Iran Is NOT Waiting for Next US Attack. The Resistance Is Winning | Laith Marouf

Update from West Asia: Laith Marouf joins Pascal to discuss the very important changes in the western debates over Israel and Palestine and the risk of wider war in West Asia. Marouf offers his interpretation of Israeli elections, pressure on Iran and the roles of Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan. They examine Yemen’s shifting frontlines, regional alliances and the limits of American power. Lottaz questions the strategic logic behind escalation, while Marouf argues that existing power structures face mounting instability. Their discussion closes with Free Palestine TV’s reporting work. Laith's Links: Free Palestine TV: https://freepalestine.video/ Free Palestine TV — all social platforms: https://linktr.ee/freepalestinetv Neutrality Studies Links: Neutrality Studies Substack: https://pascallottaz.substack.com Support Neutrality Studies: https://neutralitystudies.com/donate Neutrality Studies shop: https://neutralitystudies.com/shop Time Stamps 00:00 Changing debates over Israel and Palestine 10:42 Christian Zionism and political identity 16:05 Israeli elections and coalition politics 20:48 The West Bank and the risk of war with Iran 30:16 Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Pakistan and regional alliances 42:56 Yemen: Taiz, Aden and shifting frontlines 48:01 Yemen’s borders and wider regional consequences 52:25 Marouf’s argument about imperial decline

#Pascal

Welcome back, everybody, to Neutrality Studies. Today, we have an update with the wonderful journalist Leith Marouf from Free Palestine TV. Leith, welcome back.

#Laith Marouf

Thank you for having me, Pascal. Thank you.

#Pascal

Well, it's great having you back because a lot of things are moving at the moment, and we will get to what's happening on the ground in Yemen and also where you are in Lebanon in a moment. But I wanted to start with your assessment of what's going on in the United Kingdom, because the Green Party there has now successfully adopted a new slogan or policy: "Zionism is racism." Quite a change. What do you make of this?

#Laith Marouf

Yeah, it seems like all the efforts that the Zionists put into controlling the Labour Party and kind of purging it after Corbyn began questioning the Zionist lobby’s power in the country, or the actions of

the United Kingdom in support of a colony, and all their attention on Reform and whipping up the extreme right, opened a door for those who want change in the UK to move into the Green Party, which doesn't seem to have been getting a lot of attention from Zionist control mechanisms. And it has escaped. Now we have the first party of government in all of the imperialist domains that is not beholden to Zionist control and is actually representing the will of those who are members of this party and inspiring, I think, people around the UK to take those positions publicly now.

All the mechanisms of shaming that exist in the organized media, the government, and the private sector also don't seem to be working right now. All those attacks on the leader of the party—what's his name? I'm blanking out right now. The leader of the Green Party, who is Jewish. All of that hasn't worked the same way that the public humiliation and the public whipping of Corbyn in the Labour Party did. None of that is sticking right now. And I think part of it is because we have lived through a genocide broadcast live. So the power of the media in the West has dwindled extensively.

#Pascal

Yeah, and, you know, it's maybe too early to say that there is a sea change, but definitely something is different from 2023, when even the media in the West were just asking, day after day after day, "Do you condemn Hamas? Do you condemn Hamas?" I mean, just yesterday, Piers Morgan had Mohammad Marandi and Benjamin Moser on. I had Moser on my channel recently. He wrote, of course, a new book on Zionism and Jewish opposition to Zionism. And it seems to me that the whole idea that Zionism is just a weird way to refer to Israel is actually breaking down. I mean, people are starting to understand that there's a huge difference between the racists who want a racist state only for white immigrants from Europe and people who actually want one country for all—a way of living together, you know, not just a racist state and an enclave of European settler colonialism. Do you also share this view that the discourse itself seems to be changing?

#Laith Marouf

Definitely, the discourse has changed, and those red lines controlling debate and discussion—the kind of accepted norms of what you can say about Israel and Zionist ideologies—have changed extensively. And one of the reasons is because the Palestinian population, citizen journalists, showed the whole world what was happening. Although all the mechanisms of algorithmic control on those social media platforms were mobilized extensively to try to control the voice of the Palestinian people as the genocide was being conducted, the participation of people all over the world in resharing those posts from citizen journalists on the ground broke the barrier. And there is now a collective consciousness that is impossible to erase. You can't convince somebody, after they've seen genocide, to return to supporting Israel.

