

Seyed M. Marandi: Saudi Oil Is Burning & Trump Has No Way Out

Prof. Seyed Mohammad Marandi is a former advisor to Iran's nuclear negotiation team. Prof. Marandi discusses Saudi Arabia's miscalculation in terms of attacking Yemen. Trump has trapped himself in the Iran War, and his options keep getting worse. Buy merchandise: <https://diesen-shop.fourthwall.com/en-nok> Glenn Diesen clip channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@Prof.GlennDiesenClips> 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](https://www.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 joined again by Professor Saeed 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 very much for having me, Glenn.

#Glenn

So the U.S. war on Iran, it seems to only get more intense, and also it's widening. But the last time we spoke, we discussed what the escalation ladder might look like. That is, you mentioned that Yemen will likely play a greater role in this war in response to the U.S. escalations, for example, shutting down the Red Sea. And, well, since then, we've seen Yemen do some drone strikes on Saudi Arabia, more specifically hitting its Aramco oil facilities. And we see now the Saudis, again, seem to increase their backing of their side in Yemen to fight against who in the West call the Houthis. But what is it that's happening now? And where do you see this headed?

#Seyed M. Marandi

Well, there seems to be a bit of a strange turn of events because the United States, for the last couple of nights, has not attacked Iran. And all is quiet on the Hormuz front. Of course, the Iranians continue to shut the Hormuz to ships affiliated to Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar. And of course, they are all U.S. allies. And a ship was targeted by the Iranians, a ship which

violated Iran's naval orders. And this was the second ship that Iran struck yesterday since Trump declared that every time from now on that a ship is struck, the United States will take out an aircraft, a bridge, or a power plant. But two ships have been struck so far, and Trump has not done anything yet. Some people were speculating that Trump would attack on Friday after the markets close.

But here we are on Sunday, and so far, nothing. That doesn't mean we won't have war. But I think it is an indication that the United States does recognize the seriousness of the situation, most probably at least, and that the Iranians are not going to be intimidated or they're not going to back down, which is something that they should have known anyway, because during the 40 days of war that we had, Trump said back then he's going to annihilate Iran. He's going to obliterate Iran. He's going to take it back to the Stone Age. He's going to wipe out a civilization. But it didn't change Iran's military posture or its policy with regards to the Strait of Hormuz and the region. So now, for whatever reason, I don't know obviously what goes on in Trump's head, but it's been two days of quiet.

On the other hand, the Yemeni armed forces, Ansarullah, or as they're called in the West, the Houthis, which is not a correct term, but in any case, they did the smart thing. As the Strait of Hormuz is closed—when the Strait of Hormuz is closed—the Red Sea obviously becomes much more important, because part of the oil that was exported through the Strait of Hormuz is now going through the Red Sea. It's more expensive for the Saudis to pump it there, but still, they're able to export, by some estimates, four to four and a half million barrels of oil a day, sometimes a bit less than four million barrels, sometimes maybe a bit more than four and a half. But it seems like four, four and a half million barrels a day have been exported. So that helps the United States and the West in managing the situation to a degree.

And of course, it helps the Saudi regime survive because it can't export from the Persian Gulf. It can't export other goods from the Persian Gulf. It can't trade through the Persian Gulf. So it becomes extremely dependent on the Red Sea. So that makes this the opportune moment for Ansarullah to put pressure on the Saudis. Now, why would they want to put pressure on the Saudis? Because the Saudis have imposed a siege on Yemen for well over a decade. They imposed a genocidal war on Yemen with the support of the West, with the support of the region. They imposed starvation back then in 2015 and '16. The countries in the region, they all supported it. And even Qatar and Turkey, before the siege on Qatar, they were also part of this. And then, of course, after the siege, they tilted away.

The West supported it. Australia. There were thousands of British advisers helping keep the Saudi Air Force flying and active to bomb cities. They bombed funerals. They bombed schools. They... and they carried out a genocide. Hundreds of thousands of people died, many of starvation. And the U.S. blockaded the Red Sea. Even U.S. naval ships would block food from coming in. A senior U.S. official once said that he was on a ship, a military naval ship, and they stopped a boat that was smuggling

in medicine to Yemen, and they went and dumped it all in the sea. That's what this coalition was doing to Yemen back then. So that siege continues even until today, to a lesser degree, but still very brutal and barbaric.

