

Marandi: Plans for a U.S. Land Invasion of Iran; Yemen & Iran Enters the War?

Prof. Seyed Mohammad Marandi is a former advisor to Iran's nuclear negotiation team. Prof. Marandi discusses the plans for a U.S. land invasion of Iran, and how the participation of Yemen and Iraq in the war can change the character of the war. Buy merchandise: <https://diesen-shop.fourthwall.com/en-nok> Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glenndiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glenndiesen> Support the research by Prof. Glenn Diesen: PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glenndiesen> Buy me a Coffee: buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

#Glenn

Welcome back. We are again joined by Seyed Mohammad Marandi, a professor at Tehran University and also a former advisor to Iran's nuclear negotiation team. So thank you for coming back on the program.

#Seyed M. Marandi

Thank you for inviting me, Glenn. It's always a great honor to be with you and your audience.

#Glenn

Well, we now see that the U.S. is well back into its renewed war against Iran. It appears that the war will likely escalate beyond the targeting we saw in the former round. We also see the war possibly widening now as Yemen joins the fight, which means the Red Sea can be shut down. Saudi Arabia becomes much more vulnerable now. Iran has focused, it seems, over the past few days, a lot of its attacks on Bahrain and Kuwait. I was wondering how we can understand this — yeah, the war now. Well, what can we expect to see from Iran? How will it respond to the United States? Indeed, what is the objective of the U.S. this time around?

#Seyed M. Marandi

Well, the Iranians, as you know, and we've discussed this before, after the signing of the MOU, never believed that the United States would fulfill its obligations. That was never anything that anyone here counted on. So what they did was use the brief period of time that the MOU was to remain partially credible to export a lot of oil. Iran had accumulated a lot of oil on tankers in the Persian Gulf that couldn't leave because of the U.S. siege. And then, as soon as the MOU was

signed, tens of millions of barrels were sent to the Asian markets. After that, the Iranians were just emptying whatever they had onshore and sending it out, and bringing in ships with supplies, because Iran's ports were blocked for two months. So critical supplies that were needed were imported, and oil and other energy-related exports were exported.

That was probably the most important thing that came out of the MOU for Iran. Of course, the United States was pushing for oil to leave the Strait, and the energy crisis was, to a degree, seriously lessened as a result. But still, the global shortage of energy is very much present for all of us because for months, literally, there was a daily shortage that was accumulating. And it was not just oil and LNG, but everything. And actually, the oil shortage has been dealt with a bit better than everything else because, disproportionately, oil tankers were leaving the Persian Gulf, but other products and other goods that are necessary for the global economy were lagging far behind. Now, of course, this trade is closed, so the Americans began to violate the deal as expected.

They refused to hand over Iran's stolen assets. They refused to force the Israelis to leave Lebanon. These were all their commitments. They refused to stop threatening Iran. That was part of the deal. They expanded sanctions—another violation. They reversed the lifting of sanctions on Iranian oil exports—another violation of the deal. And so, in general, the only thing they left was the siege. There was no siege. They wanted to be able to take the oil but prevent Iran from being able to benefit from the MOU. And then they, of course, opened up this corridor, which was in violation of Article 5, because they wanted to undermine Iran's authority over this trade, which was recognized in Article 5 of the MOU. So for a couple of weeks, the Iranians kept warning the Americans.

They warned tankers not to use the American corridor. But the countries that assisted the United States in the war—the Saudis, the Qataris, the Emiratis—they would send their tankers through that corridor. In other words, they were trying to undermine Iran alongside the United States. So ultimately, Iran had to, after warning tankers repeatedly, strike a number of tankers, and the Americans bombed Iran, which, of course, is another violation. So Article 5 was violated because the Americans opened up their own corridor in violation of the agreement, and then, of course, they bombed Iran, and now they've shut the Strait through a siege. So every element of the MOU has been undermined by the Americans.

The objective of the Americans, of course, was to—since they lost the 40-day war, the Ramadan war—they lost the siege warfare, they lost at the negotiating table. What Trump was trying to do was undermine the MOU and win the war through cheating the Iranians. So they would refrain from carrying out their obligations. They would take control of the Strait of Hormuz and, in their dreams, undermine Iran, whereas that was not possible beforehand. So the Iranians resisted again. They said they were not going to allow the Americans to control the Strait. And the battle that we're seeing now, the war that we're seeing these days, is the war over the Strait of Hormuz.