So it's impossible to go back to that. And what happened after that is that many citizens in imperialist countries began asking even more questions. As repression came into those countries against critics of the Jewish colony and its actions, it revealed internal control mechanisms in those

countries. So people started questioning not only Israel's actions on the ground in the killing fields, but also how the Israeli lobby is limiting their own freedoms as citizens in their own countries. And it hasn't been normal for citizens in the West to think about these big questions for a generation or two. Most citizens in the West didn't even care about elections, for the most part. They had all the luxuries that come with living in these imperial societies.

Now we're seeing a huge interest in the mechanisms of control internally in those countries because of how the Zionists abused those mechanisms to limit discussions within those societies. And even the word "Zionism" is now normal to discuss. You know, I remember twenty-some years ago when I started my activism, and we were using the word "Zionism," and people were like, "What do you mean by Zionism? What is that? I've never heard that word before." This is how powerful the Zionist lobbies were in the West: they erased the word "Zionism" from the minds of the citizens in those countries. We had to start from that zero point of explaining what Zionism is. Well, now it seems like everybody knows what Zionism is. And I think the next stage is that people are going to be talking about Jewish supremacy.

This is how the discussion and awareness are building. Right now, it's almost useless to use the word "Zionism," because the question in the minds of the citizens of these imperial domains is not only about Palestine and how Zionism is affecting them, but also about how the Jewish institutions in those Western societies are participating in the repression of the citizens of those countries. So next, it's going to be like, "Why is, let's say, the Board of Deputies—you know, the board that represents the Jewish communities in the UK—so adamantly supportive of genocide? And why is it working to repress citizens in the UK?" So now that's going to be the next stage. We see that. And that's why the alarm bells are ringing in the lobby's mind.

#Pascal

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#Laith Marouf

Yeah, no, I think that's very much what's happening.

#Pascal

Although, you know, one of the very important things about Zionism is, of course, that it can include all of the Christian Zionists, right? And this is quite important: Zionism is a Christian invention, a Protestant invention, that was handed over and is now being equated with Judaism by the people who want to brand everything anti-Zionist as anti-Semitic. So the question is whether the next stage will be, you know, Judeo-Christian supremacism, right? Because it is the joint work of these two

groups, and it has moved from the UK over to the United States, with their evangelical nutjobs like Pete Hegseth and so on. But it's good that this is becoming a mainstream discourse. Do you think that the recent elections in Israel are going to have another impact on the way that this is being perceived?

Because, you know, they try to gaslight us again massively on Twitter and other platforms by saying, "Oh, look, in Israel, like, two million Arabs can vote, and there's Arab representation in parliament. And these weirdos are calling us an apartheid state. Not in a single Arab state can Jews vote," and stupid stuff like that. But we got a lot and a lot and a lot of replies saying, "Well, we are not talking about those inside the occupation state. We are talking about all of those six, seven million people who are excluded. And, of course, the millions of Americans who just fly over to vote and then fly back to New York to live their lives over there." How do you see the branding of the elections flowing into the global discourse?

#Laith Marouf

Yeah, look, there are a few things, obviously, that need to be cleared up in people's minds to understand this relationship between Christian Zionism and Jewish Zionism. First off, a lot of historians and so on take the Protestant Zionist movement as the beginning. This is partially incorrect because the first Zionist, we can say without using the word "Zionism," was Maimonides, the Jewish theologian and philosopher who was in Andalusia during the time of Muslim Iberia. As he was watching the Crusades happen in Greater Syria, he envisioned bringing back—and also creating and manufacturing—a new Jewish identity.

At the time, of course, no Jews spoke Hebrew, for instance, except for religious reasons. And Maimonides, who's kind of the father of Kabbalah, mystical Judaism, even needed the help of Ibn Sina, or Avicenna, to rewrite some of the Hebrew vocabulary that didn't exist for daily use, in his attempt to bring about the rebirth of a Jewish nation. Okay, so if we want to go back, we can go back that far. So it's not only the issue of Protestant Zionism, or Herzl and Zionism, or the Nazis. You can go back to a point where this is all about creating Jewish nationalist theology. Now, the Christian Zionists today, I think there's going to be a reckoning for them.

