

HC convo with Elijah Magnier Feb 2

[Helena Cobban]

Hi there.

I'm Helena Cobben, the President of Just World Educational. I'm currently in California, but I'm following developments in the US Iran standoff very closely. Back last June, I assessed that Iran on the one hand and the US Israeli axis on the other were locked in a mutually hurting stalemate after the punishing 12 day war of that month.

And until recently, I judged that stalemate still existed. Possibly it still does. But on the land areas and in the waters around Iran, President Trump has been working very hard to assemble a massive military force potentially capable of delivering a very harsh strike against Iran.

Today, it's February the second here in California, and I've been lucky to be in touch with the strategic analyst, Elijah J. Magnier, who's currently in Europe. He has posted a series of intriguing and well researched analyses on his blog recently, looking at the many military and strategic aspects of this confrontation.

The latest on February the first was titled, Why Washington flaunts naval power while the real war architecture lies elsewhere. So a big welcome to you, Elijah. It's good to talk to you again.

[Elijah Magnier]

Thank you for having me.

[Helena Cobban]

No, it's really our honor. Today's conversation is a special presentation by Just World Educational. We'll be unpacking a lot of what you've been writing about.

Of course, even as we speak, events are moving. There is a lot of political diplomatic signaling going on today, Monday. But let's get back to your assessment of the broad range of capabilities the U.S., along with Israel, and other allies have been mobilizing to threaten Iran. So you have been writing about how a lot of the Western corporate media attention has been on the USS Abraham Lincoln, the big aircraft carrier that's now in place close to Iran. And of course, it has a fairly capable carrier battle group, destroyers and such all around it. But you're saying this is not the main thing in the war architecture.

Can you speak more about how you see this war architecture?

[Elijah Magnier]

Thank you. Well, first of all, before going into these details, we need to understand what is the objective of the Americans and the Israelis in this case, because Iran doesn't represent danger to the US national security. And I will explain here because it's important.

First of all, President Trump said that he has destroyed the Iranian nuclear program. And then he sent another signal saying that Iran agreed that they will deliver all the nuclear weapons. That doesn't fit with the reality because Iran doesn't have nuclear weapons.

And we know that Iran has 409 kilograms of enriched uranium of 60%, which has nothing to do with the 90% required for nuclear weapons. In fact, no one today, even Israel, apart from Netanyahu that has he has been screaming for the last 16 years that Iran has nuclear weapons, or very close to acquiring nuclear weapons. But he never said there is a bomb that is already made and prepared to be launched, or used as deterrence.

He said Iran is very close to acquiring nuclear weapons. So if there is no nuclear weapon, and Iran is ready to negotiate on the nuclear program that Donald Trump came out of in 2018, the only thing Iran can offer is to return to an agreement similar to the JCPOA, the nuclear deal that has expired after 10 years. And this is where Iran is ready to give back the 60% or dispose of these or put them in another country, because the 60% were made in response to Donald Trump rejecting the JCPOA in 2018.

Therefore, Iran will not use the 60% uranium, because they are no function. It's easier to negotiate on something that is not needed. However, the Americans and the Israelis are very much aware that Iran is not going toward nuclear weapons, particularly if we take the word of Donald Trump for granted when he destroyed the Natanz nuclear facility, and he said Iran doesn't have anymore the capability of enriching uranium.

However, the knowledge is still with the Iranians. Now we move to the other side. The Israelis want Iran to give up on its missile program, to destroy the missile program.

It is not by destroying the location of the missile industry. It's to destroy Iranian knowledge of manufacturing ballistic hypersonic missiles. For that, there is a need to change completely the ruling system.

And a carrier doesn't have the capability to bomb Iran, destroy all the missile facilities, all the missile industry, all the storage of the missiles, and also impose on Iran to come to the negotiation table and give up on the only deterrent weapon it has, which is a missile, which means destroy all of Iran's economy, oil and energy, navy, everything. That is the capability of the carrier.

[Helena Cobban]

Yeah, if I could just interject at this point, what you're saying is that it's really not about nuclear capabilities. It's more for the US and Israel about missile capabilities. And you're saying that the only way to destroy not just the existing capabilities, but the potential in the future, like even if they destroy everything in the missile program, missile production, research, etc., planning, even if they destroy all of that, the knowledge is still there. So that's why you need regime change in order to destroy that knowledge base or erode that.

[Elijah Magnier]

Correct.

[Helena Cobban]

However, that is kind of the connection between the missile issue and the possibility of regime change.

So I think that's an important point.

[Elijah Magnier]

Yes. And with the regime change or the changing of the ruling system, we move to another point. Who is going to replace the Islamic Republic that was elected by the Iranians?

What is going to happen to West Asia if Iran is destabilized? There are seven countries bordering Iran. For Israel, it is a perfect scenario where chaos can dominate West Asia.