The Americans are planning an invasion. I'm not saying it will necessarily happen. I'm not saying it will necessarily happen in the next few days. But they have plans for an invasion. Whether they

carry them out or not, we'll see. But the Iranians, as you pointed out, the focus of Iranian strikes is on Bahrain. And that's because that's where most of the American assets have been placed for a ground invasion. But, of course, Iran is also striking U.S. targets in Jordan, in Qatar, and in Iraq. Anywhere they feel it's necessary to strike, they'll strike. This time around, of course, Iran struck American assets in Oman too, because Oman was being used against Iran.

But that's where we are right now. The Americans are, of course, having much more difficulty destroying Iranian targets because, as you know, Iranian targets are deep underground. Key assets, when Iran wants to fire missiles or drones, they don't put them inside buildings or in piles somewhere. They take out whatever they need, fire them, and then go back to their bases. Or they take out different missiles and drones, spread them out in different areas, put them apart from one another so that the Americans cannot bomb them in large numbers. Everything has been spread out in Iran and placed underground.

So the Americans, when they strike, they're not able to do much. On the other hand, U.S. assets are all on land. They're not underground. And it's almost impossible to build underground bases anyway. Even if they do decide to build underground bases, it'll take years. But in some of these countries, it's just not possible. Iran—the reason why Iran has been able to effectively build so many of these underground bases without the Americans being able to destroy them—is because Iran is very mountainous. And in mountainous areas, these underground bases become much stronger.

But in flat land and islands, the ground is not such that you can protect your assets underground easily. So countries like Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, the shores of Saudi Arabia, and most of the Emirates—it's just not doable. But in any case, if they want to, they'll take care. So Iran has—it's easy for the Iranians to destroy U.S. assets. What they have to do is destroy the radars, the radar systems, the electronic warfare systems, and then they just take out the buildings, the hangars, and whatever it is that they're targeting. So Iran has that advantage. And of course, Iran has been accumulating missiles and drones for decades now. And even now, I think last night, they introduced a new missile to the war. And remember, the Americans were saying—Trump in particular was saying—that they've wiped out all of Iran's missiles and drones.

The Iranian strikes on U.S. targets during the last few days have been very heavy. And they're just firing missiles and drones across the region at U.S. targets. So we are where we are, and it's unclear where things are heading. The Iranians are determined to make sure that the restrictions in the Strait are not removed until the United States implements its obligations in the MOU. Well, whether you call it the MOU or not, it doesn't matter. Iran wants—demands—that the United States force the Israelis to leave Lebanon, to end the genocidal attacks, to hand over stolen assets, and so on. Otherwise, I'm quite certain that trade through the Strait of Hormuz will not normalize, even if the Americans halt the hostilities, the military hostilities.

#Glenn

Well, what do you see as the relevance of Yemen's involvement? Because, again, one sees a lot of countries being involved in this, but Yemen is very critical, it seems, given its geographical location. But, you know, you have to look at the geography as well as its capabilities—what it can actually do. So how do you think, or to what extent, is Yemen willing to get involved? Well, if we were to assess it, what would be both the intentions as well as the capabilities of Yemen to contribute to this war?

#Seyed M. Marandi

I think Yemen and Iraq are both very important. In Iraq, we saw during the funeral of Ayatollah Khamenei in the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala, many millions of people—unprecedented crowds. And for the first time during these funerals, as you know, the West has not been able to downplay it. In the past, whenever there were huge gatherings in Iran, they would say thousands of people gathered, sometimes maybe tens of thousands of people. I don't recall often hearing the word hundreds of thousands. But this time around, they admitted that many millions participated in Tehran. I think it was 15, 16 million. And in Mashhad and Qom in Iran, 40-some million collectively participated. There were three days of gatherings. In Iraq, though, you had many millions of people.

And that, I think, shows where the sentiments of the Iraqi people lie. And if the war escalates, that basically means that the Iraqi resistance has a mandate. So far, the Iraqi resistance has not been as active as it was four months ago. So it's clear that the resistance, the axis of resistance, the Iranians and their allies have not gone up the escalation ladder that far yet. The same is true with Yemen. Yemen actually is a strange country, because if I were the Saudis, I wouldn't have done this. But the Iranians broke the siege against the people of Yemen. I recall a former American military official saying that he was on a ship in Yemen, a U.S. naval ship enforcing the blockade, and they captured this small boat that was smuggling in medicine for Yemen.