But gradually, during that siege and that warfare, the Yemenis began to build their own drone and missile capabilities, obviously with the help of Iran. But Yemen has lots of smart people, lots of engineers, lots of educated people, universities. So they began to develop this capability. And then finally, the Yemenis were able to strike very hard at Saudi oil installations. And that caused the Saudis to accept a ceasefire. Now, the siege has not been lifted. And recently, the Saudis made a very foolish move. And that was that Iran broke the siege by air, by sending a passenger plane to Yemen to pick up a delegation for the funeral of Ayatollah Khamenei. Of course, it was more than just for picking up people at the funeral.

It was symbolic. They were breaking the siege. And the Saudi Air Force tried to approach the airport. Apparently, anti-aircraft defenses prevented it. The Iranians brought the delegation to Iran. When they were traveling back, the Saudis bombed the airport. Obviously, they wanted to prevent the siege from being broken because if planes keep going, then obviously that's the first step in breaking the siege. But this, I think, was a major mistake, especially coming at a time when the Strait of Hormuz was closed. So, of course, Iran was outraged because the crew on that plane were just ordinary men and women. It was a passenger plane. And Yemen, of course, they were outraged. It was an act of war.

So they struck back, and then the Saudis struck al-Hodeidah. And we saw what Yemen did the night before last. So that created huge damage to the Saudi oil infrastructure. And it sends a message both to the Saudis and to the United States about the future of the oil market if this war continues. So you see that the axis of resistance is working collectively, but also Yemen is working together, because this is the best opportunity for Yemen to break the siege, because the Americans, they need that oil. And what is interesting is that, and I'm not sure about the details, but as far as I know, the Yemenis did not focus on blocking the oil exports. They did lots of damage to very key facilities. But if I'm not mistaken, the Saudis can still export oil, whereas the Yemenis could have destroyed the port and just blocked oil exports.

And this is just my personal interpretation. It may be wrong. But I think they didn't do it because they've closed the Red Sea effectively to Saudi ships. Already, they've hit three ships to teach the Saudis to take them seriously. And I think basically the reason why they didn't destroy their ability to export oil and instead have just blocked the exports themselves is so that the Saudis would have an incentive to back down and to have their exports restored. In other words, if Yemen had just destroyed Saudi exports, that would have been, of course, a catastrophic blow to Mohammed bin Salman. But here the Yemenis are basically, in my opinion, saying that, look, you stop this siege, you stop killing our kids, you stop starving our people, and you can export your oil.

But look at what we can do to you. Look at what we've done to your other facilities, how we've devastated them. And there'll be many months before they can work. And apparently some of these facilities are among the most advanced in the world. So, like Iran, I mean, you can see that Yemen and Iran are behaving in the same manner. The Iranians, they can destroy Qatar's gas installations. And believe me, many Iranians want the Iranian government to do this. They just want the Iranian government to wipe it out because of all they've done to Iran, or Saudi. But the Iranian government isn't doing that. They want to preserve the infrastructure in this region. They want the region to go back to normal, but without U.S. hegemony and U.S. domination and constant U.S. threats.

So when the United States threatens to destroy Iranian territory, vital, critical structures, the Iranians say that we're going to destroy the critical infrastructure in these regimes that have facilitated this war. But they're not going to escalate themselves first. So they want to keep that incentive. They want to keep this incentive for the United States to refrain from escalation and for the regimes in the region to put pressure on the United States in order for it to refrain from escalating. But in any case, all this aside, simultaneously, the Saudis are being targeted, the Red Sea is shut for Saudi oil, and the Strait of Hormuz is shut. And it's been two days since Trump or his armed forces have stopped attacking Iran, and they have not attacked Yemen either during this period.

#Glenn

Well, I guess that's the logic of the escalation ladder as well, not to go all out in an all-out war, because that would essentially put the Saudis as well all in if everything is being attacked. So it's that ability to escalate further. This is what usually imposes restraint on the opponent, that is, showing you're able to destroy the targets, but leaving out the more critical targets yet to give the opponent a chance to change its position. But if we would then put ourselves in the shoes of the Saudis, what kind of a—how does it look like for them?

What are their options now? And I'm assuming that the Americans are putting pressure on them to assist in this war because the Americans seem to be fighting this alone. Even the Israelis are sitting this one out, which is interesting. I see Iran is not striking the Israelis, but the Israelis are not striking Iran either. So how do you see the situation, I guess, the world from the eyes of the Saudis, as well as the Israelis, for that matter, because they have limited options now as well.

#Seyed M. Marandi

Well, first of all, I think the attack from Yemen was probably a major surprise because the quality of the attack was very high. And obviously, the technological advancements made by the Yemeni armed forces and Ansarullah are very substantial. And we have not heard of any success, or major success, in downing the missiles, drones, and cruise missiles. They themselves have said they fired dozens. So their arsenal is very substantial. On the other hand, the Iranian arsenal is enormous.

