

Seyed M. Marandi: Iran DROPPED THE HAMMER in Strait of Hormuz

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#Nima

Hi everybody, today is Saturday, May 30th, 2026, and our friend Professor Seyed M. Marandi is here with us. Welcome back, Professor.

#Seyed

Hi Nima, thank you very much for inviting me. It's always a great pleasure to be on your show, of course.

#Nima

Let me start, Professor Marandi, with what happened yesterday. Many people were arguing that the agreement was going to be announced between the two sides. Donald Trump was preparing for that. And then Iranians — even we had Donald Trump tweeting or posting through social media that he's gonna lift the blockade in the Strait of Hormuz. Nothing of that sort happened. He made a lot of comments in that post. So what was happening yesterday, and how close was it to reaching or announcing some sort of agreement?

#Seyed

I don't know. It's Trump, and we don't know why he says things or what will happen afterwards. There was no final text when he made that truthful post, when he posted his comments. And yet, in certain respects, they were close. I mean, there has been progress. And the things that the Iranians have announced, and I've also posted and discussed, those are all more or less agreed upon. And yet Trump keeps making statements that contradict those agreements or the texts that go back and forth.

But even after he makes these comments, like he did a few days ago, still the American texts that are sent to Iran are different from what he says. So, I don't know about today or since yesterday, but in the past, when he made comments that went against what was being discussed through the

messages going back and forth—because there are no negotiations, there are no direct or indirect negotiations—they're all messages, written messages that go back and forth. In the past, he made similar outlandish comments, saying he won't do this, he won't do that, Iran has to do this, and so on. But that didn't change the way in which the U.S. negotiators were moving forward.

So is this just for public consumption, or will he later on wreck the progress that's been made? Who knows? It's Donald Trump. Anything that I say is just speculation. You know, I've spoken with many people, you've spoken with many people on your show, I've been on your show many times, and others who are much more knowledgeable about the workings of the U.S. government. And whenever we listen to different people, they all say the same thing: we don't know. No one knows what's going on in the head of Donald Trump. And many say Donald Trump doesn't know what's going on in his own head. So it's unclear. But the fact is that the two sides are not that far apart, or they weren't at least until yesterday. I don't know about the last 24 or 48 hours.

But the two sides are not that far apart, or weren't far apart. And the summary that I gave earlier about the Iranian assets that were confiscated or stolen, about the waiving of the energy sector sanctions for Iranian exports, about removing the siege, about a ceasefire and the halt in the genocidal attacks in Lebanon, and about ships moving freely through the Strait of Hormuz under Iranian authority—Iran did not negotiate anything about fees, and Iran is not going to give up authority over the Strait of Hormuz. That's a done deal. They shouldn't have attacked Iran. Iran had no ambitions to control the Strait of Hormuz before the war. I don't recall ever hearing it in the public sphere in Iran or in private conversations.

And yet, now it's very clear in the public sphere and in private conversations that Iran is not going to relinquish it for security reasons and because countries in the Persian Gulf did great harm to the Iranian people. So the things that we've discussed in the past, if I remember them all—I hope I haven't missed anything—but that's basically what the two sides are agreeing upon. And of course, Iran will give assurances. It will say that we are not going to develop weapons, which it has been saying for decades. And then the two sides will discuss sanctions and the nuclear program and others as we progress through the two months. That's basically what the two sides agreed upon. There were still differences.

There's not a single, there's not a final text that the two sides agree upon. But in general, these ideas are what exist in the text. But we'll have to see. I think that after what he said and the way he said it, he cannot sign an agreement, at least for a while, because it would look foolish for him to say one thing today and then sign an agreement tomorrow. So who knows? But you know, Nima, I've spoken to people here who are knowledgeable about the situation. The belief here is that even if the United States signs the deal, they're not going to implement the deal, and that we're going to reach, most probably, a dead end well before the end of the two months, and that war could start again. We're dealing with a dying empire whose leadership has lost its mind.

