

New Strikes Imminent. Iran Prepares Knockout Blow | Prof. S.M. Marandi

As the US prepares for more war, Iran prepares for victory. Teheran's strategy is effective because it is based on accurate analysis about the enemy. Today I speak again with Professor Seyed M. Marandi of the University of Tehran about conditions in Iran, the risk of a new US and Israeli attack, sanctions and shipping pressure in the Strait of Hormuz, Gulf state exposure, OPEC, ideology and resistance, and the lessons of past nuclear talks. Marandi argues Iran now wants mutual steps, tougher terms, and no more one sided deals. Links: Prof. Seyed M. Marandi on X:https://x.com/s_m_marandi Neutrality Studies substack: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com> (Opt in for Academic Section from your profile settings: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com/s/academic>) Merch: <https://neutralitystudies-shop.fourthwall.com> Donation: <https://neutralitystudies.com/donate> Timestamps: 00:00:00 Introduction 00:00:26 Iran update and threat of new attacks 00:05:31 US war capacity and sanctions pressure 00:12:20 Strait of Hormuz and shipping tolls 00:20:55 UAE OPEC exit and Gulf state risks 00:31:35 Resistance doctrine and ideology 00:39:58 Iran terms for any future deal 00:47:18 Closing and where to follow Marandi

#Pascal

Welcome back, everybody, to Neutrality Studies. My name is Pascal Lottaz, and I'm joined today again by Professor Saeed Marandi from the University of Tehran. Saeed, welcome back.

#Marandi

Thank you very much for inviting me. It's always a great pleasure to be on your show.

#Pascal

I'm very happy to have you back because you can give us, of course, the updates from Iran, from Tehran. We are speaking today on Wednesday, April the 29th. We are in the third week of the ceasefire, or even already the fourth, after seven weeks of war. And we are still inside the warfare. The counter-blockade is going on. The Americans are still very belligerent. Can you give us a bit of an update on what things are like in Iran at the moment?

#Marandi

Things in Iran are... normal, or at least as normal as they can be under the circumstances. In general, the people who I speak with seem to believe that the United States and the Israeli regime will soon carry out a second assault, a second wave of attacks in continuation of the war. It will

probably take place within the next three or four days. It's not, of course, for certain. This is just based on what people... it's just the likely outcome of events, and as a result of U.S. regional posturing, the military activities of the United States, and of course the political realities that we're dealing with. So it's not for certain that the United States will attack, but it is believed that within the next few days it's quite likely.

And I'm guessing if that's the case, maybe they'll do it when the markets are closed, because that's something that they like doing—killing people, but not having their markets closed. Apparently, the Americans have brought in lots of equipment for land operations and both operations that may take place on Iranian territory near the Persian Gulf, but also operations that may take place deep inside Iran. And of course, the air power and the missiles are in place too. The Iranians, on the other hand, are preparing themselves militarily, and also the government is trying to prepare society to make sure there are no major shortages in the days ahead. After all, the siege that the Americans have imposed is basically directed at ordinary Iranians. It's not so much directed at the military. In fact, it's not directed at the military.

#Marandi

It's intended to prevent medicine and food.

#Marandi

Other supplies for Iranians to reach the markets, the marketplace in Iran. And it's intended to prevent Iranian oil from being sold in order to purchase many of those products—foods and products and medical supplies that Iranians use on a daily basis. So the government is busy speaking with neighboring countries, doing deals with them so that they can import and export more than before through the border with Pakistan, even Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, and Central Asia. Through Turkmenistan, of course, Iran is linked to China, and through the Caspian Sea to Russia and Kazakhstan, and then the northern borders with the Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia, and then Turkey and Iraq.

So Iran is preparing itself to lessen the pain that the Americans want to inflict. Meanwhile, because of U.S. policy, the Strait of Hormuz remains closed, and the global economic crisis grows by the day. And it's quite stunning that Trump is sacrificing the world economy for the sake of Netanyahu, an Israeli regime, and a genocidal regime gets to determine the fate of billions of people, even those people whose governments have been supporting the genocide, like the Europeans, the Canadians, the Australians, the New Zealanders—they're all suffering as a result of this global crisis. And they all supported the extermination of the Palestinian people in Gaza.