We've discussed this before. The Iranians have been preparing themselves for this war for decades. They've been producing missiles and drones for a very, very long time, and they continue to produce them now.

And the Iranians can go on with this for a very, very long time. Throughout the next year, the Americans will run out of military hardware, or missiles and air defense systems, far before the Iranians. But now that you look at Yemen alongside Iran and its capabilities, I think if I was a Saudi, I'd be terrified. Because on the one hand, you have Yemen, which can tolerate—its threshold for pain is very high. It can tolerate huge amounts of pain. It survived the genocidal war. It was treated like Gaza for years. But the difference is that in the case of Gaza, the Palestinian people had huge amounts of sympathy.

In the case of Yemen, there wasn't that much sympathy. It was largely ignored. But they still, they persevered. They won. And to their enormous credit, I mean, extraordinary, the morality of these people, when Gaza was being—when the genocide in Gaza began, they shut the Red Sea to put pressure on the Israeli regime to bring an end to the genocide, despite all the hardship that they'd been through. And despite the fact that, except for Iran and the Axis of Resistance, there was very little sympathy for them across the region, even on the streets.

So, now you see that the Iranians and Yemen, they both, they can tolerate a great deal of pain. The Iranian economy is not nearly as dependent on oil or gas as the Saudis. It is dependent. I mean, it is huge in Iran. But Iran has agriculture, it has its own industries, but it doesn't depend on oil or gas exports like the Saudis do. The Saudi economy is an oil economy. And if that is just shut down for a few months, the Saudis are in serious trouble. They have nothing but oil.

They have hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of shares and assets in the United States. But I'm not sure if the Americans will allow them to withdraw a substantial amount of money, they and the Emiratis and others, to sell their bonds or their shares to make up with, because that would be hundreds of billions of dollars if they actually did that. So the Saudis are in a very difficult situation. And as I said, the Iranians and Yemen can tolerate a lot more pain than they can. But then again, the fact that the Saudis bombed the airport and started this with Yemen, I think, was a very irrational decision to take. I've heard from a couple of people who normally are well-informed that the Americans pushed the Saudis to do this.

But even if the Americans... it doesn't matter if it was the Americans or the Saudis. It was a foolish act because it has made the Saudi regime much more vulnerable. If I was a Saudi and the Iranians had sent a plane, I would not have struck the airport, even though I know that the Iranians would probably send in more planes and every week or so they'd send another plane, or maybe two a week, gradually. But I still wouldn't risk starting a war with Yemen when the Strait of Hormuz is closed. So I think this puts the Saudis in a much more difficult position. But more importantly, I think it puts Trump in a very difficult position.

Because during the... after the 40-day war and the two months or so of siege warfare, where the United States obviously lost, Trump signed the MOU, and his justification was that we only have four weeks of energy resources or oil left in our reserves. Now, how accurate that is, I don't know. But in any case, there is a problem. There's a serious problem. The Strait of Hormuz was open for a couple of weeks, normalized for a couple of weeks, but it's been closed now for over two weeks again. And by shutting down the Red Sea and threatening Saudi installations, the pace at which the shortages increase has risen. And that, I think, puts Trump in a much more dangerous situation.

#Glenn

Yeah, I was going to say, the problems they had, be it the oil shortage, the global economy going off a cliff, or what's becoming more of a divisive issue, apparently, within Trump's administration, is the depletion of its military resources. None of these things have changed. So this is why it's very strange that the U.S. decided to go for another round of escalation, war against Iran, especially after the MOU. You did mention, though, that many were surprised by Yemen's advanced missiles and its ability to strike Saudi Arabia. Again, this is key to understanding why the Saudi action was a miscalculation.

But we also see this on the Iranian side, though, that the Iranian attacks are now being reported in media as being much more devastating. That is, it's causing more American casualties, destruction of American military targets, its equipment. And I was wondering, how are you reading this? To what extent is what is being hit on the American side, but also why? Is it the missile developments improving? I mean, because it appears they're faster now, more precise. They have more evasive maneuvers, so they avoid any missile defense. Is it support from abroad, from the Chinese or the Russians? Or are the Iranians simply less worried now about having high U.S. casualties?

Because, you know, one could put forth the hypothesis that Iran didn't want to hit too many American troops because if the casualties are too high, that would undermine the ability of diplomacy. But now, I don't think anyone thinks diplomacy is a serious proposition. So, again, I'm just throwing out thoughts here. I wanted to hear from you, though. How do you explain what is happening now? Because you would think after all these rounds of attacks on Iran, it would get weaker. But, again, people are a bit surprised because this is also in the Western media. And, again, when you go through all the rounds of attacks, narrative control, it still comes out at the other end, making the point that Iranian missiles are getting faster, more precise, causing more destruction. So how do we make sense of this?