And I remember seeing a video a few weeks ago of this evangelical preacher in the United States. It's a video on TikTok and Instagram showing how they are teaching the children in their church school—and these are white Christian children—that Jews are better than them, that there is a chosen people, and it's not them as white Christians. The chosen people are the Jews, and we have to do everything to serve them and protect them. So this is a psychosis, right? This is different from, let's say, the original Protestant Zionists, who wanted to expel the Jews because the Jews were bad for their society. This is their black hole belief.

And it's better to send them to Palestine, right? This is now saying we, as Christian whites, are less than. This is a psychosis that is not sustainable, right? And it's never happened in human history that

a people, especially an aggressive, colonizing people, stand up on top of the hill and say, “We are less than.” This is unprecedented in history. So it's not sustainable, even within that population, the Christian white population, that they will agree to say that they are less than. So let's also imagine if Jewish Zionism collapses, whether it's on the ground in Palestine, or a miracle happens and Jewish populations in the West revolt against Zionist control of their institutions, which is very unlikely. But let's pretend for a moment.

How can the Christian Zionists then advocate for a Jewish state in the land of Palestine? They can't. Even if they talk about it, they're not going to be able to recruit bodies for it. So although the Christian Zionists are important in terms of their numbers, no Christian Zionist is going to pack up and go to colonize Palestine in place of a Jewish colonist. And there will be no possibility of the states that have now supported Jewish Zionism for a century suddenly saying, “We as Christian whites have the right to colonize Palestine.” That's impossible. So, yes, while we need to highlight Christian Zionism and how important it is to the mechanisms supporting Jewish Zionism, without Jewish Zionism, Christian Zionism is not sustainable.

#Pascal

Right. Thank you very much for this. I mean, it's good to realize again what the actual social dynamics between these different factions are. Now, let's maybe move to this more concrete issue: Israel's elections, Netanyahu's position, the opposition's position, and the Arab population of Israel, which I'm not entirely sure about. I guess they won about 15 seats in parliament. Do you think that this has any direct impact on the way that Israel is conducting its multi-front wars against basically everyone around it?

#Laith Marouf

Yeah, so right now, with the final count that just came out a few hours ago, they're saying the Arab lists, as a bloc, have received 19 seats out of 120. So that number has gone up over the last few hours because of the final count. It's 19 out of 120, which means that the opposition to Netanyahu, which received fewer seats than Netanyahu's bloc, would have to build a coalition with the Arab lists if they wanted to govern. That's not going to happen. No Zionist party in the Knesset has ever agreed to form a coalition with the Arab parties. And so innate racism is present across the board in the Zionist parties.

So there is a greater possibility of Netanyahu being able to pull some of the parties in the opposition bloc, specifically the Yisrael Beiteinu party, which represents Russian immigrants and is led by Lieberman, into his bloc than of the opposition being able to pull, let's say, Ben-Gvir's or Smotrich's party out of Netanyahu's bloc. So I think we will be seeing Netanyahu governing again. And because of this across-the-board racism and hate against the Palestinian citizens of Israel and their political

representation, they will not be invited to any coalition government. Even the term that Israelis insist on using, "Arab Israelis," is itself racist. They want to deny that these are Palestinians, and they want to just say these are Arabs.

"They're not Palestinians." So there's no such thing as a Palestinian. And I think a lot of people who have become aware over the last three years in Western societies are also questioning right now: why are these people called Arab Israelis? And by the way, "Arab" in itself is a term that is very racialized. Arab peoples are the only peoples in English—and in French, by the way—who are not called by the name of their language, right? So you have a French person, the French language; an English person, the English language; a Chinese person, the Chinese language—but "Arab" and "Arabic." So we are racialized purposefully in the minds of Western audiences, although we're not a racial group. We have many colors and so forth, and language is what brings us together as a group.