For America, it is not because that is exporting terrorism, because every piece will be taken by a neighbouring country. There are militias in Sistan and Baluchistan. In the south, in the north, there is Afghanistan.

So there are so many other possibilities that no one in the world can foresee. Therefore, to destroy Iran, it doesn't mean still changing the ruling system, because in the 12-day war, the Israelis, Mossad and the CIA try their best to change the regime and to create a total chaos in the country, to give the impression that Iran is bombed from all over the places, from inside, from outside, from Azerbaijan, from Iraq, from Syria, in the air, by drone, domestically, drone manufacturing are attacking.

There are rioters, sabotage attacks, killing of officers, of decision makers, scientists, everything. And the Iranians, who are with and against the policy of the government, rejected any regime change in Iran. Again, we've seen that happening in the last weeks.

In the last week, there was a kind of coup d'etat that was prepared in Iran, where the Mossad and the CIA again tried their best. We have seen armed people in the street. We have seen more than 3,175 officers and civilians killed by the rioters.

And yet, the Iranians did not agree. They agreed that the government is not responding to their demand, is not looking after the economy properly. But they are the ones who voted for this pragmatic government.

And the last point I would like to highlight, that every single pragmatic government in Iran was boycotted by the Americans. Every single Iranian government that extended its hand to the USA, asking for full collaboration, despite the disagreement of a large part of more, what they call, less pragmatic or radicals. The government of the Iranian government, that was called a pragmatic government.

We're talking about the current Pezeckian. We're talking about the one before him, President Rouhani and Javad Zarif. We're talking even during Khatami.

We're talking about every single government that was called pragmatic. Rouhani signed the JCPOA. Zarif was accused in Iran that was selling himself to the Americans.

And what the Americans did, they destroyed the JCPOA. What the Americans are doing with Pezeckian-- who is, more pragmatic than this, you can't have. They are creating a situation where there is a coup d'etat inside the country, and a 12-day illegal and unlawful war on Iran to destroy the regime.

So this is not going to happen. Therefore, no objective can be met by the Israelis and by the Americans if they start a war today.

[Helena Cobban]

So I think I agree with your analysis. And I've actually been writing, not continuously, but every time I've looked at the Iran situation since the June war, I've said that there's no way that the U.S. and Israel can win. But then there is also the question of a kind of a narrative trap, where--

Trump is very good at standing down. I mean, you know, there is this whole concept called Trump Always Chickens Out: TACO. And he's done it on a number of important fronts, including tariffs. And he did it to a certain extent in the middle of January on the issue of after he promised, you know, "Help is on the way!" to the protesters in Iran. And then the next day, he said, Well, actually, no help is not on the way.

So there is a possibility of a Trump stand down on this. But there's also the possibility, I mean, he has meantime, like generated, and including with all this theatrical performance of the Abraham Lincoln deployment, he's created some expectations, both amongst his own people, which runs a little bit counter to the MAGA basic concept of "America First, and let's not get entangled in foreign wars." But he loves the drama! I mean, he loved the drama, for example, with the Venezuela threat and intervention and kidnapping of the President of Venezuela, to see, you know, all this footage of himself sitting in the situation room, conferring with the military leaders.

And you know, it has this, this very strong theatrical aspect. And he would probably love to have the same, you know, with him ordering some kind of a strike from from the Abraham Lincoln or from Udeid base in Qatar. But but it's, it's probably not going to happen, right?

[Elijah Magnier]

Well, there are basic things that we you and I agreed on. So first of all, he is theatrical, he is narcissistic. And unfortunately for him, he doesn't have an Q beyond the room temperature.

However, he has people around him that understand the situation. And they can't just take America against the wall. And I will explain here.

The carrier is a kind of a show of force. However, to inflict pain on Iran, he needs to use the Al Udeid, the base of central command, of CENTCOM, the central command of the Middle

East. But he also needs to use military bases in the Emirates in Bahrain, in Saudi Arabia, in Kuwait, and mainly Jordan.

So he needs to see also bases in Iraq, Kurdistan, the Harir military base, he needs he also need to use the base in Syria, and also Azerbaijan. And last, the main Israeli base in Palestine. So if we talk about all these bases were logically and militarily speaking, he needs all these bases for several objectives first, to intercept the incoming missiles.

And second, to mount an operation because he needs a continuous attack on Iran in different places. And Iran is 1,640,000 square kilometers. Iran is not small.

And Iran understood in the 12 day war in last June, that it is no longer going to use missiles on wheels, on trucks, wandering around to launch missiles and to be deployed, giving the possibility for the hostile air force to destroy it. Iran has shifted and learned the lesson and will use silos where it is very difficult to bomb the missile before they are launched or during. And the missile we have seen during the 12 day war, they need between five to seven minutes to reach their target.