And in their arrogance, they can't seem to, as they say, know how to back down when they should back down. They still think that they are the empire and that they have to defeat the other side. And it's just not going to happen. If the United States attacks Iran again, the results will be worse than last time around. I have no doubt about that. And in this siege warfare, they are harming the Iranian economy. There's absolutely no doubt about that. But the harm that they're doing to themselves and the global economy far outweighs what they're doing to Iran. Iranians will be patient. They'll be resilient. They'll see this through. But the global economy, people across the world and in the United States, they'll be asking themselves, why are we paying this price for Netanyahu?

Why are our lives being destroyed for these Zionists who are genocidal, killing people and children every day in Gaza and in Lebanon? So, you know, this is a path to nowhere, the road to hell for the United States. But so far, Trump does not have the ability to change course. I imagine that he does want to change course because there has been a sense of urgency on the American side for negotiations. They want this deal done fast. But then when progress is made, Trump goes out and says these things. Obviously, the counterpressure from the Zionists or the neocons — they're one and the same — is enormous. And I think these statements that he makes are reflective.

#Nima

Two points that were mentioned in that post — one of them is the trade-off or move. For many people who are arguing, the argument, by the way, on their part is that this is international waters. And I don't know how they are defining that, and what is the Iranian understanding, and what was the communication — how was the communication between the two sides to make them understand that this is not international waters. This is something related to Iran and Oman. It's not related to the United States to decide about it and the future of it. And it depends on the region, by the way. And how is that going to — is there any sort of communication between — because Donald Trump was mentioning that no tolls, no fees, nothing. They have to open up the Strait for most.

#Seyed

Well, Nima, first of all, international law doesn't mean anything. I mean, when Trump murdered those 168 kids, those little girls in Minab, where was Iranian sovereignty? Where was the Iranian airspace? Where was Iranian territory important for the United States or the Zionist regime? Where was it important for the EU? Where was it important for the British or the Canadians or the Australians or New Zealand? All of them supported the United States. None of them condemned the United States. They all condemned Iran. Iran was the victim. During the 12-day war, it was the victim, yet Iran was condemned. During this war, Iran was the victim, Iran was condemned. So international law means nothing.

It only means something when it suits their interests, but not the other way around. Whereas international law, as a genocide is taking place in Gaza, as the Israeli regime is slaughtering kids day

and night in Lebanon, there's no international law — meaning these are just empty words now. They meant something at least before, not that much, but still it was. But now we're living in the jungle, the jungle created by the West. The international law which they created, they dominated, they designed it in a way which benefited them rather than us. Now they, in their decline, feel that it's not working for them. So they're saying no more international law. The mask is off, and, you know, human rights and human equality — all that has been thrown out the window.

And they're, you know, these regimes are being as ruthless as possible. So that's one thing. But the second is that it's clear that the Strait of Hormuz is not wide enough to be international waters. These are territorial waters that are between Iran and Oman. And in the past, Iran never, as I said earlier, showed any ambition to do anything about it. But after this war, that changed. I mean, the West, whether they want to call it international waters or an international trade route or not, they should blame themselves for allowing this situation to take place. I mean, Trump and Netanyahu have caused Iran to take control of the Strait and impose its sovereignty over its own territorial waters. That's what has happened.

Iran has not signed any international agreement or is not a member of any agreement that prevents Iran from being able to extract fees for countries to pass through its territorial waters. So, you know, but your point that, you know, international law—when they were trying to destroy our country, you know, Western— I remember after a few days, when it was becoming clear that Iran was not going to lose the war, it was gradually becoming clear that Iran was going to win the war, I think a journalist from, I don't know if it was the BBC or Sky News, one of these mainstream Western media outlets, said to me—he asked this question and then said, “These are international waters,” you know, sort of with indignation.

I was saying, you know, you're waging a war on us. Your overlord is bombing our cities day and night, and you're trying to teach the Iranians about international law? This whole war is an affront to international law, to human dignity, to morality. But, you know, in their arrogance, they still don't see the irony of what they say.

#Nima

The second point which was mentioned by Donald Trump is the nuclear, the so-called nuclear dust. He's talking about the enriched uranium in Iran. And he wants that to be, you know, he wants Iran to send that to the United States. And it seems that from what we've heard from Iranian sources, there was no mention of this in the memorandum of understanding. That was that document that was supposed to be the one both sides had agreed on, and they were supposed to announce it. And what do we know about that?