And they just took the medicine and dumped it into the sea. So this is how the United States and the West and the Arab regimes in our region have all been treating Yemen. They've been trying to starve the population, trying to make them suffer as much as possible. It's not dissimilar to Gaza. The war on Yemen that was carried out for years by the Saudis and Emiratis, with the support of all these other countries, was a genocidal war like Gaza. But it failed. And Iran broke the siege. It sent a passenger aircraft to Yemen in order to facilitate the movement of Yemeni officials to take part in the Iranian funeral. And when the plane was going back, the Saudis bombed Sana'a International Airport, the capital's international airport.

And that put the Iranian plane at risk, but also Yemeni citizens at risk. And Yemen retaliated. So the tensions between Saudi Arabia and Yemen have heightened. And that is bad news for Saudi Arabia. That's bad news for the United States. It has been said that the Americans put pressure on the Saudis to carry out this attack. I don't know if that's true or not. I don't have any information. But I have heard this from a couple of credible, generally speaking, credible people. But I have no proof of it. So the situation in the Red Sea, therefore, is much more dangerous than it was before because of the rising tensions between Yemen and Saudi Arabia. What can Yemen do?

Well, they can stop the flow of oil from the Red Sea to the Asian markets very easily if they strike any of the supertankers. If they even hit one supertanker, that will affect trade immensely because insurance companies and tanker companies will rethink sending their ships into the Red Sea. If they strike Saudi oil and energy assets, that will be catastrophic too. You recall what ended the dirty war against Yemen was near the end of the seven years — the Yemeni armed forces began to strike back. They had acquired drone and missile capabilities, so they destroyed Saudi export capabilities, and the Saudis quickly accepted a ceasefire. So one would assume that those capabilities that existed back then have not disappeared.

So if they strike the Saudi oil export capabilities, it would be catastrophic for the Saudis, but also for the United States. That's why I think that U.S. pressure on Saudi Arabia to carry out this attack was foolish. Because now that the Strait of Hormuz is closed, if anything happens to Saudi exports, which are roughly anywhere between three to four and four and a half million barrels a day, based on different estimations, that would, I think, bring a very sharp rise in the price of oil. But so far, we haven't seen Yemen do that. We haven't seen the resistance in Iraq make a move, and we haven't seen the resistance in Yemen make a move. That would, in my opinion, mean that the Iranians want to manage this escalation rather than carry out all-out war.

#Glenn

Well, as you said, the years-long war against Yemen came to an end when Yemen was able to target the economic interests of Saudi Arabia. And when Trump, I guess, reluctantly signed the MOU, he also referred to the need to get energy through the Strait of Hormuz, as the U.S. only had a few weeks left of oil. So, obviously, the economic pressures are quite important here, I mean, especially when fighting a massive country, a great power like the United States. But again, the war hasn't been over for that long. What is the state of the economy now? How much oil have the Americans been able to get through? And, well, can they essentially go on for months now?

Because I'm just wondering, how is the situation of the global economy now? Because when I try to assess how this war is going to go, yes, one can look at the capabilities that the Americans were able to accumulate, the Iranians, what kind of weapons they were able to develop, but also the economic resilience. As you said, the Iranians were able to get a lot of their ships through. But what is the overall state of the global economy here? Because it doesn't seem like this was enough time for, you know, what J.D. Vance said — we need to buy some time to get oil flowing again. But this was not a lot of time.

#Sayed M. Marandi

Well, the irony is that if the United States had just allowed the MOU to move forward, by now the flow of oil would have normalized. But they tried to take control, and they tried to undermine Iran, and now we are where we are. But for a period of time, according to Vance's own interview—let's

accept his numbers—20 million barrels of oil a day left the Persian Gulf. That is, I don't know if that includes the Red Sea or not. If it doesn't, then more oil than normally would leave the Persian Gulf left for the global markets during this period of time. Let's say that he's not including the Red Sea. And it's logical.