So I know I veered a little bit, but when we look at these elections, in my mind, although some of the Western media are trying to bill it as, "Oh, Netanyahu has lost some of his mandates," right? Well, when we look at the actual reality, we see that a vast majority of the population—the settler population, the colonist population—have voted for Netanyahu or for a party that said it would reject the creation of a Palestinian state or a two-state solution. That includes every leader of the Zionist parties that got elected. Every one of them was interviewed—18 leaders—and all of them said they are against the two-state solution. They will not allow a Palestinian state anywhere, and they will continue hunting the resistance. So it's a reaffirmation of support for genocide and ethnic cleansing by the population of Israel.

#Pascal

Yeah, I mean, there's very little chance of a change in the way that the Zionist state is approaching Palestine. The question to me is whether there's a change in the other wars, for instance, toward Lebanon or toward Iran. I mean, Donald Trump already announced that after the midterms, he will attack Iran again. And probably Netanyahu is going to cheer that on and applaud it. So I guess that's exactly what we need right now. I mean, there's another very racist discourse going on, like, "Finish the job," right? What's your assessment of that and of all the other places that Israel is occupying, including, of course, this renewed campaign in the West Bank, just expelling around 5,000 people from their homes in Hebron? How do you see that developing?

#Laith Marouf

Yeah, like in the West Bank, as you're saying, in the city of Khalil, or Hebron, a few hundred families were also forcibly expelled from their homes this morning. It is a huge ethnic cleansing campaign in the West Bank. We know that there are at least 40 villages in the Jordan Valley that have been completely ethnically cleansed. Not much attention is given to them. We see more coverage, of

course, of the major Palestinian cities or the violence of the hilltop colonists, as they call them, against Palestinians who are trying to harvest their fields. But yeah, it's accelerated. There is going to be no one in Western societies who stops the ethnic cleansing in the West Bank.

It is going to fall on the Palestinians to defend themselves and on the axis of resistance to give them as much support as possible, because the rest of the world is just going to watch. That's what we learned from the last three years. Hopefully, you know, the effects of something like the "Zionism is racism" motion in the Green Party will accelerate internal conflict in Western societies against Zionist control. That may somehow, at one point, lead to political leaders in Western societies actually delivering on the will of their people. The vast majority of people in the world do not want to see this genocide continuing. As for the possibilities of war, we are inching closer and closer. There was a messenger from Qatar arriving in Iran today. The Iranian government said they received a letter on behalf of the vice president, J. D. Vance, but they are not going to release the contents of this letter.

They will not be responding to it publicly until after the elections in the United States. But there will be no ceasefire between Iran and the U.S. until the United States delivers on the seven conditions that they both signed on to. There will be no end to the war or any discussions until those seven points are delivered on, which include the cessation of all hostilities in Western Asia, in Lebanon, Palestine, and Yemen. So I think the Iranian government is ready for the possibility of war any minute now. We see how Trump and Vance canceled some of their events over the weekend. There are a few drones that Iran also shot down around Hormuz and so on. So there are clear indications that maybe we will see war in the next few hours, maybe over the weekend. And it may not wait until the elections in the United States are conducted.

#Pascal

Renewing the kinetic phase of the war three or four days before the actual midterms would be a new level of audacity. But then again, it would, of course, still be on brand for Donald Trump. What do you think can come out of this? Because, yes, on the one hand, Iran is, of course, one of the very few supporters and the largest driver behind the axis of resistance. On the other hand, you know, Israel is terrorizing the Palestinian population it has control over, but it also uses them as human shields, right?

I mean, one of the reasons why Iran will probably never be able to strike at any of Israel's really sensitive installations is because it would automatically put the lives of tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of Palestinians on the line as well. And I mean, especially something like the nuclear reactor at Dimona or the desalination plants. So, in terms of a cross-country resistance—Iran, Yemen, Palestine, and so on—it's almost impossible to achieve anything against Zionism with just military force. Or how do you see that?

#Laith Marouf

You know, when we look back at the various wars in the last century around the liberation of Palestine, there were multiple times when Israel was on the precipice of collapse. One of them, of course, was in 1973, when the Syrian military liberated all of the Golan Heights and was crossing the shores of the Sea of Galilee, and the Egyptian army was advancing through the Naqab Desert. And, you know, if you look at it geographically, basically Israel was going to fall. And that's when threats to use nuclear weapons were delivered to the USSR, which was at the time supporting the Syrian and Egyptian armies. And, you know, at that time, the Soviets blinked.