#Seyed M. Marandi

Well, there are a couple of things. One is that, first of all, one thing that I've personally learned during the past, what is it now, five months or so of war, is that the Iranians are actually much better at keeping secrets than I thought. Iranians talk a lot. And if you speak to Iranian politicians, everyone has their own... Everyone is an authority. We always say that in Iran. Everyone is... We

have 90 million leaders and 90 million presidents and 90 million... Everyone is an authority. And often, during the past, let's say, a few months, when I've spoken to people who I thought were highly informed, people who are advisors to high-ranking officials, and they'd say something to me about, let's say, what Iran's plans are, what Iran's capabilities are, it would turn out to be wrong.

And I think that the military has actually been keeping secrets better than I thought, because these people who usually speak, I would have thought that they were informed, and because of their position, that they should be informed, or I thought that they should be informed. They're actually not that well informed. And that, I think, shows that the Iranian armed forces have actually been able to keep military secrets from the public realm quite well. And I would imagine that that has probably been very effective in keeping information away from the Americans. Because after all, if I know something, I'll tell someone on the phone, and someone will tell someone else, or someone will listen in on the conversation. I mean, the technology that they have gives them that capability.

But from what I've experienced over the past few months, I think that there were things that I did not expect to happen that happened. There were capabilities that I didn't know that they had. And I think, based on the incorrect information that some people who have status have, that the Americans probably—their information on Iran's capabilities was deeply flawed. And the same is true with Israel. And so, one thing that I think surprised them is not just what you pointed out, the effectiveness of their missiles and drones, but also their sheer numbers. The Iranians, they can go on and on with these attacks for a very, very long time. And they're producing them. And they actually had secret factories underground alongside factories that were out in the open.

So the Iranians were, I think, they were playing a game of deception for a very long time, putting some things on the ground for the Americans to see or the Israeli regime to see, and then underground they were doing other things, or at least they were doing things in parallel. So the number of missiles and drones that were being produced was far higher than the numbers that the Americans had calculated, much higher, and their capability to continue producing them as well. So that's one thing. It's the sheer numbers, but also the quality and the capabilities. My understanding is that even during the war, the quality of their missiles has been improving. But still, they've been prioritizing using older missiles and older drones.

Older drones, in particular, are being used because they have endless amounts of these drones, and since no one is able to down them, since they're not being brought down by any of these—by the United States or the others—they'll just continue using them until they run out, and they'll move on to the more highly developed technologies. And one thing that I think that the Iranians have learned, and we've discussed this before, is that during the 12-day war, they saw the flaws in their defense capabilities and they adjusted. And so the Americans, during the 40 days of fighting, were unable to destroy any of Iran's missiles on the ground or the launchers. And then during these 15 days now, I think—I'm not quite sure—but there are two days of quiet.

But the rest, they haven't been able to destroy Iran's capability to launch missiles. I believe that the Iranians have also transported or given that knowledge to Yemen. So obviously, the Yemeni armed forces, they too have been developing more underground bases, and they're more capable now of firing their missiles and drones without being detected. And the difference between the Iranians and Yemen and the Americans and the Israelis and the others is that these assets are all underground, and their assets are on the ground. So the Iranians have been able to strike targets, destroy them, and, of course, during the last couple of weeks, with much greater accuracy than before.

So for Iran, ever since True Promise One, and then, you know, it's just been evolution. They've been evolving and getting better at what they're doing. And also, the Iranians have a lot of intelligence on the ground. They have lots of people. And my understanding is that they have lots of sympathizers across the region. They're not necessarily all citizens. Some could just be spies, paid spies. But in any case, Iran has lots of intelligence. They know which hotels the Americans are staying in. They know which buildings they're occupying in the Emirates, in Kuwait, in Qatar. And the Iranians warned just, I think, two days ago that they're going to start striking those buildings, those hotels where the Americans are staying.

And then, of course, the Americans stopped. I'm not saying they stopped because of this particular threat, but in any case, this was one of the last things that the Iranians had said they were going to do before the Americans halted the bombing. Now, the halt in the bombing could just be a short-term event. The Americans may actually carry out these heavy strikes on Iran, which have been discussed. But the problem is that the longer it's delayed, the greater the global energy crisis. And so things are going to get progressively worse for the Americans. Of course, the siege is going to have an effect on the Iranians too.