#Pascal

It's interesting what you're saying, that Iran is getting prepared for the next phase and for our next kinetic attack. A lot of people have been online saying, like, oh no, we need to warn Iran that this is just a ploy, but I don't think Iran needs to be warned by anyone about anything. I mean, obviously, the current ceasefire is also in the interest of Iran, but that doesn't apparently mean that there's any kind of complacency on Iran's part, right? And the question, though, to me, is whether the United States still has the ability to continue the war.

In, let's say, U.S. mainstream media, we even read that the United States used 40 to 50 percent of its missile capabilities, its striking capabilities. And more colleagues of mine who I've interviewed before, like Stephen Starr, he speaks about 70 to 80 percent of Patriot and THAAD missiles that are gone. They're just gone. They're not here anymore. So what is your assessment actually of the U.S. capability to continue the kinetic phase of the war? Because in my interpretation, we've gone to a non-kinetic phase of the war where the strangulation tactics are being put into place and the blockade in this sense being a...

#Pascal

You know, being a version of the—what's the word? It was in place before, right? The United Nations, the sanctions—sorry, sanctions on steroids, right? Super sanctions, militarily enhanced sanctions. How do you view that?

#Marandi

Well, again, a military assault on the Iranian people is not for certain. It's not inevitable. We don't know what the United States will do. But the fact is that they brought a lot of equipment and troops into the region, and it's very costly. And the weather is getting warmer. You know, the region—the Persian Gulf region, the Arabian Peninsula—becomes very hot and very humid very fast. And the summer season is intolerable, really, for ordinary people if there's no electricity or they are working outside during the day.

#Pascal

Hey, very brief intermission because I was recently banned from YouTube. And although I'm back, this can happen anytime again. So please consider subscribing not only here, but to my mailing list on Substack. That's pascallottaz.substack.com. The link's going to be in the description below. And now, back to the video.

#Marandi

Right now, May is the transition month, where by the end of the month it becomes very hot. And then June, July, August, September—these months are very difficult. So it will be very problematic

for the Americans to keep their troops here, to keep all that equipment here. It's very expensive. So the assumption is that before it gets hot, it's the final opportunity for the United States to be able to launch an assault before it gets intolerable for soldiers. Of course, that doesn't mean that they won't do it in a month when it's very hot. It doesn't mean that they will thus carry out this attack in the next few days.

But it is highly likely, especially after all the expenses that they've incurred—the many, many billions of dollars that they spent just getting these troops here. But, of course, the sanctions or the siege that they've imposed on the Iranian country are intended to bring Iranians to their knees. But the miscalculation, I think, works at two levels at least. One is that they fought the United States assault and the Israeli regime with the help of the regimes in the Persian Gulf like Kuwait, the Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Qatar. They assaulted the Iranian nation for almost 40 days—39 days—during the Ramadan war. And they failed.

And the reason is that the Iranian people are extraordinarily resilient, and they've shown themselves to be extraordinarily resistant too. And of course, the Iranian military has been structured in a way which they failed to undermine their defensive and offensive capabilities. It's a unique structure, something new in warfare, and something that will be studied in the years ahead by countries across the world, especially countries that want to resist against empire. What Iran has done will be a model, I think, that can be, that will be repeated elsewhere. So... yes, and what I was saying is that the siege is going to have the same result because they failed in waging open warfare against the Iranian people.

There's no reason to think that the same resilience and resistance will not assist the Iranian people in overcoming this phase as well. Whether there's a military attack or a second wave of assaults accompanying the starvation siege or not, I think the outcome will still be the same. Whereas the United States has also imposed a siege on the rest of the world, which began much earlier. In other words, we are two months into this global economic crisis that is the making of Trump and Netanyahu and, of course, the Zionist lobby. So I think, ultimately, the suffering across the world and across the region and Iran will continue. But I think it's clear that the United States will still fail.

#Pascal

Do you interpret what Iran is doing in the Strait of Hormuz actually, like most in the mainstream, as a blockade? Because to me it doesn't look like one, since the ships can still pass, right? It's a very selective affair where friends can go through, and those who ally with the enemy cannot. It's relatively simple. Plus, then there's the issue of charging for that. What do you think going forward? Countries like where I am in Japan right now are going to get very desperate about actually having oil coming through. And Japan hasn't had bad blood with Iran, at least not in the past. Is there a chance that if countries like Japan approach Iran and say, hey, can we make an agreement among us that our things go through, Iran will try to make these kinds of selective agreements with third parties to open the strait from their side?

