called him. They asked him, "Do something. Can you be the mediator?" I was in Moscow last week before the war, unfortunately. I left Moscow—wow—three days before the war. And I went through, of all places, Oman. I was in Oman two days before the war. Of course, there were all sorts of rumors all around the world, but we never expected that... Mohammad was saying that on Friday in Tehran, they were expecting it could happen between Friday and Saturday.

In Oman on Thursday, people were saying, "No, we're going to have the next meeting—the indirect meeting—on Monday." And they were still discussing; there was a possibility of a deal. Poor Omanis. Very gracious, of course, but poor Omanis. So... at least a lot of things are now absolutely clear: the death of international law, the death of the UN, the death of any possibility of mediation,

negotiation, or diplomacy with the empire of chaos, plunder, and permanent strikes. If they don't like you, they kill you. That's what it is now—the total mafiasation of the American presidency, led by a megalomaniacal mafioso taught by an adviser to McCarthyist Senator Joseph McCarthy.

That tells you everything about Trump. Who taught Trump to be what he is now? He learned it from a McCarthyite. That's it. That's a very simple answer. So he has to act like a... a boss, or an aspirant to Tony Soprano, the way he is now. That's what he really is. We shouldn't be astonished by all that. What we should be astonished at is that the sovereignty of the United States is also six feet under after the start of this war. This is a war by a mafioso presidency, basically following the orders of a genocidal war criminal. And when we have historians in the 21st century—independent historians from the Global South—who will be writing the history of the 21st century, this is what's going to be written.

And this was the final moral principle—not to mention the geopolitical, geoeconomic, and so on—collapse of so-called Western civilization. Which, by the way, at the Munich Security Conference, through the little, pathetic clown Marco Rubio, was described as, "Yes, we are the heirs of Western civilization, the heirs of you Europeans, and now we're going to recolonize the Global South. And you Europeans, you have to be with us. You're going to recover all the previous historical bling-bling you had, thanks to us Americans." So at least now everything is clear.

The enormous tragedy of all this is that it's clear through another completely absurd, murderous, incredibly perverse war that began with the decapitation strike on the leader of a sovereign nation and the killing of 160 or 170 girls in an elementary school—a ritualistic murder by a bunch of perverts who worship their piece-of-shit god with that piece-of-shit book that nobody can stand. At least it's clear to all of us, you know. And what we're living through these days, at least, is—okay, let's see if Iran, with its decentralized mosaic strategy, is capable of putting up enough resistance to turn the game around and teach a lesson to this bunch of perverts.

#Danny

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, powerful stuff. Are you guys good for another ten minutes? Do you have that, Pepe and Mohammad, Professor Mahdi?

#Marandi

Yeah, I want to hear Mohammad. Absolutely. I have to leave in ten minutes because I have to go on—I regret to say—Piers Morgan's show. By the way, I don't know if you can hear the bombs exploding again.

#Danny

I heard that one.

#Marandi

Yeah, so anyway—but yeah, I can be on for a few more minutes.

#Danny

Okay, all right, well, I guess my final question—

#Escobar

Are you gonna talk with that piece of shit what again, Mohammad?

#Marandi

Anyway, I didn't want to, but hey.

#Danny

I understand.

#Escobar

I thank you for your patience and your wisdom.

#Marandi

You're very kind.

#Danny

Well, I guess, you know, my final question to both of you—the United States, of course, isn't talking like this. They're saying, you know, the Trump administration claims it's wiped out everything. We've even seen Israel and the U.S. post videos, essentially of bombings of what look like decoys—painted helicopters and jets on the ground—and showing that as some kind of major feat. But of course, Iran is getting hit. And now they're talking about, Professor Marandi, possibly a Kurdish insurgency, an uprising they want to bring into the country to help with the overall goal, it seems, of regime change. What do you make of this and the overall hubris of the United States right now?

#Marandi

Well, just first a reminder—if we go back a few months to the seven-week war against Yemen—every day they were telling us how they were wiping out the Ansarullah forces, or the Houthis as they like to call them, and that they were devastating them. And I think Pepe knows a thing or two

about that; he was there. So we were hearing how it was finished, and then suddenly, after seven weeks, Trump came on television and said, "They capitulated. We won. It's over." And he walked away. And it turns out it was the exact opposite—Yemen won. Despite the fact, of course, that the Trump regime slaughtered many innocent people. We recall those messages on, I think, Signal, where they said this guy, their missile leader, went into a building to see his girlfriend. I mean, obviously, they're clueless about what they're talking about.