But as I said in a previous discussion that we've had, the Iranians, when they signed the MOU, knowing that the Americans were going to violate it and undermine it, they quickly, as soon as the siege was lifted—and the Americans lifted the siege for themselves, basically, because they wanted to alleviate the energy crisis—the Iranians had tens of tankers full of oil, and so they quickly exported it to the Asian markets, and they brought in ships to bring in critical supplies for Iran. So the Iranians now can—they have a better ability to show patience, whereas I think the Americans are running short on energy.

#Glenn

I keep thinking that what's unfortunate for Iran, though, is that it's up against the U.S., Israel. And again, their intelligence services are quite impressive. So I would think that they would get a lot of information on Iran. So if Iran is infiltrated, if I was Iranian, I would do as you suggest. I would put out a lot of this information to flood the information space, just if it's difficult to keep big secrets. However, though, with this, I think you're right with this de-escalation now by Trump. Well, you say they haven't struck anything over the past few days in Iran. And again, the media reports, one

should take with a grain of salt, of course. But the suggestion is that Trump wants to go for a massive escalation. However, his advisers are warning him that the situation, the consequences would be very unpredictable. And the assumption of success, I mean... First, you have to define that success.

So he's being advised against it. At least this is what we're told. But, of course, the propaganda is quite heavy. And I'm not sure media is reporting on what's happening or what they want people to think is happening. But either way, it is interesting how Iran responds to it. Because, again, if I was Iranian, I would see a dilemma here. On one hand, if the Americans want to de-escalate this, that's a good thing. Buy some time. Also, any day without bombs is a good day, I guess. On the other hand, the other side of that equation would be that it would give the Americans time to regroup as they want. And I guess giving away that escalation control to the Americans, who decide when the escalation begins, when the de-escalation begins, if the Americans feel they have this control over the war, it would make them much bolder.

They would be willing to go into a big conflict, knowing that they're able to pull back if and when they would want to. I guess that's how also they ended up in the problem with the Strait of Hormuz. They thought if they weren't able to decapitate Iran, then they could go back to the old status quo. But as they found out, there's no such thing. Anyways, my question was actually about the Strait of Hormuz, because the U.S. had a lot of objectives, we know. They wanted regime change. They wanted to knock out the nuclear program of Iran, you know, military, civilian, doesn't matter. They didn't want anything. They wanted to destroy the ballistic missile program.

They wanted Iran to sever its partnership with regional allies. But now it appears that the main objective is to have the Strait of Hormuz opened again, that is not in Iranian control. Again, the old status quo. This is what they want. How do you see this shaping the conflict moving forward? Because on the Iranian side, I see some reports of the Iranians and Oman being in talks. I'm not sure exactly about what. And on the American side, they're thinking, you know, this has to come under U.S. control in some way or another. I see Trump talking about how they're the guardians of the Strait of Hormuz.

But at some point, the PR and the, well, let's call it BS, has to actually manifest itself in something specific. So I spoke to Trump's former counterterrorism chief yesterday, Joe Kent, and he was making the point that the U.S. might now go in for a ground invasion, even though he made the point this is going to be a huge disaster. They can capture islands, for example, but they can't hold them. They can't do the supply and support. I was just wondering—sorry, a very long question—but at the heart of it, how do you see the Strait of Hormuz essentially shaping the conflict moving forward, given the Iranians having talks with Oman, the Americans seemingly getting quite desperate?

#Seyed M. Marandi

First of all, I think that, in a sense, Iran in this conflict is already going up the escalation ladder in a way by keeping the Strait of Hormuz closed. And I know also now that the Red Sea is closed as well. It is sort of very quietly increasing the pressure on the United States. Of course, the pressure is on Iran too, no doubt about it. But the Iranian capability to tolerate pain is different from that of the United States for a host of reasons. One is, of course, we've seen the funerals, we've seen the support for the Islamic Republic among the general population, which is key. But also, Iran is the victim of this war. That gives people greater resilience.

Iran's religious ideology, Shia Islam, makes it particularly resistant against oppression and aggressors and empire. So these all make Iran more patient. It will be difficult, but more patient. For the United States, it's a war of choice. Everyone knows that it's being done for Israel. It's not being done for the American people. That will make it more difficult for it to tolerate inflation and economic pain and so on. If it was a war that the Americans had to fight, then, of course, their threshold for pain and so on would be different, obviously. But this is not the case. So I think that the Iranians, every day that goes by, they have the advantage. As I said, especially with Yemen added to the equation.

With regards to the Strait of Hormuz, that for Iran, I think is clearly by now, clear to all, a red line. They've taken the Strait of Hormuz, and they're not giving it away. They've made this very public too. It's not just something that someone put out there so that they can withdraw. They've been very clear that the Strait of Hormuz, it's forever changed. The Americans, they can go a couple of different directions. One is they could gradually back down, or they could escalate, or they can continue, which I think would be a terrible option for the United States because they'll fail. Or they can escalate to try to find a solution to force a different situation upon the Iranians, where the Americans have the upper hand.