If the target is the farthest, that is Israel, but not the closest. That is Al Udeid or Kuwait, Qatar or Kuwait, or Bahrain, or the Emirate or Saudi Arabia. Therefore, we're talking about just a few minutes before the missile will reach these bases.

And to have all the hundreds of airplanes going in and out, covering the sky over Tehran, a carrier can never deliver this. But on the other hand, Iran promised that is going to bomb all these bases, considering that they belong to America, which is true. And this is where Donald Trump is going to a very heavy price with the life of American soldiers, because of the objective he is out to fulfill on behalf of Israel.

Because America can sit with the Iranians, say, no nuclear enrichment beyond 3.75 percent, back to the JCPOA [level]. I want American companies to return to Iran and exploit the oil. The Iranian will be-- he wants the American company, the Iranian would be more than delighted because American companies were in Iran before 2018.

So what he has achieved since 2018 until today? nothing, back to square one. He is requesting today exactly the same, but adding the missile program that he will never get. Now, there's something that happened in the last 24 hours that changed and shift everything.

It's the Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei, that is the leader of the Iranian revolution, and the head of all armed forces. But he enjoys another title. He is a source of emulation.

He is a religious authority in the Shia Muslim world. And he said that all the region will be in flame, which means that the Yemeni, the Iraqi, the Lebanese will participate to this war because he enjoys hundreds of thousands of followers in Iraq, in Yemen, and in Lebanon. And these will respond to the religious duty call to engage in the battle regardless the consequences.

So Iran can say, okay, I'm going to destroy Lebanon. It doesn't matter. Because here we're talking about the ideology. It is the survival of Iran, or the fall of all of them. Therefore, this is not a war with Iran only. There are several fronts that are going to be engaged.

Is this what Donald Trump is ready for?

[Helena Cobban]

Yeah, obviously Ayatollah Khamenei's speech was a big thing.

Who do you see driving this war front? Is it the Israelis? Or is it the Americans? I mean, you seem to be saying that it's mainly the Israelis. But my recollection is back on January 13th or so, when there was, well, in the days leading to January 13th, when there was considerable talk of Western support for the protesters in Iran, that the Israelis sent a message, no, don't do it. We're not ready to do this. And they were a kind of a braking force on the Americans. Many of the Americans were from the kind of liberal interventionist, you know, National Endowment for Democracy and all these kind of liberal interventionist organizations who were urging [it] and now this is not Trump's natural base.

But it's an influential base inside the United States. They were the ones who were urging, you know, full support for the protesters, like Libya. If you remember Libya, oh my God.

And the Israelis said, no, no, don't do it. So has something changed in Israel that Netanyahu is saying, okay, now maybe now that the Abraham Lincoln carrier battle group is in place, now we can do it? Or what's changed?

[Elijah Magnier]

No, the carrier doesn't change anything. The presence of the carrier is just a show of power of Donald Trump thinking that this is a way to influence the Iranians. But he will soon realize that this is an additional target he is offering to Iran.

And on top of that, he's offering Iran the possibility to close the Strait of Hormuz and to disturb the world economy, where the world economy crosses the Strait of Hormuz with a large percent between 18 to 19%. Therefore, this will damage the whole world if he engages in this war.

Now, we have seen in the 12-day War, which is important to go back to it: Always when the Israelis part of the war, the Israelis, since the beginning, they can never go to war without the Americans. They need the American support. They need the Americans money. They need the Americans weapons. No one can go to war without a refill. Because look what's happening in Ukraine.

Europe doesn't have any more bombs or weapons to supply the Ukrainians because they've used everything. Now the Israelis have the luxury to go to war anytime they want, as long as they want, because they have unlimited supply from the Europeans and above all from the Americans. So the Americans are opening all their warehouses to the Israelis.

Trump said we have refilled the Iron Dome and that he told Netanyahu stop showing off about it. This is an American product. We made it, we created, we are refilling it and we are deploying it.

So without America, the Israelis cannot go to war. In June, they went to war and Netanyahu was begging Donald Trump to come and join him because he can't continue. And Donald Trump told us on day five, day seven, between five and seven, Benjamin Netanyahu asked him for a ceasefire because he understood that America is not going to be engaged in a war and he wanted to end the war because he is on a very short fuse and cannot start a war and finish it on his own.

He needs the Americans in it. What the difference now is that America is threatening Iran, thinking that by the theatre against Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela, he can repeat that in Iran. But Venezuela and Iran are completely different in their reaction.

Every single president in the United States tried with Iran in the past to put sanctions on Iran. This is why there are more than 8,500 sanctions on Iran because since Jimmy Carter and every single president in America has increased the sanctions on the Iranians, including the Europeans. Therefore, it is not by sanction that Iran can be submitted.