#Seyed

Well, you're right. I mean, the Iranians in this statement, in this document, will say that we will not pursue nuclear weapons, which is not new, and that this and other issues will be discussed after this deal is implemented. And of course, what are the other issues? They invaded the country. They killed thousands of people. They destroyed our infrastructure. What about compensation? In addition to that, and more important than anything else, the sanctions. They've imposed sanctions on every aspect of Iranian life. So the sanctions have to go. So we have more to put on the table than the Americans.

They want to negotiate about the nuclear program. Fine, we'll be negotiating about a lot of things, and the Americans will have to deliver. And if they can't deliver, then they shouldn't expect us, the Iranians, to deliver anything. We did not carry out aggression. We did not violate international law. If Iran wants to enrich uranium at 99.999%, it can do so in accordance with international law. It's Iran's right. So there's nothing that the Americans can complain about. Of course, the Iranians have, from the very beginning, enriched uranium at 60% for a reason.

And that is because the United States and Iran had signed a nuclear deal in 2015, and the Americans began violating the deal from day one under Obama. And as they violated the deal, the Europeans violated the deal with the Americans when the Americans would implement those sanctions. All of these were gross violations, and it got worse and worse and worse until the last day of Obama's presidency. He was doing Iran no favors. It was not a good deal for Iran because he was cheating Iran. And that's why the Iranians are negotiating in a different style this time. They're saying that you have to show, we have to see you give the concessions.

We have to see the benefits of your concessions before we reciprocate. Not like last time around, where we did everything and you did nothing, and you cheated us. This time around, we have to see the U.S. actually implement its side of the bargain, implement its commitments. But back then, that's what Obama did. Then when Trump came, he ultimately did the same, and then he exited the deal, as we all know. And then what did the Europeans do? They obeyed Trump. They were violating all of their commitments. And Iran waited for two years before fully restarting all those elements of the nuclear program, all those aspects of the Iranian nuclear program that were shut down due to the 2015 deal.

They waited, and so after two years, the Iranians restarted their program in full, and then they began enriching uranium at 60%. Why? Because they wanted to put pressure on the Americans and Europeans to go back to their obligations, to abide by their obligations. So there was a reason why Iran did this. Iran did this because the other side was violating the deal. But they pretend as if Iran enriched uranium at 60% because it wants to build a nuclear bomb. No, that was never the intention. It was a direct response to their gross violations of their commitments. So they have no one to blame but themselves.

#Nima

Do you think the difference continues on the frozen Iranian assets as well, or is there some sort of understanding between the two parties on that issue?

#Seyed

I can't say for sure right now where things stand. And after Trump spoke yesterday, I don't know what sort of communications have been going back and forth since then. But as I said earlier, there was a broad agreement about a deal. Now, for the Iranians, the financial issue, which is stolen Iranian money, it's no gift. And when Trump spoke about giving a billion dollars or, I don't know, \$900 million in cash, he wasn't doing Iran any favors. That was confiscated Iranian money. That was stolen Iranian money.

#Nima

Which is against international law, by the way.

#Seyed

Of course, yes. I mean, it's not as if they pretend they're giving us gifts. They steal our stuff, and then Iran forces them to give a bit of it back. And then, you know, they pretend as if they're doing us a big favor. And this is the money of 90 million people. But in any case... I don't know where it stands right now, the talks, where things are. But for the Iranians, a key issue is the transfer of Iran's wealth. Because the Americans, as we've seen so many times, they'll write down something on paper, but then they won't implement it. So the Iranians are saying, look, we don't want to go. We're not going to accept, again, the United States writing something down and then saying, oh, we couldn't do it for this legal reason or that technical reason.

So the Iranians want to make sure that the Americans, as I said earlier, carry out their obligations. So there are two, I guess, two major problems. One is we have to see if the Americans come to an agreement, because Trump, every day, he says something different, and what he says is very different from what his negotiators are writing down on paper, at least last time I heard. And the second is, of course, the issue of implementation. The Americans have a very bad history when it comes to implementation. They're deceitful, they're dishonest, and it's not just Trump. Different administrations have always been that way when it comes to Iran.