They can only do it in two ways. They either carry out a land invasion or they carry out heavy strikes, or both. But, you know, if they carry out heavy strikes on Iran, Iran will devastate the Arab regimes in the Persian Gulf. They will collapse, especially now, until then this September. It'll definitely bring about their immediate collapse. But even if the Americans carried out heavy attacks three, four months from now, Iran, when it devastates those countries in response for their complicity, they would collapse anyway. But now it would be just, you know, the height of the heat is in August in the Arabian Peninsula, and the humidity.

So then the other is the land offensive that Joe Kent, I think you spoke with, said that. I didn't see the program, and I'll try to watch. But what would be the purpose? The purpose would be to take Iranian islands, let's say, where Iran exports oil. Because one of the islands that they keep speaking of is Kharg. But when there's a siege on the Strait of Hormuz or on Iranian ports, then Kharg is not exporting any oil. So what is the purpose of occupying the island? All it does is that if they take this island and a couple of other islands and some of the mainland, let's say, to open the Strait of Hormuz, it won't open the Strait of Hormuz because the Iranians keep the Strait of Hormuz from far away.

I mean, they're striking U.S. bases in Jordan with precision, destroying their key assets. So this is not like the 20th century or the 18th century, where you have to have soldiers standing on the shore and boats in the middle of the strait saying, "Okay, you can't go, and you can, you know, you can go, but you can't go." Iranians can take out all the ships. I mean, the ships are throughout the Persian Gulf. Many of them are far away from the strait. They're near, you know, in the north of the Persian Gulf. And the Iranians have half the shore. That's why it's called the Persian Gulf. And they have all these islands. And they have mountains running right alongside the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

So the Iranians can destroy the oil installations, the gas installations, the electrical power plants. They can destroy the desalination plants. And Iran doesn't need desalination plants. One percent of Iran's population uses desalination plants. In these countries, it's almost everyone. And they can do it from anywhere in Iran. They can destroy all these from anywhere in Iran. They can destroy the ships. So taking the Strait of Hormuz physically is not going to do anything. Taking an island through which Iran exports oil is not going to do anything. What it does is it puts all those troops close to Iran, inside Iran. And Iranian ground troops have been preparing themselves for this war for decades. They have their own drones.

They have their own rockets. And it will be close combat. And they will be fighting, in many cases, from the mountains. So, and the Americans will have a huge logistical problem, especially in the next, let's say, for the next three, four months, when it's very hot. And say in three, four months, it's still hot. And half of the problem is just getting enough water in for their soldiers. So it will fail. I mean, they'll be defeated. So whether the United States escalates through heavy airstrikes or through a land operation, it's going to lead to Iran destroying the critical infrastructure of the countries on the other side of the Persian Gulf because they were complicit. This is Iran's deterrence, and they will have to retaliate ultimately.

If a land operation is carried out, these countries are involved. So Iran will destroy their critical infrastructure. And it will make it much more difficult, by the way, for the United States to bring in logistical support. When all these countries have fallen apart and there's no electricity and no water, then the United States is going to have a much more difficult time bringing things in from Kuwait or from Bahrain or from the Emirates. So if it's heavy airstrikes, the region—Iran retaliates. If it's a land offensive, Iran retaliates. In either case, the United States loses. If it's a continuation of the same, they lose because the global energy crisis will hit the world. I mean, this is not like two, three months ago.

The shortages have accumulated, and we're reaching a tipping point. And with the Bab al-Mandab being as it is, it's going to be worse. So the smart solution is for the United States to walk away. I mean, if I was the United States, I'd walk away. But even that's a problem, because if they walk away, Iranians are not going to just open the Strait of Hormuz. They may open it up somewhat to help, like, Global South countries and fertilizer, and to help them as much as possible. But they're

not going to help the West. They're not going to help any country that is bound to the West. And so the United States is going to have to go back to giving concessions.

And then let's say they go back to something like the MOU. But after what's happened, I don't think the Iranians are going to accept the MOU. They're going to say, "We want an MOU-plus, and you're going to have to give concessions at the very start before we do anything, because we don't believe you." Because what happened with the MOU, the United States violated it from day one. They did not force the Israelis to leave Lebanon or to stop the killing, or to stop the destruction. They did not return Iran's stolen assets. They continued to threaten Iranians in violation of the deal. They removed Iran's oil exports from the sanctions regime, but they reimposed those sanctions after just a few days.