I mean, it's possible because these tankers were already in the Persian Gulf and full of oil, so they were just waiting to leave. But new production isn't necessarily taking place. So for a few days or a few weeks, these tankers could all quickly leave. But then afterwards, we'll have to see if new tankers will be entering the Persian Gulf in sufficient numbers and whether the production in the countries in the Persian Gulf can be normalized. So you may have a sudden rise in the amount of oil that exists and that comes from the Strait of Hormuz, but that is not necessarily sustainable. And from my understanding and from what I've heard from experts, it isn't sustainable.

But if it's, let's say, 20 million barrels a day, and it's even more than normal, it still won't make a big difference because the shortages are enormous and the daily consumption hasn't changed drastically. So at most, let's say, three, four million extra barrels of oil were coming to the market a day for, let's say, three weeks. During this period that the Strait of Hormuz has been shut again, I think it equals that. The excess amount that went to the markets has now been canceled by the fact that during the past few days, this trade has been closed. And so for now, on every day that this trade is closed, it's going to create an increasingly dangerous situation.

Because as you rightly pointed out, when Trump was attacked by literally everyone over the MOU and giving Iran all those, and accepting all of Iran's demands, he said that we only have four weeks left of oil supplies. And he also said that he gave the example of Herbert Hoover and the Great Depression, so he didn't want to preside over that. So if we look at the fact that there was some extra oil leaving the Persian Gulf because it was already ready in the tankers, and the fact that nothing is leaving now, I would say that from now on, the shortage is—we go back to where we were when Trump made that statement.

Let's say four weeks of supplies. Again, this is just a general estimate. But I don't think that this situation is sustainable for long. It may be more than four weeks. I mean, Trump is not known to be honest. He may have just said four weeks to create fear so that people would stop criticizing the MOU. It could be six weeks. It could be eight weeks. But the crisis is getting worse by the day. And then, Glenn, there's also the fact that during these few weeks, these like three weeks when the oil was leaving the Strait—first of all, not nearly as many tankers were entering the Strait. That's really important for the future. And second of all, the tankers were mostly leaving and fewer tankers were entering the Strait.

So in the future, if there's an agreement and the Strait is opened, it will take more time to get oil out. And in addition to that, the fact that these countries restarted exporting and now they have to shut it down again is going to do increased damage to the oil wells. So the consequences of restarting this situation are going to be significant. And I think that the long-term consequences will

be felt even if the situation is resolved. But this time around, I don't see the Iranians normalizing this trade of hydrocarbons anytime soon, unless the United States fulfills its MOU obligations. Whether it's within the framework of the MOU or not, this time the Iranians are not going to open it without getting major concessions.

#Glenn

Well, I'm glad you mentioned that because that was a question of mine. That is the possibility for diplomacy now. From what I understand, in Iran—well, let's call them the hawks—made the warnings that, well, hawks, it seems, predicted that, as you said, the U.S. wouldn't implement the MOU. But this was essentially the argument for continuing the fighting. It appears that, well, their argument went through—that is, they were correct, the U.S. would not live up to this. So you would assume that the more hardline views within Tehran would now gain some momentum. So what is the possibility now of diplomacy?

Because, well, again, if you want to put it in the wider context, that is the JCPOA, which was never implemented by the U.S., and then they withdrew. Then there were two attacks on Iran while there were claims they were close to a deal. One just gets the impression that diplomacy is a mere instrument to regroup and shape the battlefield more favorably. So given that diplomacy now has been, well, destroyed or diminished to such an extent, what is Iran's approach now to further talks with the U.S.? Because on one hand, yes, I wouldn't trust the U.S. either if I were sitting in Tehran. On the other hand, at some point, one needs to talk to put an end to this whole thing.

#Seyed M. Marandi

You know, it's interesting, and you're absolutely correct. There have been divisions, and we've discussed this together before, in Iran about the way forward. And after the MOU, there was a divide on how to deal with the United States. Some were saying that the MOU is decent enough—we have to export our oil and import what we need—and if the Americans don't abide by the MOU, we'll just refrain from easing up on the Strait of Hormuz. Others were saying that we should have just continued with the war and shouldn't have signed the MOU. Now, who was right and who was wrong?