There was no missile leader killed. There was no growth. They just brought down an entire apartment block, slaughtering everyone based on fake intelligence. But they lost the war, so I wouldn't take anything they say seriously. The Trump regime is always "winning," and they're winning on all fronts—about everything in the world. So when they talk about winning against Iran, put it alongside all their other "wins," and it has about the same amount of credibility. They won the trade war, they won in Yemen—they're always winning. So, okay, they can keep saying that. But the reality on the ground is that no oil is leaving the Persian Gulf until the Iranians say so. And Trump said he's going to open the Persian Gulf, he's going to open the Strait of Hormuz. Let's see him do it. That's where Iran has Trump by the throat.

The entire Persian Gulf—anyone who knows a thing or two about it knows it's one of the most sensitive places on the planet. It's not very wide, and it's full of oil and gas facilities. If you land at any airport in the Persian Gulf, you fly over oil and gas installations and tankers. I don't know if you saw that clip a couple of days ago when the Iranians hit a tanker with a missile—the missile was flying past all these other tankers. Those other tankers were obeying orders; the one that got hit was listening to the Americans. So the Iranians can pull the plug, and there's nothing the Americans can do about it.

If the Iranians hit the desalination plants, everyone has to leave immediately—go to Jordan or wherever. If they destroy the oil and gas installations, nothing will be coming out of the Persian Gulf. If they destroy those installations, then it's over. And they can do the same with Azerbaijan. So Trump should be very careful. I mean, he can boast all he wants, but the Iranians are steadfast. The Iranian culture, their religious ideology, and their loyalty to Ayatollah Khamenei have made them extremely steadfast. We are being bombed as we speak, but we're not afraid. We're not intimidated.

And we're not going to relinquish the Palestinian people, nor are we going to relinquish the Cubans. And here, just before I leave, I want to remind everyone that as this war is going on, they're starving the Cuban people. They've taken the people of Venezuela hostage. So these are dark days, as Pepe said—very dark days—but they will not defeat the Islamic Republic of Iran. And as General Soleimani said, as Pepe alluded to, we are the nation of Imam Hussain. So there's no such thing as surrender for us. Anyway, I hope—well, later on I'll come back and listen to Pepe, because I have to leave now and sign in for their program, which is being recorded.

But I'll listen to Pepe later on, and to what you have to say. I just hope your audience remains active and prays for the Iranian people, for the resistance, for the Palestinians, and for the Lebanese who

are also being battered. They're slaughtering the Lebanese because Hezbollah is battling the Israeli regime. If people can boycott U.S. or Western goods, if they can raise awareness about what's going on in Cuba, in our region, in Palestine, in Gaza, in Lebanon, I'm absolutely certain there will be light at the end of the tunnel. Whether people like me are around to see it is completely irrelevant. So, bye for now.

#Danny

Goodbye, Professor Marandi. Great to be with you. We'll be in touch, definitely. Thanks so much.

#Marandi

Thank you, Mohammad. Bless you. Thank you, Pepe.

#Danny

All right. Yeah, Pepe, we don't have to stay much longer. I just want to hear your closing comments on anything we haven't mentioned about this.

#Escobar

I need to go as well. Sorry about that.

#Danny

No problem. Any final comments, Pepe, that you'd like to share?

#Escobar

No, I think what I wanted to say, I said a few minutes ago. This is a lesson for all of us in the Global South, and for all of you in the Global North who have critical thinking and ideas—who think and act like real human beings. So, I assume that's the majority of the planet. Let's be auspicious, you know. Our future is being decided now—yeah, it is—and the geopolitical future of the whole planet. It could not be more serious than what's going on right now.

#Danny

Yeah, I just want to thank everyone. Thanks so much, Pepe. We'll head out together. I want to thank everyone for watching, and all those who gave super chats that I'm pulling up on the screen right now. I also want to make sure you know that Pepe's work can be found on X and on Telegram—the links are in the video description. There are also links there to support this channel as well. Without further ado, everyone, hit the like button—that'll keep the show going, so to speak. I'll be back tomorrow with friends of Pepe's and mine. We'll have Larry Johnson and Colonel Lawrence

Wilkerson on to continue the daily updates. Pepe, great to be with you. We'll head out together. Take care, everyone. Thank you so much, Dave, and thanks to all of you, our audience. Thank you—and you know, don't forget, the struggle continues. It does. All right, everybody, see you tomorrow, 12 noon Eastern time. Bye-bye.