#Marandi

Well, if I'm not mistaken, a Japanese ship actually passed through the Strait of Hormuz yesterday. I think it was a supertanker, if I'm not mistaken. So that is true. You're right. The Strait of Hormuz was never shut down by the Iranians. Iran only shut down trade that was linked to countries that were involved in the war against Iran. The countries that I named earlier allowed the Americans to use their land, their sea, and their airspace to wage war against Iran. Iran has been preventing their ships or ships linked to them from passing through the Strait of Hormuz. But Chinese ships, Russian ships, Iraqi ships—these ships and ships that are linked to countries friendly with Iran have been able to pass through.

Even some of those ships from countries whose goods are being taken are from these countries that helped in the assault on Iran. So, for example, if I'm not mistaken, the Japanese supertanker—its oil came from one of these five countries. It may be Saudi Arabia or the Emirates; I'm not quite sure which one. But it did pass through. Of course, the Iranians, as they've said, there will be a fee for passage. And that is because these countries in the Persian Gulf that helped with the assault on Iran have destroyed the lives of many tens of thousands of families in Iran and helped destroy key infrastructure. So they have to pay reparations.

But Iran never shut down the Strait of Hormuz. And in fact, the ceasefire deal between the United States and Iran after the 39 days of war was to allow more ships from these five Arab rich family dictatorships to pass through the Strait of Hormuz. But since the Americans violated the deal by allowing the Israeli regime to violate the ceasefire, the Iranians said that as long as they're carpet bombing Lebanon and slaughtering the Lebanese in violation of the ceasefire that was agreed upon, Iran too will refrain from carrying out its commitment and allowing more ships from these five countries to pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

When Netanyahu was forced, after 10 days, to accept the ceasefire—which he's now violating again and killing people daily, like in Gaza—the Iranians, when he accepted initially after 10 days, said, we will allow those extra ships to get through, ships belonging to these regimes. But then what did Trump do? He said, well, I'm going to keep my siege on Iranian ports, which is also a violation of the ceasefire agreement. I'm going to keep it in place. So the Iranians said, well, if you're going to violate your side of the bargain, then we're also not going to carry out our side of the bargain. Your allies, your proxies in the Persian Gulf, can't import or export because of the role they played in this war as long as you continue with these violations.

#Pascal

You know, that makes absolute sense. I mean, in my view, the Iranian strategy has been built on these two pillars: mosaic defense in the military realm and the principle of an eye for an eye in order to reestablish deterrence. I mean, if you have more pillars that you think I would be interested in

hearing about, I'd like to hear those. But I have a detailed question, which is that toll—what currency does Iran demand the toll to be paid in? And do you have any information on what channels they're using? Because, of course, this is a very interesting way of not getting money, but foreign currency, which then can be used on foreign markets to buy foreign goods. If the mechanism is set up, my guess would be that it's in a third country like China or something like that. But do you have any information on how the mechanism is actually supposed to work to get that currency?

#Marandi

Well, first I should add that in this war, which of course Iran did not start—if you listen to or watch Western media, you'd think Iran started the war—but Iran never escalated at any point. Even when Iran began striking, let's say, oil or gas facilities in the Persian Gulf region, in those countries that assisted the United States and the Israeli regime in this war, it was only after Iranian oil and gas facilities were targeted. In other words, throughout the war, it's all been escalation on the Western side, on the U.S. and the Israeli side, and thus, by extension, their proxies. Whenever they escalated, Iran would escalate. Whenever they would carry out an attack, Iran would retaliate.

So the Iranians never initiated escalation, or they never initiated the targeting of critical infrastructure or anything like that. With regards to the Strait of Hormuz, I don't have the details. I've heard different things. I would imagine part of it would probably be through the same mechanisms that Iran uses to sell its oil on the global market, which I think is a very sophisticated process to make sure that the Americans cannot block it. I've heard that the Chinese currency is used. I've also heard that they've encouraged the Iranian currency to be used so that these companies would be forced to use the Iranian currency. I've heard different things.

I would imagine that it would be a sort of combination of different currencies, probably because Iran doesn't only need one currency—it needs different currencies for its trade and business. But I would imagine that using the Chinese currency would be a priority because China is Iran's most important trading partner, as it is with most countries across the world today. But they haven't made this public, so I'm not quite sure. I think a lot of the shipping companies—I mean, after a few months, it'll become clear how it works—but I'm sort of guessing that they negotiate with different shipping companies and different people, and they have perhaps different means of carrying out this exchange on different occasions.