I think all of them, there was a consensus that the MOU wouldn't last. But there were differences over the fact that the MOU was signed anyway, that the Iranians came to this agreement. That gap has lessened because now we're back at war. So Iranian politics is more united. Now, Vance said something last night on Rogan's show, the Joe Rogan show. That was nonsense. He was saying that in Iran there are these two factions. Some are reasonable, some are crazy. And the reasonable one says we shouldn't have hit Iran.

#Glenn

That's all nonsense.

#Seyed M. Marandi

I mean, nothing in Iran happens without a mandate from the Supreme National Security Council. The Guards, the army—no one has the ability to just go fire missiles or fire drones or anything like that. That's simply not going to happen. And in Iran, as I said, the only reason why Iran struck those ships was because the Americans were violating the MOU with those ships. The governments that controlled those ships were assisting the Americans in the violation. And the Iranians were not going to accept that, because if you allow the Americans to undermine the deal, then they will undermine you. So Iranian politics is united today, more united than it was a week ago.

On the other hand, if you—and I'm sure you have—if you've listened to what J.D. Vance was saying on the show, it's clear that politics in the White House are not all that united. J.D. Vance seems to be speaking a very different language than Trump and others around Trump. But also, in addition to that, you see the attempt by Trump to get an additional budget for the war. The Secretary of War's attempts to increase the budget have been met with strong resistance from the Democrats because they see that the American population is opposed to the war, and Democrats disproportionately, almost universally, oppose the war. So you see resistance to that.

If that resistance continues, that's going to make it difficult for Trump to continue waging the war because he needs extra money. So Vance doesn't seem to be in full coordination with Trump. The Senate and the House may create problems for Trump in continuing the war. So while the political scene in Tehran is more united today with the start of the war, in the United States it seems to be much more divided. And this, I think, means that there may be an opportunity in the future to force the United States to change its policy, but the Iranians are not interested for the time being. So I don't think that we're going to have a ceasefire anytime soon.

I think that this is going to continue for a while. And then what the Iranians will want is for the United States to actually implement the deal or implement certain demands. The Iranians are not going to accept any new piece of paper. They're going to say, you carry these out and then leave. This trade can be normalized. Now, Trump may be able to say that he spoke to some of his imaginary Iranian friends and imaginary Iranian leaders and that they gave him everything he wanted, and they gave him big, big, bigly gifts and that sort of thing, and then justify another retreat. And that may be the case, but I don't see the Iranians going back to the negotiating table at all until action is taken.

So it doesn't matter to the Iranians what the Americans say. The Iranians, as I said, didn't trust them back then. The Iranians thought this MOU provided an opportunity for swiftly bringing in supplies and exporting oil. So I think that for the next few days, I'd be very surprised if the United States halts operations. But even if the United States does, I think that Iran will continue to keep the Strait of Hormuz closed until the United States implements what it promised to do. Whether you call

it the MOU or anything else, the Iranians want those demands to be met. Otherwise, there won't be a free flow of oil or anything else through the Strait.

#Glenn

Well, I just want to circle back to something you said earlier on, that is, that the situation in Iraq has also shifted to a great extent as a result of this war. And indeed, I've seen some reports that there's been some fighting close to the Iraqi border with Kuwait. And I was just wondering, what is the overall relevance here of Iraq? Because, again, if I think for the United States, ideally—and I'm not saying that's not a possibility anymore—but ideally they would want to use ground troops. You know, usually they fight through proxies, you use other people. So you use Ukrainians against Russia, you use Filipinos, for example, against the Chinese. But, you know, Iraqis would ideally have been an instrument for the United States to be used again against Iran. You, as a veteran of the Iraq-Iran war, I don't have to tell you, of course, but what is the relevance now of Iraq? I mean, can they play a significant role in this war on the side of Iran? Sure.

#Seyed M. Marandi

Yes, no doubt. I mean, the Americans do use proxies against Iran. The Kurdish terrorists in northern Iraq and other terror groups, they exist there, they're trained there, and they're funded. And the Iraqi local government, the Kurdish government, tolerates them. So they have bases, and the Iranians are bombing them literally every day. Also, you have the Wahhabi, Salafi, Takfiri elements in Pakistan's Balochistan, where Pakistan doesn't have much control. They are trained, they carry out operations in Iran, and we've seen extra, more activity in these two areas than in Pakistan. But these groups won't be able to do anything important. They don't have that capability. Their numbers are small.