And instead of threatening to also use nuclear weapons if the United States used them on Damascus and Cairo, they actually stopped all their weapons supplies to the Syrian and Egyptian militaries. And that meant that if a Syrian tank had any problem, it just couldn't move. There were no spare parts to fix it. And this is the only reason Israel didn't disappear in 1973. So today we're in a different situation. There is no USSR that could control the Axis of Resistance through its weapons supplies. The Axis of Resistance is mainly dependent on its own indigenous military production.

And the threat of using nuclear weapons against Iran will not change anything in the military balance, but will open the door to genocide as the normal form of warfare in this battle. It's already been normalized by Israel over the last three years on the other battlefields, and Iran will retaliate in kind. I don't think Iran, at that point, if a nuclear weapon is used against its own population, will care about the Palestinian population. Not because they don't care about the Palestinian population, but because it will be an existential thing. And Israel is already participating in the genocide of the Palestinians. So I don't think Iran will hold back if a nuclear weapon is used against it.

It will attack Israel's nuclear sites. And, you know, what will that lead to? How would the major powers react? Once you start firing nuclear weapons, I think we'll be in an age of nuclear war, and it's not going to be an issue of only Palestine. I personally believe that Israel and the United States will not use nuclear weapons. I think they're kind of a fear tactic. The U.S. doesn't have the ability to do it because that opens the door for Russia and China to do the same on their battlefields. And Israel wouldn't do it because then North Korea and Belarus, which are medium powers like Israel, would also have the okay to do it. And I don't think the United States will allow them to do that.

#Pascal

What is your interpretation of this recent visit by the Saudis, the Turks, and the Pakistanis to Tehran? Alexander Mercouris interprets it as a last-ditch effort to kind of avert a U.S. strike, but says that basically nothing came out of these meetings. What is your interpretation of what this was about?

#Laith Marouf

You know, I was listening to a Democratic congressman speaking just a few hours ago, and he told the Gulf monarchies, the Arabian Peninsula monarchies, to get ready for an age when the United

States is no longer the guarantor of their safety. And the U.S. cannot actually go to war with Iran right now without losing a large amount of military equipment and a large number of soldiers, because right now they're not on the ground. They're all at sea or at airports far away. So if Iran hits a ship, the casualties are going to be much higher than if it hits a base. So whatever the U.S. does right now, if it's stupid enough to trigger a war, which I think it will be, we'll see mass-casualty events involving its own soldiers.

This is why we saw those announcements that the U.S. military is doing drills for mass burials in the midst of war, when it cannot evacuate its dead by helicopter or jet. So they're training for the first time since the Korean War under the assumption that you're going to lose a lot of soldiers all at once and you're not going to be able to evacuate them. So you have to bury them on the battlefield and return to them afterwards. That's an indication that they know any action against Iran is going to lead to mass casualties. So, going back to this Mecca agreement, there are a few things we learned from this visit, just looking at it from the outside.

One is that the Saudi Minister of Defense, the Amir, arrived on a military cargo jet. So he didn't arrive on a civilian one. So he was carrying something with him. Was it packed with gold or pallets of dollars or whatever? Whatever he had there was a tribute. The second part is that he came with the head of Turkish intelligence. He didn't come with the head of the Turkish military. So that indicates from the outset that Turkey's possible involvement in the war against Iran will include intelligence assets, mobilizing some of the Turkic populations in Iran—the Azerbaijani population, the Turkmen population, whatever it is—to create unrest.

Turkey is not going to be involved militarily if an attack on Iran by this Mecca alliance happens. It will be mainly an intelligence operation. The third thing is that we saw the dictator of Pakistan, the supreme leader, the field marshal, was the one who arrived at this meeting. So that's another indication that if there is Pakistani involvement against Iran, it will be the Pakistani military, and it will include soldiers. So now we see the Saudis are the money, the Turks are the intelligence, and the Pakistanis are the soldiers.

#Pascal

And that's how any future war involving this alliance against Iran will play out.