#Pascal

It would be very interesting to figure that one out. I suppose that the foreign ministry must be very, very busy also working with the embassies of the countries that want to go through, because one option is always bilateral clearing agreements, on public or not. But we will probably not find that out very soon. However, then we've seen yesterday that the Emirates, the UAE, announced its exit from OPEC. How do you interpret that? Does it have something to do directly or indirectly with the

war? And do you think it is rather a move in order to please the United States? Or is it, on the contrary, something that just again shows that the structure that we are used to is actually unraveling? How do you view it?

#Marandi

I think the Emirates is doing this to move closer to the United States and the Israeli regime. But I think that the UAE regime really doesn't quite understand how things have changed. We are not going to go back to the past. And there will no longer be a UAE that we knew two and a half months ago, three months ago, six months ago. That era is gone. The Epstein class, the billionaire class, a lot of the money—the dirty money—that would go through the Emirates, I don't think it's going to go there like before, which is a good thing for the people of the region and the Emirates itself. The drug money from Afghanistan, which has been a misery for the entire region and beyond, that all goes through the Emirates—almost all the drug money over the years, especially during the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan, when the production went through the roof.

It almost exclusively went through the Emirates. Or a lot of the minerals that are stolen from African countries through the dirty wars and through supporting militias in different countries—those resources that are being stolen, the gold and other valuable underground resource elements—the money goes through the Emirates, and also the gold itself and other African wealth that is stolen, a lot of it physically actually goes through the Emirates. So that era is over. And the Emirates being this hub for the elite and the rich, that's not going to ever happen again. And if the war continues, I believe that probably the regime itself won't survive, depending on how things play out.

Because if, for example, the United States carries out another war and it begins targeting, as it has threatened to, critical Iranian infrastructure, then Iran is going to do the same to U.S. proxies because they're the ones who are facilitating it. Remember, without these five countries, war against Iran is not possible because they use their territory both for logistical support but also to actually carry out these attacks. And it is subsidized. All of their expenditures in the Arabian Peninsula are paid for by these governments. It's not like in... Well, I don't know the details of Japan, but, for example, in the case of Japan, I think that the United States doesn't pay for those bases. But Japan does not pay, if I'm not mistaken, for the electricity, for the water supplies, for... Everything in all of these bases—Japan pays for a lot.

#Pascal

Japan pays for a lot. It's part of the deal. It's like protection for bases, which come with basically Japanese payments. Not everything, but a good part of it.

#Marandi

Well, everything is paid for by those countries.

#Pascal

Everything.

#Marandi

And so the Americans are basically waging this war to a large extent through the funding of these countries. So it's not only their territory, but it's their wealth that's being used. These countries wanted to have their cake and eat it too. They wanted to be a part of the assault on Iran but say that they are neutral, which is not possible. It's an insult to the intelligence of Iranians. And whenever they repeat this, Iranians become increasingly unhappy. But in any case, if the United States restarts the war, then the Iranians are going to retaliate just like they did before.

If the Americans escalate, the Iranians will do so. And I think that will be the end of these countries. Because if their critical infrastructure is destroyed in the summer, life cannot be sustained. Everyone will have to leave. And you will have literally many millions of people leaving, because it's five countries—many millions of people leaving these countries for Iraq, for Oman. And then I think a global economic depression, not recession, depression is assured.

#Pascal

My prediction, when we saw what happened to the Gulf states, is that this will create tremendous geopolitical pressure on them to actually distance themselves from the United States. I mean, just regarding that the U.S. is not capable of defending them, and even worse, is willing to throw them under the bus and accept that they get destroyed in the process of their war. Now, extracting themselves from the U.S. embrace and getting rid of new bases is something that will take many, many years. And actually, Iran sped that up because it destroyed so much of it.

But did you see any political signs over the past weeks that would indicate that a rethinking is happening, at least in some of these states? Because, I mean, we do have, and you just called it out, we have Oman, right, which has a very different strategy towards Iran and is way more neutral, quote unquote, than the rest. And isn't that registering little by little in these Gulf monarchies, or the dictatorships, as you point out? Or are they just structurally so embedded with the United States that it's impossible for those leaderships to actually extricate themselves?