So if the Americans want to carry out a land operation, they don't have to do it themselves. And the places where the Americans are being prepared or have been trying to prepare themselves for a potential land operation are Kuwait and Bahrain. That's why they're being attacked disproportionately. Anything that could be linked to a land operation against Iran is being bombed in these two countries. Now, this, Glenn, is important. From what I'm hearing from Iranian people who know a thing or two about the military, the U.S. bombing of Iran is being carried out in a way that would be appropriate for a ground invasion. The targeting, the places that are being bombed, are more appropriate for land defense.

Now, the problem, the reason why this surprises me a bit, and it surprises the Iranian military, is that now is not the time for a land operation because the heat and the humidity in the Arabian Peninsula and in the Persian Gulf are very high. It's, you know, like in the high 40s, 50 degrees, over 50 degrees, and the humidity is like 100%, especially on the other side and around the Persian Gulf, the immediate surroundings of the Persian Gulf. So if the Americans want to take islands, it will be hell on earth.

They'll be in their uniforms and they'll be running. During the day, that would be very dangerous to do. Troops could die as a result of the heat very easily. So now is not the best time to carry out a land invasion. The Iranians were, as I said, the Iranians did not believe the Americans would carry out the move. The Iranians believed that the Americans would, if they carried out a land invasion, do it in late September or after late September, when the temperatures began to cool. It would still be hot, but it would not be as horrible and difficult as now, which would be terrible for morale. And I'm sure the U.S. soldiers in the region, their morale is very low.

Because Iranian soldiers, they go home, even in the more difficult areas near the Persian Gulf region—difficult meaning the heat and all that. But for the Americans, they're just based under terrible circumstances. And their equipment is not well protected—you know, the dust storms, the heat, the humidity. The heat is definitely not good for any of the equipment, the hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of equipment that has been brought to the region. So, um, but the pattern is that of an armed force that wants to carry out a land operation. So whether they do it or not, I don't know. The Iranians are hitting very hard, and they are prepared for a land war.

They've been preparing for decades. The Iranians—we discussed this during the 40-day war before on your show—when I said that the Iranians actually want the Americans to carry out a land invasion. And the same is true now because they felt that if there was a land invasion, they would win. The Iranians would win. The Iranians would let them take some islands, they'd let them take parts of the mainland, wherever they want to go, and then they would start hitting them. And the American soldiers would be very vulnerable, and supporting those soldiers would be very difficult because the other side of Kuwait is far away.

Bahrain is far away. The logistics of an operation would be very difficult and very difficult to sustain. So the Iranians believe that if the Americans carry out a land operation, that would actually end the war sooner because this would be the final defeat. But that didn't happen back then, and the Iranians are planning for it now. They're just surprised that the Americans are conducting themselves in a way at the moment that would be appropriate for a somewhat imminent land invasion, or a land invasion that would be carried out before late September. Well...

#Glenn

If the U.S. would do a land invasion—and again, I've seen the same reports—obviously every day I see Kuwait and Bahrain especially being hit very hard. But my last question is just about Saudi Arabia, though. To what extent do you think they might involve themselves in such an operation? Because if you want to seize any Iranian islands, for example, or even try to invade the Iranian mainland, you would think they would need the Saudis.

#Sayed M. Marandi

You know, Glenn, the real issue, I think—it was just announced a few hours ago again by the military—that if Iran's critical infrastructure is targeted, they will destroy everything. And they said that during the 40-day war as well. But a land invasion would mean destroying critical infrastructure by nature. You'll be taking territory, you'll be destroying it. So I think that all of these countries are at risk. And Saudi Arabia in particular is at risk from the Red Sea and from Yemen too. I don't see... I mean, the problem is, Glenn, that these countries recognize that their interests are not in fighting against Iran. But in the case of Kuwait and the regime in Bahrain, they are... I mean, maybe the regime in Bahrain is—I mean, it is very dependent on American support to exist. But Kuwait and Bahrain have shown a particular hostility towards Iran during the last few weeks.