#Laith Marouf

So things were very clear. And the other thing that we note here is that there was no joint statement coming out of the parties that met, which means there was no agreement on anything. And this meeting didn't bridge any gaps between the opinions of these parties. And I think the next war will expand the battle zone. If we look at the 40-day war, we see that triangle between Iran, Palestine,

and Yemen as the main battlefield. Well, now it's definitely going to spill into Pakistan, maybe Afghanistan, for sure into Turkey, and maybe even further into Egypt, if Egypt is involved in a war in any sense.

#Pascal

But do you think the Turks and the Pakistanis could be foolish enough to let themselves be pushed into a multi-front war against Iran? Do you think the Americans are trying behind the scenes to talk them into it, saying, "Look, now it's a five-party war against Iran, and everybody's going to get a piece once we carve the thing up"? Do you think something like that is in the works?

#Laith Marouf

I think so. Look, those people who are in charge in Turkey, in Pakistan, and in Saudi Arabia are not sovereigns, right? If there were a real sovereign in Pakistan, that would be the elected president, Imran Khan, who is languishing in prison right now, specifically because he wanted better relations with his neighbor, Iran. He went and visited Iran at that time. And he rejected the war in Ukraine and had built better relationships with Russia. So those who are in charge right now in Pakistan have been brought into power specifically to create problems with Iran and the BRICS and Russia and what have you. So I think the Pakistani junta will follow any dictates that are given to them by the Saudis and the Americans.

Similarly with Turkey, unfortunately, right now we see that although Turkey has been the most stable Muslim country, let's say, since World War II and has this industrial base and so on, it was originally promised by Obama that it could rebuild the glory of the Ottoman Empire, ruling the Arabs. That was part of the Arab Spring, which was supposed to lead to Qatar and Turkey ruling the Arabs. And now, because of the failure of that project, it's being promised that it can go east towards the Central Asian countries and build a kind of Turkic empire. And Iran stands in the way. So they're going to be dragged into it because they have their expansionist outlooks that have been encouraged by the imperial order. I think they will go into these wars.

It doesn't mean that they're going to be successful or that it's not going to lead to the collapse of their own states. Pakistan going to war with Iran is a suicidal mission. The vast majority of the population is already out in the streets, as we see in the border regions, you know, in Balochistan, in Kashmir, along the border with Afghanistan, with the Taliban and all the supporters of ISIS. So we're talking about a vast majority of the population that is already against what the junta is doing. Same thing in Turkey. You have the Alevi, the Shia population, the Armenian population, the Kurdish population, and then you have the nationalists. So it is a stupid move for Turkey to enter a war against Iran. That will actually accelerate the collapse of the Turkish state.

#Pascal

Yeah, that's why I would think it unlikely that something like this could happen. But then again, given your analysis, I think the power dynamics could lead to that kind of grand gamble, especially if the United States poured a lot of money into convincing these few leaders. And I know that your interpretation is that all of this is more or less centrally guided by the imperial forces emanating from Washington. So you don't see this kind of Mecca alliance and what is happening as these countries breaking out of that corset and actually reorganizing local security, but rather as a big charade that, again, just masks the actual power structures, which are still like colonial power structures, with the West and Washington basically giving everybody their marching orders. Is that it?

#Laith Marouf

Yeah, if we think that these actors are rational, we will not understand any of their decisions. We will always be shocked. Why are they doing this? It's crazy that Saudi Arabia started a war against Yemen when it didn't need to. Well, it's because it's not a rational actor. It's not a sovereign actor. It is being played by an imperialist power center. And, you know, when we look at this Mecca alliance, it's very important for all of us to read history. You know, when there were Arab unification efforts led by Gamal Abdel Nasser in the 1950s, the Americans and the British created a fake pact called the Baghdad Pact, instead of the Mecca alliance, where they brought in the communists who had just taken control of Iraq, along with the Jordanians and others. And they were presenting this as a sovereign alliance against foreign interference and Egypt's interference in the politics of Western Asia or Greater Syria.

So it's the exact same warnings, just with a change now. And there were multiple other pacts between the Baghdad Pact and the Mecca Alliance that were exactly the same. And their sole purpose is to propagate this idea that anyone who's resisting imperialist and Zionist control in the region is actually a puppet of a foreign power. As in the current case, the claim is that members of the Axis of Resistance are all puppets of Iran. So that's the main value of it. It's never truly about creating sovereign power in the region against foreign interference.