#Marandi

Well, you're absolutely correct. Oman is not, as you basically were implying, neutral. It is very close to the United States, but it is neutral enough for Iran. And so Iran has very good relations with the country. The Iranian foreign minister has just visited Oman in his regional tour to Pakistan, Oman, and Russia. And I'm sure that during his negotiations in Muscat, the capital, they had discussions about how to deal with these five monarchies. But what we're seeing on the ground is the exact

opposite. Right now, large numbers of U.S. ground troops are assembling in these countries—in Kuwait, Bahrain, and the others. Large numbers of planes to provide jet fuel to refuel bombers and aircraft that will attack Iran are assembling in Saudi Arabia.

Alongside in the Israeli regime. So right now they're all doing the opposite. They're allowing the Americans to prepare for a new assault on Iran. Whether it's because they're just proxies or their leaders are compromised, it's difficult to say. Just like, why is it that Trump does this anyway? Is it because he's compromised? Is it because of the Epstein files? Is it because he's been bought off by the Zionist lobby and the oligarchy? It's unclear. There's no definitive answer out there for us to see to make an assessment. But these people are most probably all compromised in one way or another. These monarchies, as you know, they've been bound to the West. They send their families to the West. They are very wealthy.

They steal a big chunk of the country's wealth for themselves. And elites who are super wealthy and whose wealth is usually illegitimate—you can imagine that they have many skeletons in their closet. So I just find it very difficult to imagine that they will be willing to break away from the United States and say, look, we don't... I mean, if they said that—if these five countries together today, like in two hours from now, announced in a joint statement that we will not allow our airspace, our land, and our seas to be used by the United States to wage war against Iran, and we are completely neutral, and the United States is not allowed to do any of these things—the war would be over.

It would be finished. And then we would be able to move on to the next stage just by that statement. Because, as I said, logistically speaking, it would be impossible for the Americans to wage war. They could carry out some limited strikes on the country through Diego Garcia or through Syrian airspace, the Mediterranean, the Israeli regime, etc., and illegally fly over Iraq because the Iraqi government doesn't accept any of this. But that would be very limited and very difficult for the United States, and basically that would mean the war is over.

#Pascal

This is why it's so important to actually neutralize more parts of the globe, because it makes war more difficult to implement just by virtue of access to places. But I had this interesting seminar in Tokyo last Friday, organized by colleagues at another university, with an Iranian scholar, and he interpreted the war that is going on and the outcome of it as something that will push toward a transactional relationship between Iran and the United States, but more generally between Iran and its neighborhood. And I asked him if he doesn't view ideology and the anti-colonial struggle and the anti-Zionist struggle also as an element. And he dismissed that. He said, no, no, the time for romantic ideas of what war is about is over. It's all about what can I get for what kind of thing. How do you see that? How big is the element of Iran actually trying to keep not only itself, but the axis of resistance alive and resistance against the colonial enterprise of the West?

#Marandi

Oh, it's key. There's absolutely no doubt about it. And the evidence is out there. You can see it every day. The whole problem between Iran and the United States was the revolution and the fact that the Iranians moved away from the American camp and wanted to be outside of either of the two camps, the Western Bloc and the Eastern Bloc. Of course, the Eastern Bloc no longer exists today. It's a very different world. But back then, when we had an Eastern Bloc, the Iranians wanted to be separated. And that's why both the Soviet Union and the United States were hostile towards Iran. And that's why they both supported Saddam Hussein in his assault.

But of course, the West did much worse. They gave Saddam chemical weapons to use extensively against Iranians. I personally survived two chemical attacks. So if you recall, previously I spoke of a book, *Going to Tehran*. I think people should read it. And I think these are two people who worked in the White House, two very well-educated academics. And I think it's a very good book. I think they do explain a lot of the myths that exist about Iran and the fact that it's very ideological on the American side as well. And they were saying that the path that the United States is taking is leading towards destruction. And they turned out to be right.

They were hammered and marginalized and demonized by their former friends and colleagues for writing this book. But it turns out they were right, and the United States, instead of listening to them, listened to the Zionists, and this is where we are today. But the issue of Palestine, the issue of Cuba, the issue of apartheid in South Africa, all of these have always been key issues for the Iranians. And they have this decolonization process, this anti-colonial mentality that is very powerful in Iran. For Iran, U.S. hegemony over our region and the rest of the world has only brought about darkness, and Iran resists.

But its resistance is like the resistance of people under apartheid South Africa. It's legitimate and it's not aggressive. It is only a response to aggression, just like the war itself that we were discussing earlier. The war was not initiated by Iran. The United States effectively controlled Iran since 1953, the British before that. And then there was a revolution, but the Americans would not let go. They supported Saddam. They gave him chemical weapons. Then they imposed maximum pressure sanctions. They've been supporting terrorist groups in the country to carry out armed violence for decades.

