

Mohammad Marandi: Assassinations won't work in Iran

The interview argues that targeted assassinations will not change Iran's political system or the wider resistance movement, describing both as structured, resilient, and not dependent on individuals. It claims Western leaders are misreading the conflict, while public support inside Iran remains strong despite ongoing attacks. The discussion also portrays U.S., Israeli, European, and Gulf involvement as part of a broader war, warns that escalation around the Strait of Hormuz could trigger wider economic disaster, and says the conflict is likely to continue unless the balance on the ground changes.

#Nima

What the Israelis are talking about is the assassination of the head of Iran's National Security Council, Ali Larijani. What is your reaction to what has happened and the way the Israelis are trying, somehow, to justify it? This is the same policy they've followed since the war started—the policy of assassinating people who are, you know, the decision-makers. They feel they can change the whole system through this way of thinking. What's your understanding of what has happened, and what do you think Iran's policy will be as time goes by with the conflict, with the war?

#Mohammad

We have to wait and see what the National Security Council says—or the Supreme National Security Council, to be more precise—in the hours ahead. But what's really important is that the West, and we've discussed this before, they and their proxies don't understand Iran. They don't understand the Islamic Republic of Iran. They don't understand the axis of resistance. They don't understand that it's not dependent on anyone. Ayatollah Khamenei was just martyred a couple of weeks ago—and what happened? They're losing the war. We saw Trump talk like a drunkard a few hours ago, constantly contradicting himself, clearly in a bad situation. But Ayatollah Khamenei was martyred, and yet the Islamic Republic of Iran has a constitution—a sophisticated constitution. It has sophisticated state structures. It's not dependent on individuals. The same is true with Hezbollah.

Remember Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah—when he was martyred, and as the war went on, the Israeli regime and the West were saying that Hezbollah was a diminished force. I was there when he was martyred; I was in Beirut. What happened? Not only did the Israeli regime fail to take southern Lebanon, but now that Hezbollah has reengaged with this monstrous regime, they're hitting them very hard. This is the Hezbollah they claimed had fallen apart. Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah was martyred, and almost—I guess all, or at least many—of the senior commanders were martyred. Yet today, Hezbollah is fighting and beating back this brutal enemy. So the Islamic Republic of Iran is

not dependent on any individual or set of individuals. It is a state. It is sophisticated. Actually, I think a lot of these perceptions in the West come from racism.

#Mohammad

No. The Islamic Republic of Iran is a very sophisticated system. It's a different system—a better system. After all, the Islamic Republic of Iran does not support genocide; it opposes genocide. They support genocide. I think people are beginning to recognize that all those forty-seven-year-old narratives are nonsense. But it is a sophisticated state with its own checks and balances and mechanisms to put in a new leader. If the president is killed, the president will be re-elected; if he's martyred or if he passes away, the same is true with the leader. So nothing is going to change in Iran. The constitution is complicated, complex, and it has worked very well over the last forty-seven years—despite sanctions, despite three wars, despite endless terrorism.

They've murdered presidents before. They've murdered the head of the judiciary before. They've murdered so many ministers and so many commanders. So they have to wake up to the reality that the Islamic Republic of Iran is powerful and not dependent on individuals. The same is true with Hezbollah. The same, I'm sure, is true with the resistance in Iraq and with Ansarullah in Yemen. And they will continue to resist. In fact, I think what our enemies should really be worried about is Joe Kent's resignation.

#Mohammad

The director of U.S. National Counterterrorism, I think—he's said, as you know, that he's resigning because Iran was not a threat. He's resigning because this war was caused under the influence of the Zionist regime and the Zionist lobby. This, in my opinion, is the beginning of the end of this Titanic ship that's engaged in war with the Iranian people. The Titanic is sinking. And this isn't even Tucker Carlson—this is someone Trump installed, someone who's an insider.

#Nima

His job... Yeah, I can hear you, Professor Marandi.

#Mohammad

Okay, sorry, I can hear you. So this is a person whose job is to know these things—his job is to know what is a threat and what is not a threat to the United States. And he knows who is pushing what agenda in this regard. So I think it's very good news. We'll have to see if anyone else is prepared to resign, someone like Tulsi Gabbard. I think it's her moral responsibility to do so. But from Trump's statements last night, I think it's clear that things are not going well. He's not going to be able to—well, you know, he said that Iran is obliterated. Okay, we're obliterated. And then he goes and says he needs everyone across the world to help him, including the Chinese.

Well, if it's obliterated, why do you need everyone else? And then everyone else is saying, you know, "Leave me out of it." So obviously— But he's talking about Iran; it's nonsense. As we speak, Iran today has fired more missiles and drones at targets across the region—U.S. assets in the Persian Gulf and the Israeli regime. So I believe the United States is going to suffer a strategic defeat. And Joe Kent's resignation, I think, is a sign that things are going exceptionally badly for Washington—for the Trump regime, at least. And I think Trump's statements, those contradictory statements we saw a few hours ago—he was behaving like a drunk person.