But if there is a land war, the Iranians will not continue just focusing on these two countries. If Iran's critical infrastructure is taken out on these islands or the United States occupies them, then I don't think Iran will show restraint—Iran will retaliate. And the armed forces have said that all critical infrastructure in the region will be destroyed. If that happens, that brings an end to these countries—Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and Oman too, now that they've been helping the Americans. They can't survive if Iran strikes their critical infrastructure, because these countries are desert countries. I mean, Iran is a country you've visited. Iran has forests. Iran has rivers. Iran has mountains. Iran has deserts, but it has everything else too. Iran is almost self-sufficient in agriculture despite the sanctions.

If it wasn't for the sanctions, Iran would be more than just self-sufficient. And this year we've had a pretty good rate, better than average slightly, whereas we had a drought for the last three, four years. So if there is all-out war, and if they try to take Iranian territory, if they start striking Iranian critical infrastructure, as Trump has threatened to do, Iran doesn't want to go there. But that would mean all-out war. And we've seen—I'm sure you've seen—the footage of Iranian missile strikes and drone strikes during the last few days. Very precise. Better than before. It's clear that the missile capabilities of Iran are being enhanced, both in quality and quantity.

And Iran can easily take out the key oil-producing assets, the key gas-producing assets, the key electrical power plants, and there aren't that many in these countries. They're big and close to Iranian borders. Iran doesn't even have to use its long-range missiles. In fact, during the last few days, Iran has not been using more than a handful of its long-range missiles. It's been using short-range and medium-range missiles and drones to strike. Only on a few occasions, probably just for, I don't know, practice, did they use long-range missiles. So this, I think, is the biggest danger. Saudi Arabia is in a particularly dangerous situation because it is the only country that continues to export oil through the Red Sea, through the Strait of Hormuz.

That's not possible anymore. But it's antagonized Yemen, and the Yemenis are not going to back down. On the other hand, if the United States carries out a land invasion, that means by nature targeting Iranian critical infrastructure, because you'd be taking that territory. And if Trump carries out the threat to strike Iranian bridges and electrical power plants, then I would say that these

countries would probably cease to exist. And remember, in these temperatures, people would have to leave immediately. They would have to go to Iraq or Yemen or Syria, but they most certainly wouldn't be able to stay anywhere near the Persian Gulf region.

#Glenn

This is incredible. I think one of the key lessons from the war against Iran has, in my opinion, been that the illusion of escalation control is quite dangerous. And I think the U.S. still hasn't really embraced that lesson. As we now see, I think this war can deepen and widen very, very quickly, and yeah, it's an interesting situation. I just don't see a military option for the United States. Obviously, they didn't see one either before—that's why they signed the MOU—and also now the diplomatic window is shutting down. So no, it's an incredible situation. Anyways, I would have taken an hour of my day.

#Seyed M. Marandi

Just one final point. I think that the Americans know that this was foolish. And the geography of the region doesn't benefit the United States. And again, if these countries do collapse, that means we go into a global economic depression far worse than the 1930s. Iraq would be much safer, Yemen would be much safer, and of course Iran would be much safer than staying in the Arabian Peninsula under these circumstances. So that collapse would be irreversible. But the point is, well, why is this happening? Why is the United States doing this?

I think it goes back to what Joe Kent said at the very beginning when he handed in his resignation letter at the beginning of the war. He was a Trump appointee. He was as high up in the intelligence ladder as you can possibly get. He said that it's the Zionist lobby and the Israeli machine. They want this war. If you add that to hubris and Trump's arrogance and American exceptionalism, that is the only reason why this is happening. Otherwise, basically what Trump seems to be doing is he's gambling the house in the hope that somehow, miraculously, he will come out on top. But that's not what's going to happen.

And that's why I think what Vance said in the interview, despite the nonsense he said about Iran being one group of fanatics and one group of crazy people and the other group sensible people, he needs to say that in order not to be seen as turning against Trump. He's repeating that narrative, but what I think Vance recognizes is that this ship is going to sink and that he has to get off the ship. And maybe he sees himself as the person who can save the ship. But this doesn't make sense. And I think Vance's statements sort of indicate that the Democrats in the House and the Senate, their resistance to the money that wants to be provided to the Department of War, are indicative of that too. Because they obviously know things that the media won't tell the American...

#Glenn

Well, thanks again for taking the time today. I hope you can come back very soon.

#Seyed M. Marandi

Thank you for having me. I hope when I come back, it will be to discuss more optimistic scenarios.