And now we have the third war against Iran in 47 years. So it's definitely not transactional. But I think some of these Iranian scholars in the West, or who are trained within the Western mindset or among Western elites, and, you know, within the framework of Western narratives, I think they begin to choose, or they begin to believe in some of those Western assumptions about Iran. Iran has never been aggressive toward the United States. Still, despite that, Iranians have been defensive. And supporting the people of Palestine is not an aggressive posture. Supporting South Africans and the Southern African resistance against apartheid is not aggressive. It is defensive. Or supporting the people of Cuba or others under a starvation siege is not aggressive.

It's the opposite. But the Americans see any resistance to their empire as aggressive. Wherever you walk, if you're walking in your own country, you're walking in what they deem to be their territory. But in any case, Iran has tried many times to decrease tensions with the United States. And after the war, I mean, even during the war, the Americans approached Iran as they were heavily supporting Saddam Hussein. They did a couple of deals that turned out to be the Iran-Contra affair, where Iran purchased some weapons from the United States to see what would happen—surface-to-air missiles. But even then, the Americans tried to cheat Iran. They brought in Israeli missiles.

And on one occasion, the Iranians returned them, saying, why are you sending us these missiles? Because they saw the Hebrew writing on the missiles, then they returned them. So even then, the American behavior was suspicious, and the whole thing fell through ultimately. Or in the 1990s, the Iranians gave Conoco, the oil company, an oil field in Iran. They negotiated for two years, and then the Americans imposed sanctions on Iranian oil and gas. I mean, there are many instances where the Iranians were willing to work with the Americans. After 9/11, the Iranians, believing the American narrative on Al Qaeda to be true, cooperated against Al Qaeda, and then they were called the axis of evil.

And it just goes on. The JCPOA, the nuclear deal of 2015 — Iranians signed it, Iranians implemented it, but Obama didn't. And of course, Trump tore up the deal. So I can give you many instances where the Iranians tried to show goodwill. But whenever Iran shows goodwill to the United States, the reaction in the United States is that this is a sign of weakness. The United States is... Yeah, this is the big problem with the United States. They, unlike other countries — like, you show goodwill to me, I show goodwill to you — it's a sign of friendship. Then things become easier. With the United States, it's different than anyone else. If you show them goodwill, they say they're weak. So let's strangle them harder.

#Pascal

Yeah, and that's, of course, the problem. Like, on the one hand, the United States will not accept yes as an answer. Having a deal that makes sure that Iran will never develop a nuclear weapon is not acceptable, right? They want more and more. And whenever more is given, then they want even more, to the point where they basically have all their bases, and where you're in a situation like all the other occupied territories, right, basically under complete control. How does Iran approach that?

That's my last question now in these negotiations, because what we can see, what we saw in Islamabad, is that Iran is willing to make suggestions and constructive approaches toward the United States in order to entice them to actually come toward a final peace agreement. And the goals of that have been laid out. We talked about it before — ten points, including security, conflict resolution, and so on. What is the approach to make sure that whatever the United States promises, if it actually goes that far to promise something, it will keep it?

#Marandi

That's a very, very important question. And I think it's the key question, really, in all of this. I would say that the Iranians have changed their approach completely after the war. Even before the war, I don't think they shifted in the way that I'm going to describe. When the war started and the Iranians said, well, we're here now, it is a direct confrontation, they hit back as hard as they could. They fought the war. And they said to themselves that we don't want a short war. We want a long war, even though we don't want war and it's destructive. But the Iranians wanted the war to last long because they wanted to make sure the United States regretted attacking Iran so that it never happens again. So after a few, I mean, the Americans demanded—Trump said, you know, complete capitulation and unconditional surrender. Then it didn't happen.

Then they were saying Iran is running out of missiles and drones every day. They showed these graphs in their briefings at the Pentagon. And then after a week, two weeks, things didn't change. The Iranians were fighting back. The people were united. And after roughly 10 days, I think, the Americans started sending messages to Iran, and the Iranians ignored them. Until the U.S. 15-point plan that I think was like on day 30-something, 34, 35, something like that, I don't know, 36 maybe. And the Iranians rejected it because it violated Iran's sovereignty. And then Iran put forward its own plan, and Trump accepted it — the 10-point plan that you alluded to. And of course, after Trump accepted it, then his spokeswoman said, no, we don't accept it. But in any case, it was a symbolic defeat for the United States, and the plan that Iran is insisting must be discussed at the negotiating table.