#Nima

I have never seen one of the main negotiators on the Iranian side putting out any statement like what we heard from the head of the Iranian parliament yesterday, what he posted. Three points in that post. One of them is, we seize concessions not through dialogue, but with missiles. In negotiations, we merely make them understand. The second point, he said, we have no trust in guarantees or words. Only actions are the measure. No actions will be taken before the other side

acts. And the third point is, the winner of any agreement is the one who is better prepared for war from the day after.

I have never seen such a strong statement by an Iranian negotiator. We're not talking about the IRGC and the commanders of the IRGC talking about the situation. We're talking about the head of the Iranian delegation that went to Islamabad to negotiate and talk with the American delegation. And what is happening is that Iran has reached this point where they need to be prepared. They know that war is coming. They know they're prepared for the day after. And they don't see any sort of reliable or meaningful negotiations between the two sides.

#Seyed

Well, Nima, I feel like Qasem Soleimani, before his martyrdom, was always telling Iranians that you're strong, you're powerful. He was always very confident about the capabilities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the entire axis of resistance. And he created a generation or multiple generations of people who had that confidence. Not everyone had that confidence.

#Nima

Yeah, it seems we've lost Professor Marandi. Let's see if he's gonna get back. Yeah, it seems that he's out. Let me just... Yeah, he's gonna be back. And I think this is huge, this is a sea change. Whoever is familiar with Iranian domestic policy and what's going on in Iran, when you see something like that and some sort of statement like that, it's mean. Here is Professor Marandi coming back.

#Seyed

Sorry, Nima.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Seyed

This is Iran. The internet is back to normal, but the quality still hasn't come back to normal.

#Nima

You were talking about the generation that the former Iranian Supreme Leader has taught or created.

#Seyed

Yes, generations of people in Iran were taught by him to have confidence. And I'm just kidding, I'm just making up this number, but let's say half the country believed that we would win this war from the very beginning. Again, I'm just guessing, I don't know, but I would imagine something like that. I don't think it's a completely inaccurate number. And the other half of the country was nervous. But after a few days, those who were nervous became more confident, and they saw that we were actually defeating the superpower and its allies. With all the power and all the wealth and everything that they brought in, and the funding from even these regimes in the Persian Gulf that were assisting them in this war, Iran was winning the war.

And that self-confidence is, I think, reflected in today's society. People are not, you know, they ask, is there going to be war? Not war, but not like before. Before, many were worried. Now it's like, some say, well, we should have. Not everyone says that, but some say, let's go, we should just finish them off. You see that a lot. But I think the government is doing the right thing to negotiate, to see if there is a solution. But there is a very strong degree of confidence. And what Dr. Velayati says, and I think he was one of those who was confident from the very beginning, it resonates. It says a lot about Iranian society.

People say, yes, this is exactly how our negotiators should speak when dealing with Americans. Not when dealing with friends. We have many friends across the world. But the Americans are not our friends. I mean, the regime, the Trump regime, the elites, not ordinary Americans. They're not the problem. They're victims, just like everyone else. So yes, it's a tough statement. And I think it shows that the state and the different branches of government and the political establishment are sending a message to the United States that this is not the JCPOA where you just wear us down or where we're going to show excessive or too much patience or too much flexibility. I believe that in the nuclear deal, we did show too much flexibility.

And in the past, because we did not want war, our response to their aggression—murdering General Soleimani, the bombing of our embassy in Syria, in Damascus, and so on—our responses were more cautious because we didn't want regional instability. But now we've reached a point where we say, okay, enough is enough. We are powerful. People recognize the country's power, the power of the resistance, the axis of resistance, and it's reflected in the statement of the chief negotiator—that sense of confidence about our righteousness, about our strength, and about us being on the right side of the moral issues of the day, supporting the oppressed against the oppressor. So I think it's an important statement, and it is a statement that is resonating in a very positive way among ordinary Iranians.