Then, of course, they created their own corridor in the Strait of Hormuz in violation of Article 5. I mean, America has violated everything in the MOU. I mean, if you watch American media, it just shows how bankrupt it is. It's all pretending as if Iran, you know, the reason why this war reignited was because Iran struck a couple of ships, which, of course, is nonsense. Those ships were violating the MOU. The countries that own the ships, the Saudis, Emiratis, and the Kuwaitis, did it intentionally along with the Americans. And the Iranians were saying, "No, you're not going to do that. We will not allow you to violate the MOU." So I think that ultimately, ultimately, there will be some sort of agreement.

I mean, all wars come to an end. Just like between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, this will come to an end. But I think the Iranians will, for example, demand that the siege on Yemen be lifted. I think Iran will make additional demands on Gaza and probably more demands on its own assets. So I think that by restarting this war, Trump has strengthened Iran's hand. War, of course, is devastating for everyone, but I'm speaking in relative terms. In relative terms, Iran is growing stronger, just as it did during the 40 Days War, just as it did during the siege, in relative terms. And that is continuing as we speak.

And so ultimately, when the United States comes to its senses, it's going to have to give more than what it promised in the MOU. And the Iranians are going to make sure that it is forced to give more than what we saw in the MOU. That's my understanding, at least. And one other thing, Glenn, is that I think—and again, I'm not privy to behind-the-scenes information—but I think as time goes by, the coordination between Iran and Russia is growing. And effectively, you're now seeing the United States and the West making these two fronts one and the same. And you saw, for example, the ship that was in the Caspian Sea that Zelensky bragged about striking, which he said was taking weapons to Iran.

The Iranians and the Russians are now cooperating increasingly in all aspects. And this is thanks to U.S. policy. And so, as Russia escalates, our region is escalating. Yemen is escalating. Tomorrow may be the Iraqi resistance that escalates. The Iraqi resistance is a very powerful force. It's not talked about much, but the Iranians have huge numbers of allies in Iraq that bear arms. They're far

larger than Hezbollah, including Hezbollah reserves, which is a huge force in itself. So if Iraq gets engaged, and Yemen is engaged, and the Russians are engaged, and we know what's going on on the battlefield in Ukraine and the rising tensions, Trump has a lot of problems to deal with.

#Glenn

I get the impression that the Iranians—again, no one in Tehran is telling me anything either—but you can look at the interests and put forth some hypotheses and see to what extent there's some evidence there. If you would expect the Iranians to prepare themselves for a possible U.S. ground invasion, what would you expect to see? Well, you know, you would assume that the Iranians would begin to hit U.S. proxies in Iraq, hit possible Kurdish groups that can be used, as you know, for a land operation, all of which Iran has done. Also, the geographical points which would be required, such as Kuwait, Bahrain, they're all being devastated now. It looks like they have a special place now for Iran's strikes.

So it looks as if the Iranians are softening these targets, which could be used in an offensive land operation. I just want to say that it appears to me, because you linked the Russians with the Iranians, I think the war on Iran and the war on Russia, including the economic war on China, it all has a common purpose. I mean, this is about the wider world order, restoring the global primacy of the U.S., so resetting back to the 1990s. This was the world order established then. That's the world order now being dismantled. But again, at every corner, against all of these three adversaries, you see that it only intensifies the shift to multipolarity. That is, the Iranians now, yeah, have taken the Strait of Hormuz.

As you said, the Iranians and the Russians are getting closer. You can also say that the Iranians, Russians, and the Chinese, they're all getting closer. So this is a predictable disaster. I can understand why the U.S. and its, let's call them allies in Europe, would like to see a return to the '90s, would like to have a return to the hegemonic peace. But I try to always tell people in my part of the world that you have to accept the world as it is, that is, the international distribution as it is. If you keep having policies of a hegemonic order when you're in a multipolar world, you're going to invite disaster. And I think the Iranian war is a key case study proving this. Anyways, do you have any final thoughts before we wrap up?

#Seyed M. Marandi

Just one final point, and that is that, you know, because what you said made me think a bit more, I think this would complement what you've just said. The Iranians, the reason why they were in Syria was because of the CIA and Mossad, and that they wanted to take over Syria. And of course, the Qataris and the Saudis and Erdogan all wanted to make it a sectarian war because they were in the American camp, and that worked. And a lot of people believed the nonsense that this was about sectarianism, and it had nothing to do with sectarianism. ISIS and al-Qaeda were tools of the West, and Iran was fighting it.