It was so inconsistent and incoherent. I think that was also very revealing. So we'll see. I think the war is going to continue. I don't think it's going to end anytime soon. The Trump regime and the Netanyahu regime will continue to murder people. They'll continue to slaughter. Just yesterday, we had the youngest martyr so far—a three-day-old boy and his two-year-old sister were murdered in a village. They bombed a village. These pilots, when they fire their missiles, they just don't care. They just want people to suffer. What target could there be in a tiny village? They've been bombing banks. They've been bombing electrical power plants.

They've, of course, slaughtered children at school. Every day they expose themselves further. But people in Iran are on the streets. Right now, Nima, as we speak, people across the country are gathering in huge numbers. And it's become—remember, after the riots, when you were in Iran, after the riots, the West was saying, I don't know, tens of thousands of people were killed and all that nonsense. During those deadly riots, when foreign intelligence agencies brought in weapons and killed so many police officers and innocent people, the people came out on the streets against the rioters—in the many millions, tens of millions across the country.

And if you recall—and I'm sure you do—they were trying to say that this was AI. Afterwards, on the anniversary of the revolution, people came out in even larger numbers to prove a point to Elon Musk and the others who were pretending this was AI, that these were real people. For more than two weeks now, every night people have been on the streets, under missile fire. And on some days there have been huge gatherings—like on Friday, which I attended. During that gathering, when millions were on the streets, they fired missiles at Tehran and murdered a demonstrator. No one moved. The crowds are so huge, and they come out so often, that now they can't hide it.

And so the president himself—Trump—has to go and say this is AI. Why? Because people are seeing through the narrative. People are seeing through the Guardian and the Times narrative, the narrative of CNN, MSNBC, and Fox News. It doesn't matter—these traditional, these mainstream leftists or these mainstream conservatives, this Epstein class and their affiliates, even some who pretend they're not part of that class—they can't hide it anymore. They can't hide the fact that the people in Iran are on the streets. They're steadfast. They're not afraid. And we see, on the other side, that the empire—the Trump regime—is facing bigger and bigger problems with this resignation.

#Nima

You know, on the same day we saw International Quds Day, all the Iranian officials were on the streets together with the Iranian people. Meanwhile, we had the head of the Pentagon, Pete Haxett, talking about how the Iranian officials are hiding, that they've gone into hiding. You know, it's getting kind of ridiculous, because there's no connection between the reality of what's going on and what Donald Trump and Pete Haxett are trying to present to the American people.

#Mohammad

Yes. And Haxett has shown himself to be barbaric. He's basically saying, "We have no red lines, and we'll just kill whoever we want." I mean, when you listen to him, it's like listening to a thug in some Hollywood movie. He's so disgusting. And of course, the whole regime is disgusting, and the whole political class is disgusting. I mean, Trump—when he spoke about obliterating Iran or destroying Iran in a way it would never recover—did anyone show outrage? Or when he lost the ruling and went and did that press conference, he said, "I can destroy countries, but I can't impose one dollar's worth of tariffs on other countries," even Cuba, which they're strangling as we speak.

Cuba has no electricity right now. Doctors can't operate. People are dying in large numbers because of disease and because there's no electricity. Do you see any outrage? Do you see any mainstream journalists screaming that these are crimes against humanity? No. It's an utterly corrupt system—from Latin America to our part of the world to anywhere else. So Hegseth, yes, he speaks like that—and then he called them rats, the Iranian leaders. This is how American leaders speak. Yet the president was on the streets, the speaker was on the streets, the head of the judiciary was on the streets. The head of the judiciary—when the bomb exploded, he was doing an interview.

He didn't even flinch. Dr. Larijani was on the streets. Ministers were among the people—not only under the threat of missiles, but out there with very little security. The Islamic Republic of Iran is unique. They can call it evil all they want, but people around the world are seeing through the narrative. They're realizing that for 47 years they were lied to by the Western media and the Arab media—the Qatari, the Saudi, the Emirati—and their huge media apparatus, their cultural centers, and their religious centers, all of which are funded and constantly misinform and spread disinformation about him.

They've been doing it for decades—the same people who gave you ISIS, Al-Qaeda, Jaysh al-Islam, and all the other flavors of Takfiri ideology. People are seeing through the propaganda. They're seeing through it when it comes to Iran, when it comes to the resistance in Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, and elsewhere. The mask has fallen off the face of the regime in Washington. So, you know, Hegseth can say what he wants, but enough people are seeing right through the propaganda. I don't know if you saw this—I'm sure you did—but that woman who was talking about "Allahu Akbar" and what it means, and then the bomb struck. She was explaining how people don't move—and they didn't. And she, by the way—people did not flee. Even though a woman was martyred, no one budged. No one ran. This is what the United States and the Israeli regime are up against.