#Nima

I think the other issue is Lebanon, which we were talking about, and we know what the Iranian position is. Do you think there is any sort of positive sign that the Iranian delegation or the Iranian side is seeing in the Trump administration, in the way they're talking about the conflict—the war

between Israel and Lebanon—that they are willing to put pressure on Israel to end the war? Because we know what is going on in Lebanon. We know how Israel is attacking Lebanon. We know how capable and how important the way Hezbollah is fighting back is. We just had, you know, rockets from Hezbollah hitting cities in the northern part of Israel, penetrating the Iron Dome. This is the reality of Hezbollah today. And what is the understanding of the Iranian side regarding Donald Trump's position on Lebanon?

#Seyed

Well, first I have to, you know, I have to say that what Hezbollah is doing is extraordinary. Not only are they fighting in a very sophisticated way, but against all odds. You have these Takfiri monsters in Syria who are proxies of the United States. And all those who pretended that they were the Syrian people, they were proxies of the United States. And those who supported them enabled the United States to take Syria, and they weakened the Palestinian cause. And they can pretend that Hezbollah or Iran, what they did in Syria, was wrong. No, what they did was absolutely right. It had nothing to do with religion or sectarianism. It had to do with fighting and resisting against the CIA and the empire. The CIA was doing everything it could for the Israeli regime, and these people assisted the Israeli regime.

And those who continue to pretend that it's anything different from that, they are still assisting the Israeli regime, even if they pretend that they support Palestine. Or maybe they do support Palestine, but in their blindness—and I mean willful blindness—they pretend that the reality is different from what it really is. So Hezbollah, to the east, is surrounded by Al-Qaeda and ISIS, American proxies. The regime in Beirut, which was installed by the Americans, installed by force, the regime is a proxy of the United States. And then you have the Israeli regime. They're surrounded. And many in Lebanon are bought off. The dictatorships in the Persian Gulf, they're funding groups against the resistance. And of course, Americans and Europeans have all these NGOs.

And so the resistance is fighting against this very complicated, complex situation within the context of this very complicated situation. And they're defeating the enemy. They're defeating the most brutal and ruthless enemy too on this planet. In revenge, they take down apartment blocks and slaughter women and children. They don't care about women and children. We know who they are. We saw what they did in Gaza and what they're doing in Gaza. The genocide in Gaza is picking up steam again. But you won't know this if you watch CNN or the BBC or read The Guardian or The New York Times or anything like that. So Hezbollah is the hero. The heroism of Hezbollah is unique. And that's why they're a household name.

And they've made these sacrifices for the sake of the Palestinian people. The Palestinian people, during these years, they've been defending themselves. Hezbollah has been assisting another people and making sacrifices. They knew that the Israelis would bomb their families. They knew that they would slaughter their women and children in revenge. But they still fought in order to draw troops away from Gaza. These are unique people. Unique people. People across the globe should have the

utmost respect for their martyrs and for their families and for all those who made such sacrifices. Women, they have made enormous sacrifices to support the combatants. But that aside, there will be no deal until the slaughter ends and there is a regional ceasefire and an end to the war.

There will be no deal. So we'll wait. If Americans want to destroy the global economy, it's up to them. If Netanyahu and the Zionists are determined to destroy the global economy so that they can have the right to slaughter women and children, no, that's not going to happen. So there's an agreement on the table. Already Netanyahu has blocked it once because after the 39 days or so of fighting, when the Americans lost the war and we had a ceasefire, it was agreed that Iran would allow ships. Remember again, I've said this before, the Strait of Hormuz has never been closed. Ships that belong to countries that were not waging war against Iran or were not complicit in the war were always allowed to pass through.

Only those regimes that were assisting in the assault on the Iranian people, their ships were blocked. Only their ships were blocked. Kuwait, the Emirates, and so on. The Europeans, whoever. But in the ceasefire agreement, the Iranians were going to allow those ships to go through. And Netanyahu blocked it by carpet bombing Lebanon. So this was 50 days ago or so. Yeah, 50 days ago. Imagine what the global economy could have been right now, where we could have been, where people across the world could have been if Netanyahu had allowed it, if the Zionists had allowed it. But Trump, being a weak and feeble leader, and totally corrupt, and I'm sure compromised—I mean, I can't imagine really him being compromised not being a part of the issue, the problem.