And the Saud family itself has not been able to stay in power without the never-ending direct support of the British and then, eventually, the Americans. So it is actually suicidal for them to abandon the United States suddenly. Their own population has been kept under control by brute force. So as the U.S. is exiting right now, this is what's pushing the Saudis to bring the Pakistanis and the Turks into their own country, because they're scared of their own population. So the Mecca Pact is not going to bring any peace. It's not really about regional sovereignty. It is about balancing the power of the Axis of Resistance. Right.

#Pascal

And a form of indigenous washing, whitewashing of the actual power dynamics that are emanating from the West. Thank you for that. Let's spend a few more minutes just talking about Yemen. I'm following quite closely the reports by Jon Elmer of the Electronic Intifada, who does a brilliant job of

actually showing how the Yemeni forces are moving. And it seems, at least according to those reports, that the momentum is on their side, right? They're now approaching the city of Taiz or have surrounded it. And that is the last big city before Aden, as you explained to me before. How is that war going now?

#Laith Marouf

Yeah, Taiz is completely surrounded. In fact, they have entered the city of Taiz. There are just two major neighborhoods left in the city that are not under their control. They have captured the whole province of Taiz, but they have kept multiple paths out of the city as dedicated zones for anyone who wants to exit with their medium and small weapons. So they're giving those holdouts in the few neighborhoods of Taiz that are still out of their control a chance to escape towards Aden and not be slaughtered on the ground. But I don't think these diehard Wahhabi death squads that are now holed up in those neighborhoods will surrender or agree to leave the city. Many of them are foreign fighters. We're starting to see that.

And those foreign fighters are usually the ones who stay until the end because they know that if they're caught, they're dead. They're in a bad, bad, bad position, and nobody cares about them—not even those who gave them money to come to Yemen, to this killing field. Once they're captured, nobody's going to come to their defense. So Taiz is almost done. This is why we're seeing the beginnings of a buildup toward Aden city. Over the last few days, we saw those attacks that the Yemeni armed forces conducted against Aden airport when two Saudi military cargo planes landed in Aden with resupplies for personnel under Saudi control. Within minutes, ballistic missiles hit those planes on the tarmac and destroyed the weapons resupply.

The Saudis are in a really bad position in terms of their ability to resupply their mercenaries in Yemen. The land routes have been cut off by the Yemeni armed forces in the north. And now they cannot resupply these militias in the south by sea. Ships are very easy to target. They're very slow. So the last choice the Saudis had was, let's do a run, you know, a dash: deliver these weapons and take off. And that didn't work. So we're seeing the weapons that the mercenaries have in Yemen dwindle. This is going to accelerate the liberation of Yemen from Saudi-backed mercenaries. And the next stage would be the liberation of Aden city. If we see that, then only 5% of the population of Yemen will be outside the control of the government of Sana'a. The territory outside its control will mainly be desert, making up two-thirds of Yemen's territory.

And I don't think the Yemeni military will go down from the mountains into the open desert, because that would make them sitting ducks for air attacks. If the Saudis, by the time Aden falls, do not retreat and acknowledge the government of Sana'a, and if they continue to attack Yemen at that point, I think the Yemeni armed forces will cross into what is now Saudi territory in the mountain ranges of Asir, Najran, and Abha and try to liberate those areas, because that is a much better military position for the Yemeni armed forces than going into the open desert. And the possibility of losing territory may encourage the Saudis to abandon the rest of Yemen.

#Pascal

Thank you very much. That sounds very plausible and actually feasible. And the way that Ansar Allah has been able to strike Saudi forces with their drones and missiles—the precision of it is quite striking. Do you think Ansar Allah cares about the actual borders of Yemen as we find them on Google Maps? Or do you think their war goals are different? At what point would Ansar Allah say, "Job done"?

#Laith Marouf

Well, obviously, their first priority is liberating Yemeni territory as defined by the World War II lines. Now, will the Saudis let them just have that? Clearly, they don't even want to let the Yemenis have that. So even if Ansar Allah and the national military wanted to be content with liberating Yemen's own territory, I don't think the Saudis or the imperialist alliance would allow them to have that peace. So they will be dragged into continuing the war some other way. And in fact, all of the actions of the imperialists, the Zionists, and the Wahhabis have been kind of suicidal for themselves, right? Remember how the West is the one that created ISIS, which erased the Sykes-Picot borders.