And I think that it's fair to say that from now on, in any negotiations with the United States, the Iranians will no longer be carrying out commitments and then waiting for the Americans to carry out their commitments, like we did in the JCPOA, where immediately afterwards we did everything that we were supposed to do and the Americans didn't. And Obama basically cheated Iran. And until the very end of his presidency, many of the commitments that the Americans were supposed to carry out were not being carried out at all. So we saw in this ceasefire agreement that we discussed earlier that as soon as the United States began to violate it, allowing Netanyahu to continue slaughtering women and children in Lebanon, the Iranians said, but of course the ceasefire agreement included everywhere in Gaza also.

But Gaza is more complicated because these regional regimes — you know, Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, the monarchies in the Persian Gulf, and others — they signed up to Trump's fake ceasefire. So it's difficult for Iran to make any changes to that, sadly. But in the case of Lebanon, when Trump allowed Netanyahu to slaughter the Lebanese, Iran said, okay, then I'm not going to implement my side of the bargain. So now the equation is very different than before. And the Americans keep insisting that Iran first talk about the nuclear program. Iran says, no, you waged war against us. First we talk about the war. And so we are first going to — you know, the ceasefire agreement has to be implemented.

After that, our negotiations surround our 10-point plan, and then we can talk about the nuclear program. So Iran no longer commits itself to anything without the other side doing so, and it no longer allows the Americans to determine what is to be negotiated and what is negotiated first and last. So I think this is huge. And the hope in Iran is that if there is another wave of war, this will help its allies across the world. It will help Venezuela, it will help Cuba, it will help other countries that are under U.S. oppression and imperial power, that this will be a weakening of the empire in a way in which these countries can start to breathe, where the people can break the siege slowly.

So it is going to be painful. And to be very blunt, I don't know my own personal fate, but it is something that we have to go through. And if the United States launches another wave of attacks, we will resist. And the Iranian people, I have no doubt, will be resilient. The Americans, the Israelis will do whatever they can. This will be their final roll of the dice, I think. And so they may do all sorts of things. But I don't see a scenario in which they succeed. And the more they continue with this, ultimately, the worse it is for them. And I personally believe that the biggest loser in all this is Zionism.

Because for two and a half years, they have been carrying out genocide in Gaza and now increasingly in Lebanon too. And the world has turned against them and looks at them with horror. But now they are also wrecking the world economy, and people across the world who've turned against them are saying that they're destroying my life. Trump and Netanyahu and the Zionists are destroying my family's ability to sustain itself because of their selfish war. And so the mood will turn further against the empire, further against Zionism, the ideology. And in the long run, I think that this will basically make the survival of the Zionist ideology unsustainable.

#Pascal

It's very interesting how you're putting this, in this strategy of Iran, which I do see as quite singular — of resistance and resilience and the ability to absorb without escalation, without being defenseless. But on the other hand, now then demanding implementation on the other side first, while not giving reason for more attacks. It's a very, very sophisticated strategy, and we will certainly talk about it more later. People who want to hear from you more — I mean, luckily you are on a lot of programs — but should people go somewhere specifically to read your analysis?

#Marandi

Well, I've been removed from Instagram and Facebook quite a while ago. And since a lot of your running accounts are being removed from Twitter now, I don't know how things will be in the future. Right now I have a Twitter account, and they can see my previous interviews on your show. I would advise people to read **Going to Tehran** and to have others read it as well. It's, I think, a very useful book. There's also—it's not my book—but there's also another book, which isn't mine either, but written by Alastair Crooke.

It's a somewhat old book, I think, called *Culture of Resistance*, right? I forget the name because I read it so long ago. That's also an interesting book to read for people to better understand the mentality of the Iranian people, the axis of resistance, where this resilience and resistance come from — this mentality, sympathy for the oppressed, and this resistance against the oppressor. It's very much a part of the religious culture, especially Shia Islam in particular. But for now, I'm on Twitter. We'll speak.

#Pascal

I will put a link to your Twitter profile below, and also to the books that you mentioned. Professor Seyed Mohammad Marandi, thank you so much for your time today.

#Marandi

Thank you, Pascal. It's always a pleasure.