An educated people whose only sin is that they support the oppressed—based on their values as human beings, as Muslims, as Shias, and on their adherence to the ideals of the Prophet's grandson and his actions in Karbala, and the actions of his sister Zaynab in Karbala—who've so deeply influenced our lives and our society. Again, I don't know the fate of Dr. Larijani, but if anyone goes to his Twitter account, when they threatened to kill him, he quoted Imam Hussain. He's not afraid of death. They don't comprehend these people. They don't comprehend Hezbollah. It's beyond their comprehension. They will continue to misread, misunderstand, and misinform—but they will fail. The resistance will continue, and a strategic defeat will be imposed upon Trump. And the Israeli regime will move one step closer to its end.

#Nima

Professor Marandi, we've seen that Donald Trump is asking all these NATO countries to join him in the Strait of Hormuz to open it up. So far, they've said they're not going to be part of the operation. But the reality is, they've been part of it since day one. They've been supporting the United States, fighting for the United States and Israel since the war started. What's your understanding of the position of the European and NATO countries?

#Mohammad

Of course, they're all part of it. They've been part of it—not just them, but their Asian allies too. Australia, New Zealand, Japan—everyone bound to the West. Sadly, Erdogan, Jordan, these Persian Gulf dictatorships—all of them are in the same camp. Every single one of them, without exception. And the fact that they all say, "Look, we don't want to have anything to do with this," says a lot. It shows how weakened the United States is in being able to impose itself, although I do think some of these countries will ultimately contribute something. But it won't have an impact. What do they have? A couple of boats they want to send to our region? What are they going to do?

They've given this—so what is a boat from, I don't know, South Korea or the Netherlands? What difference is that going to make? When, for example, the South Koreans have 26 ships in the Persian Gulf right now. Well, if they want to pick a fight, then all those ships will be destroyed. I mean, the thing, Nima, is that these people don't seem to understand: the Strait of Hormuz is not that important. Iran has closed the Strait of Hormuz so that the United States will come to its senses. But if Iran really wanted to do long-term and permanent damage, and bring about a global economic catastrophe beyond anything that has ever happened over the last century, Iran would destroy all the ships in the Persian Gulf and in the surrounding areas.

And it would destroy the oil and gas assets in the Persian Gulf region. It would destroy all the infrastructure. It hasn't done that so far—it's only carried out proportionate retaliation because they've struck Iranian assets, and these Arab family dictatorships are all complicit. Why? Because Iran wants to punish the Trump regime, and it will not accept a ceasefire, since they'd just regroup and attack Iran again in six months, a year, or two years. That's not something we're going to accept

anymore. The facts on the ground have to change. Until the facts on the ground change, the war will continue.

But the point is that Iran, by shutting the Strait of Hormuz, is trying to talk sense to Trump—or not Trump himself, you can't talk sense to him—but to people who are sane in the West, to make them understand that, look, if you push this, we're heading toward catastrophe. You accept defeat, back off, and accept our demands, and then oil, gas, petrochemicals, and other things will go through the Strait of Hormuz. So the Strait of Hormuz is not that important. If they, let's say, try through military means to open the Strait of Hormuz, first of all, they'll fail. Iran has been preparing itself for 25 years.

And second of all, what are they going to do to protect all those ships and those oil and gas facilities? They can't. And still, Iran hasn't escalated, Nima. Iran hasn't escalated. The resistance in Iraq hasn't escalated either. They're doing some things, but they could go much further than this. And of course, Yemen has said they'll join, but they still haven't. So it would be smart for the West to change direction. And maybe this Joe Kent phenomenon—his resignation, who knows—maybe it'll have an impact. There might be more resignations, perhaps. Who knows? And the pressure will increase on Trump, but Iran will continue fighting until the United States under Trump is defeated.

#Nima

I think what Iran is doing right now—you mentioned desalination plants. They've attacked desalination plants in Iran, but Iran didn't respond to that. So how do you see that red line for Iran, in terms of the morality of what's going on? When is that red line going to be crossed for the Iranians? Under what conditions could it be crossed?

#Mohammad

The Iranians have shown enormous restraint. These countries have Iranian blood on their hands—and it's nothing new. In the 1980s, these family dictatorships supported Saddam Hussein. The U.S. and the West pushed Saddam Hussein to start the war against Iran and then gave him chemical weapons and all sorts of weaponry, alongside the Soviet Union. The West was the force that pushed him toward war. The West was the force that gave him chemical weapons. Who funded him? These countries—the Saudis, the Kuwaitis, and the others. They all backed him. The Iranians forgave them. Then who supported ISIS and al-Qaeda in Syria and in Iraq? These countries, along with other American allies, the United States, the Israelis, Erdogan, Jordan, and so on.

These countries have always done harm to our region, and now they're complicit in the war. Iran has again shown restraint. But if they go after Iran's infrastructure—if they try to destroy Iran's critical infrastructure—then it's over. Everything will be destroyed. That's why I've been saying, and I've said this multiple times, I've tweeted it multiple times: everyone should leave the Persian Gulf region—meaning Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, and Oman. Because we don't

know what Trump is going to do. He is not sane. But whatever he does, Iran is not going to let him get away with it. These countries are all complicit. So if I were living in any one of them, I'd get in my car and leave. I'd go to Iraq or Yemen. I'd just drive out of this region until things come to a conclusion.