But in any case, because of these people, the world is now suffering immensely. And unless the Americans accept and enforce a halt to the genocide and accept a ceasefire and an end to the hostilities, then there won't be an agreement. Not only for moral considerations, not only because the people of Lebanon deserve to live. I mean, what the Americans want and what the West wants is that Iran says, let them, you know, you can have your ceasefire and you can have your ships leave the Strait of Hormuz, the Iranians can do trade, but let the Israelis slaughter the Lebanese. No, that's not going to happen. This shows how morally bankrupt the West is, Western elites. Utterly immoral. But beyond that, there's also another issue.

If Iran allows the other side to refrain from implementing its obligations in an agreement, in one case, they'll do it again and again and again. If the Americans think that, okay, the Iranians have set these five conditions for the Strait of Hormuz to be open, let's not do number one, let's not implement number two, let's not carry out our obligations in number three. If they do it and they get away with it, then they'll go on and say, well, let's do another and another, let's keep violating the deal and see how much we can get. So the Iranians—and this is what happened in the JCPOA, this is exactly what happened in 2015—the Iranians carried out all of their obligations because they abide by their commitments.

And the Americans under Obama, not Trump—Obama cheated Iran every step of the way. And the Iranians, President Rouhani was too cautious, and that only made things worse. Now the Iranians are saying, no, no. We have a deal. You abide by that deal. You don't abide by that deal, we don't have a deal. So that's why, as I said earlier, there's a widespread belief in Iran among people who are involved in the decision-making process that even if an agreement is signed, it doesn't mean an end to the war. It doesn't even mean that it'll last for two months. It could last, it could fall apart in two weeks. That's where we are now.

#Nima

We know that they attacked, they hit those two speedboats, and then they attacked somewhere in the city of Bandar Abbas, which was responded to by Iran with an attack on an American air base in Kuwait. Initially, they said that they intercepted the missile, but later Bloomberg reported that two MQ-9 drones were destroyed in that attack and five American soldiers were injured.

So do you think that with the blockade, we had the military advisor to the Supreme Leader of Iran, Mohsen Rezaei, saying that this is the third time the United States is betraying the negotiations, the talks between these two sides, which he is mentioning—he basically is talking about the blockade. And do you see the blockade bringing some sort of escalation to the region? Because yesterday I was talking with one of our friends that you know, and I said, this is part of the Iranian dignity. It's not anymore related to the Iranian economy. It's part of the Iranian dignity. That's why Iran would go against this sort of behavior, this blockade of the United States. What is your understanding of that?

#Seyed

Well, first of all, even Bloomberg — we should take anything that they say with a big pile of salt. And, you know, throughout this war, they've been lying. You know, they're always intercepting the missiles and drones, and then after the war, we learn that everything's been destroyed. But, you know, all the missiles and drones were being intercepted. So it's all deceit. And even when Bloomberg says two very expensive drones were badly damaged or destroyed and five soldiers were injured, you can imagine that it was probably a lot worse than that. But for the Iranians, you're right. I mean, again, this is something that we discussed a couple of times in the past. The Iranians are very resistant — I mean, like Hezbollah.

The culture of resistance and dignity and rejecting humiliation is very strong in Iranian culture. You know, in a couple of weeks, pretty soon from now, it's going to be Muharram, the month of Muharram. And in the month of Muharram, Imam Hussain, the grandson of the Holy Prophet, was martyred in Karbala, along with his sister and his companions. We know the story. People should read about it—not from Western sources—but they'll understand where this resilience comes from. And Imam Hussain, you know, his rejection of any form of humiliation is something that resonates

among all Iranians. I mean, you're Iranian. You know that in Iran, you have people who are not religious.

They drink and they dance and they, you know, they just... But even when it comes to Ashura and Tasua, almost all of these people too become a part of all the, you know, the ceremonies and the events on the day before and on the day of Tasua, the 9th, and on Ashura, the 10th, where Imam Hussain was martyred. So this sense of resilience and this steadfastness and this idea of standing up to oppression and to support the oppressed and to reject being... Someone once said on a different show, a young man said to me, we should support Iran because they're oppressed. And I didn't say anything out of respect for the young man. But, you know, Iran doesn't feel oppressed. Iran feels that they're steadfast and defiant. Hezbollah is not oppressed. They don't feel oppressed. They feel steadfast and defiant.