And evidence for this, that there never was a sectarian war, was that Iran supported the resistance in Afghanistan against the U.S. occupation. And that resistance was the Taliban. And while many of these fanatical Wahhabis and Salafi Takfiris have been attacking Iran, and they still attack Iran for Syria, saying that they killed Sunnis, which was, of course, nonsense, the Shia in Afghanistan—not all of them, but some of them—and the Tajiks, the Persian speakers, and the Uzbeks, and some of the Pashtuns who were not with the Taliban, were attacking Iran, saying, "You're supporting the Taliban against us."

But in reality, Iran's policy in Afghanistan was identical to its policy in Syria. And that is, Iran believed that the empire is the force that has to be driven out. And if the empire is driven out, automatically our region will become a better place. So Iran, in the case of Afghanistan, supported the Taliban, not against the Shia, not against the Tajiks, not against the Uzbeks, not against the secular Pashtuns or whoever, but against the empire. In Syria, they supported the government, not against Sunnis, not against anyone.

It was against the United States. It was against the empire again. Now, what is interesting is that the Taliban—and this is what I want to sort of attach to what you just said, or to add on to what you said—the Taliban is evolving. So the Americans have been trying to create a force to the east of Iran, like those Kurdish groups that are proxies of the Israelis and the Americans in northern Iraq. They want to create them in Afghanistan and in Pakistan. And the Taliban is crushing them. So if you've noticed, I mean, the number of attacks on Iranian forces, terrorist attacks in Sistan and Balochistan and near their border, they continue, but they've decreased.

And one reason is because the Taliban is attacking these Takfiri groups, these, you know, ISIS-like and al-Qaeda-like groups that the Americans and Israelis and Western agencies and their affiliates are funding in Afghanistan and in Pakistan. So this is sort of like this evolution that you see. I don't know what the future holds, but this evolution that you see between Iran and Russia, and Iran and China, and Russia and China, and so on. And you can expand this, you know, Shanghai Cooperation Organization and so on. This evolution is also taking place in the region too. So you see the Taliban, which—the former generation of the Taliban—they were killing anyone who was affiliated to the Iranians or friendly to the Iranians.

They were carrying out genocidal attacks in the 1990s. This new generation of the Taliban, even though we're very different from them—we have huge differences over female education and work and so on—but they've evolved dramatically from that Taliban. And now you see in Iraq what the Americans and the Europeans had used against Iran in the 1980s and the 1990s. When Ayatollah Khamenei's followers go to Najaf and Karbala, you see millions of people on the streets in Iraq participating with those emotions and in 50-degree temperature, hotter than even Iran in the height of summer. So you see this evolving situation taking place both at the global level and at the regional level. And on the whole, it doesn't look good for the United States.

#Glenn

No, not at all. Well, I keep hearing always the reference to how, you know, in the West, we should now, you know, this is time to stand up for Western civilization. But what they're really referring to is the hegemonic era, which is gone. Because, again, for me, this is the key challenge for people in the West now: how do we manage this transition from a unipolar to a multipolar world in the most favorable position possible? And, you know, there are many dimensions of this problem. One of them is that in a declining hegemon, one can expect the moral compass to fall apart. And I think, well, in West Asia now, you see, you know, if we—that is, the West—what is being done: the support now of these radical headchoppers in Syria, backing genocide in Palestine, you know, backing this corrupt pedophile child killer in the Epstein coalition. I mean, this is—what are we doing here?

#Seyed M. Marandi

This is absurd. But also we see this shift taking place in the West. You see that people see what's happening now in the West. The mainstream media, which has had a hold over the population, and a hold over the rest of the world too, by the way. I mean, maybe the Iranians would resist, but across the world, people had negative views of Iran because they were getting their information from the Western media. People had negative views of Russia or wherever because most of the information was coming from the mainstream media. So even in Iran, if we wanted to learn at university, if I wanted to read a book on China, I would have to go first and foremost probably to read Kissinger's book on China in Iran, the translated view, rather than having firsthand knowledge or Iranians writing books about China.

That's how it was in the past. Now the world is getting increasingly alternative information, but also in the West, people are getting alternative information. So when you speak about the Epstein class, people in the West don't see these elites as representative of Western civilization. They see it as corrupt elites that are ruling over them in the name of civilization, just as they've been ruling over us in the name of civilization. But they've never been representative of anything that ordinary people in the West would consider to be their civilization.

#Glenn

Well, on that note, thank you very much for coming on the program. I always look forward to speaking with you, so thank you.

#Seyed M. Marandi

It's always a great pleasure, Glenn. And I hope the next time we speak, there are more positive things to talk about.

#Glenn

We always say that. It keeps getting very dark, but hopefully we'll turn a corner. Thank you.

#Seyed M. Marandi

We'll get there. We'll get there.