#Pascal

Yeah.

#Laith Marouf

Right. After the Arab unificationist movements and the Syrian unificationist movements in the 1940s, '50s, '60s, '70s, and '80s, the Ba'ath Party, and all of the political movements that could have unified Syria and the Levant had been defeated by the empire, it was the empire that decided to erase the Sykes-Picot borders and make it possible again for the indigenous people to dream that dream. So now the doors of hell have been opened by the empire when it attempted to balkanize the colonial border states.

#Pascal

Okay.

#Laith Marouf

And now we see this visit by the prime minister of Iraq to Syria, shaking hands with al-Julani, who was second in command of ISIS, which killed hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and Iraqi soldiers. And suddenly al-Julani is saying, "We're protecting the Shia shrines in Syria and opening them for pilgrimage." This is the Wahhabi death squad leader who said shrines are heresy and those Shia shrines have to be destroyed. Suddenly, all of these things indicate to us how weak even the

imperialist puppets are, that they're having to abandon so much of the propaganda that their whole rule was based on, whether it's the prime minister of Iraq or this al-Julani.

So I think we're going to continue seeing the vassal regimes in Western Asia taking actions that are clearly suicidal because those are the orders they've been given. This is going to force the axis of resistance, whose priority is just to end the genocide in Palestine and the ethnic cleansing in Lebanon, toward the wider horizons of total regime change in Western Asia.

#Pascal

Wow. If that interpretation is correct, then all the decisions that are being taken now by the imperialists are actually just going to increase the speed of that, because it seems that they're losing so much grip and so much power. I mean, if you're correct, then they're basically burning off their own puppet regimes, right? Because that's the last thing they can do, and they wouldn't care. But in this sense, you wouldn't bet on the ability of those puppet regimes to actually still change the course of the liberation of West Asia.

#Laith Marouf

I don't think we will see any of these regimes change their positions, right? There could be change in places like Turkey. But, you know, Erdogan has purged many of the nationalists from the army and so forth. So, you know, there is still hope for some societies. But as I see it, the imperialists and the Zionists are trying to slow the inevitable. The inevitable is the end of the Jewish colony, the liberation of Palestine. You know, the whole existence of the Jewish colony is so 1700s. It's not even 20th century. And the vassal regimes, the total dictatorships under family rule and so forth, are also abhorrent in the times we live in, the 21st century. And the existence of Israel or these absolute monarchies is 100% dependent on the unlimited military power of the empire. And that is not available.

So there's an inevitability to the collapse of these fabricated, illegitimate societies and states. So what we see is the U.S. and the whole Western imperialist order trying to just delay the inevitable. And that means burning what you have in your hand, not because you know you're going to win something out of this, but just to slow the advance, and cannibalizing components of the empire to try to strengthen the core as some of the parts are collapsing. We see how the U.S. is cannibalizing European states, forcing them to buy its own gas and oil instead of buying it from Russia or other sources, and so on. So all of these things are indicators of desperation, and of the empire's willingness to cut its own hand to slow things down. But it knows that it's most probably going to have to chop off a full arm in the end. It's just about slowing the inevitable.

#Pascal

Yeah, once you start gnawing on your own bones, you know that you've reached the very end—the starving empire. But Leif, thank you very much for your reporting, for your analysis, and for the way that you make sense of the greater whole. People who want to follow you should, of course, first and foremost, go to Free Palestine TV. Where else can people find you?

#Laith Marouf

Yes, our website is freepalestine.video. From there, people can find links to our social media platforms. We're on YouTube, X, Rumble, and many more. People can also donate if they like the content that we're producing. We're doing daily field reports and mini-documentaries from Lebanon and the region. And there's a shop where people can buy some merch if they like it. So freepalestine.video is the website, and you can find us on all the social media platforms as Free Palestine TV.

#Pascal

I will put all of the links in the description box below. Everybody, please do help and support the work of Leif and his team. They're making very important journalistic contributions here, and we will certainly have him back. Leif, thank you so much for your time today. Thank you so much, Pascal. See you soon.