They're struggling and fighting oppression, not just on their own behalf, but on behalf of the Palestinian people and others. So this thousands of years of civilization combined with this, you know, this sense of resilience and dignity is what defeated the United States. It is this self-confidence that made the young Iranians develop missiles and drones and devise a military doctrine that was able to defeat the superpower and its allies and its proxies. It is a combination of all of these together. I mean, these factors gave that self-confidence to Iranian generals, to young scientists, men and women, to enhance Iran's technological capabilities. And by the way, many female scientists are part of these programs to develop Iran's military and technological capabilities.

So again, I think it all goes back to a complete lack of understanding of Iran in the West and the axis of resistance. I mean, look at Hezbollah right now. It's just amazing how they can... I mean, it's not even like Hamas. Hamas, I mean, at least they controlled Gaza. Hezbollah doesn't control Lebanon. The government of Lebanon is as treacherous as the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, if not more so, much more so. And a portion of the population in Lebanon is allied to the Israeli regime. They're in bed with the Israeli regime. They assisted the Israeli regime in 1982 when they occupied Lebanon. They helped, they and the Israelis went into the Palestinian camp of Sabra and Shatila.

They slaughtered 3,000 men, women, and children in literally like 24 hours with Israeli supervision. They have these people in them. But despite that, you see how resilient and steadfast the resistance is. This is a culture that, and I mentioned this on your show before, I think even last time, Alistair Crook's book **Resistance** is a good read. I think people should read it. I think people should buy it and read it and have others read it to better understand where this resistance and resilience come from. And of course, this is something that people across the world know very little about. But in reality, the most effective resistance against the empire ever comes from here.

It's not without reason that the godfather of the neocons, Robert Kagan, says that this was the biggest U.S. defeat ever. First time the U.S. was defeated in war on the battlefield. I mean, they went and occupied Iraq, and thanks to General Soleimani and his companions, they failed. In Afghanistan, again, very much thanks to General Soleimani and his companions, they failed. Because

we have big disagreements with the Taliban about women, about education, about freedoms, and so on. But the U.S. occupation was a threat to everyone. And General Soleimani began cooperating with them, and they did evolve to a degree, the Taliban. They're not like what they were 20 years ago, although we have big differences. But they have evolved to a degree.

But thanks to Iran, the Americans were forced. But this was different from Iraq and Afghanistan. Here, they were defeated on the battlefield. And it wasn't just the United States that brought in everything it had. It was the Israeli regime, and it was all these rich Arab dictatorships that, with all their wealth, and then the European Union and Austria, everyone sanctioning Iran, condemning Iran, and they failed. Not through years of occupation — they failed on the battlefield. So there's a lot that people have to learn about the axis of resistance. And the more they learn, the more their countries will be capable of being defended — they'll be more capable of defending their countries against them.

#Nima

Where are we with the air defense system, with the military-industrial complex we're on today? Because if you listen to Pete Hegseth, he says that we've destroyed everything. They don't have the capability to produce missiles or drones. They may have some missiles and drones, but they're not capable anymore of producing more drones and more missiles. On the other hand, we've seen what is happening, for example, in Armenia. Recently, we've seen the Iranian air defense system, Majid, being shown in one of these parades in Armenia, marches of the army in Armenia. And the other point was the Su-30 jets in Armenia being, you know, we've seen the—if I'm not mistaken, the names of the Iranian-made glide bombs on these Su-30s are Yasin and Balaban, something like that. They're using these precision glide bombs on their Su-30 jets in Armenia. These are Iranian-produced bombs. So what is your understanding of the military-industrial complex of Iran today?

#Seyed

Well, Iran has been selling to friendly countries that are not carrying out war against innocent people for years, but countries are cautious about showing it because of the United States, and they don't want to make them angry. So Iran actually—its weapons have been sold to many countries. And after this war, I'm sure it's going to increase a lot because Iranian weapon systems have been so effective. It's clear that U.S. weapons systems, despite their enormous cost, are not what they claim to be. They're not nearly as effective. And if the United States was so confident about its capabilities, then Hegseth could have just continued the war. Remember, I mean, remember—I'm sure—but we have to remember that at the beginning of the war, Trump was saying, lay down your arms, unconditional surrender.

By the end of the war, he had to accept the Iranian 10-point plan as a framework for negotiations. So if what Hegseth says is right, then why did they stop the fighting? And why don't they just force open the Strait of Hormuz? It's not obviously as simple as he claims in Iran's capabilities, which are—

I mean, those air defense systems that, I mean, what I can say is that those air defense systems that brought down those planes, they were Iranian. They were not imported from Iraq. I can say that much to you. And there is a foreign friend of Iran that has purchased them, which I don't want to name. I've been told this, but it's not a backward country compared with Iran. It's quite capable. Yes, it's a very capable country when it comes to military production. I mean, the country that purchased this air defense system. And my understanding is that Iran is expanding it.

#Nima

Professor Marandi, what is the assessment of these American drones coming to Iran? Because we've seen not only in Iran—in Yemen we've seen one of them, an MQ-9, being hit by the Yemenis. And we have seen in the southern part of Iran they're using these drones to come to sea. Are they, in the assessment on the part of Iran, trying to see what those cities—underground cities of missiles—are? What are they looking for? What is the assessment on the part of the Iranians?

#Seyed

Well, they're definitely gathering intelligence, but the thing is that, you know, Nima, these Western journalists, mainstream media journalists, that come and say the Strait of Hormuz is international waters—none of them seem to be bothered by the fact that the United States is violating Iranian airspace every day and sending hostile aircraft and drones into Iranian airspace on a regular basis, and at times bombing Iran. I mean, those two boats that were bombed, where the four young sailors were murdered by the Americans, they were in Iranian territorial waters. They weren't even in the Persian Gulf. They were in Iranian territorial waters when they were bombed.

But do Western journalists care about—I mean, just like in Lebanon—these Western journalists don't care about the children that every day we're seeing taken out from under the rubble of Gaza. And when it's in their interest, they say these are international waters, like the Strait of Hormuz. But they don't seem to comprehend that these drones that the United States flies over Iranian territory are violations of international law. So why is international law important when it's to their benefit, but not important when it's not to their benefit? It just shows how compromised these journalists are, and how compromised Western legacy media is, and why we should not trust anything that comes from Western media.

#Nima

Thank you so much, Professor Marandi. We know that this situation is very fluid. And I think the understanding on the part of Iranians is that they cannot trust the Trump administration. Nobody is happy about the war because this is a war of aggression against Iran. We know that. And the people—because when it comes to the mainstream media, basically in the West—they're talking about it because Iran is under tremendous pressure. The Iranian economy is under tremendous pressure. They may bend. That's why Donald Trump is continuing with the blockade. Yeah.

#Seyed

Yeah. I mean, sorry, I got distracted when you asked that question. I got distracted by this hypocrisy and I sort of forgot the question itself. But you're absolutely correct. The reason why they're attacking, the reason why they murder people, soldiers, whose families are mourning them, the reason why they have drones and they fly over Iranian territory is because they want to put pressure on Iran through illegitimate and immoral means. But it's not going to work, because what it does is it makes Iranians more distrustful toward the United States. It only reminds us that this regime is completely untrustworthy, that when you have a ceasefire, it doesn't mean anything.

In Gaza, they murdered a thousand people since the ceasefire. In Lebanon, they're murdering people day and night, even though they're bombing Beirut, even though there's a so-called ceasefire. So when the Americans murder our young men, and when they violate our airspace, they're just reminding us that these people don't abide by commitments. And the only way to deal with them is through what Dr. Golibov wrote in that tweet of his that you read out. You have to deal with the empire through strength and through confidence and resistance. And the Iranians say, as General Soleimani said, we are the nation of martyrdom. We are the nation of Imam Hussain. And so the more the Americans push, the harder we push back.

#Nima

Thank you so much, Professor Marandi, for being with us today. Great pleasure, as always.

#Seyed

It's a great honor, Nima.

#Nima

Thank you for having me.