Iran will never submit. Iran wants a normal relationship with the West. Iran needs the West, Europe and the United States, but on equal ground, not as master-slave. This is not going to [happen.] And threatening Iran will make the population more compact around their leadership. We have seen that. I'm not inventing anything.

We've seen it twice in Iran since June, less than a year. Then we have the Iranians that have the capability to inflict serious damage on the US base and on Israel, even if Iran is going to suffer a lot of damage. Now, the idea comes from the Israelis, because they think with America, they can impose on Iran to remove their missile program, and then they can destroy wherever they want in Iran, as they have done with Syria.

After Bashar al-Assad, they went and destroyed all the Syrian missile warehouses, the Syrian military industry, the Navy and the capability. This is exactly what Israel wants to do with Iran once the missiles are delivered. So for Iran, it's a question of life and death.

Whatever the Israelis are trying to convince Donald Trump to go to war on behalf of Israel, there are intelligent Americans who will tell their boss, the President of the United States, who understands very little about politics and military planning, that this is actually not a very good idea, because he will be told the size of the damage and the casualties that the Americans are going to suffer. Now, we heard Secretary Rubio saying a long time ago, that America doesn't want a long war, want something extremely swift, small, one hit, and then get out.

They don't want to be involved. Who can give America the guarantee not to be involved? The Israelis would be delighted to see Americans involved in dying in Iran, or in the bases around Iran, in different Middle Eastern bases, on behalf of the Israeli plan.

Because again, Iran doesn't represent a danger to the American national security. They don't have missiles that can reach 10,000 miles away and hit American soil. And the Israeli,

the American military bases were hit by the Iranian once in Al-Anbar [in Iraq] in Ain al-Assad in Iraq, after the Americans killed the top general Qasem Soleimani in January 2020.

[Helena Cobban]

Yeah, that was Donald Trump as well.

[Elijah Magnier]

That was Donald Trump and the Americans were informed that the missiles were coming, like the Americans were informed in Al Udeid, Qatar military base during the 12-day war. When the Americans bombed Iran, the Iranian responded. We're not dealing with a country that's going to be submitted [forced to submit.] This is a country that's going to respond. And if you threaten this country to its core and say, I'm going to kill you, because it's a matter of death or a life or death, then it's going to respond with all the might that it has.

So for the Israelis, that's okay. For the Americans, it is not okay.

[Helena Cobban]

I mean, obviously, the whole history of the US entanglement in Iraq was something that was deeply draining and, you know, horrendous for so many thousands of American families. And that was a big part of, obviously, the kind of the MAGA, America First movement in this country. And the Israelis just loved to see that.

They loved to see, you know, the chaos in Iraq and the draining of American power in Iraq. So I see your point about the relevance of this for thinking about Iran.

I want to turn to some of the questions about the reports of current negotiations or willingness to negotiate.

I think the Foreign Minister Araqchi and the Prime Minister Pezeckian have both been very forthright saying that they want to have negotiations. But only about the nuclear issue, not about the missile issue. And I think Araqchi, the Foreign Minister has gone to Istanbul, maybe, and Witkoff may go to Istanbul.

In this case, I think it's Witkoff that's much more important than Marco Rubio. I mean, Marco Rubio is almost totally focused on Cuba and the Caribbean and like, trying to regain his parents' patrimony or whatever there. And Witkoff is the go-to person.

So if there are negotiations-- I mean, if I was sitting in Tehran, I would be rather concerned about the prospect of negotiations because back on January, sorry, June 12th and 13th of last year, they were involved in negotiations with Trump on the nuclear issue. And they were gathered in Tehran to discuss this. And it was precisely at that moment that the US-Israeli strike struck them when they were all gathered to discuss negotiations.

So, you know, if I were in Tehran, how could I know that this would not be the same thing, you know, that Foreign Minister Araqchi goes to Istanbul, he hears something possibly

interesting from Witkoff, he goes back to Tehran, they discuss it. And at the moment, they discuss it, they get struck. I mean, wouldn't that be a concern?

[Elijah Magnier]

You're absolutely right. That was the first concern the Iranians expressed to all the mediators. However, those who are mediating today are the President of Turkey in person, Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The President of Egypt in person--e're talking about President Sisi. In Qatar, the Emir. He is the one involved in the negotiation. The Prime Minister of Qatar went to Iran and visited Iran.

So we have Oman that is playing also a role. All these countries are playing a role and trying to ease the situation because they understand that they have a lot to lose in case of a war in the region. Because the Iranians said very clearly it's not going to be limited to Iran.

Therefore, the Iranians say we don't trust the Americans, but we trust the mediators. So they put their trust in Turkey, Egypt, Qatar, and Oman, because they understand that they are the guarantor. The Americans today are in a different position.

They thought that they can come in, send the bombers, bomb one specific place, a plan that the Americans said they've been organising, studying and planning for the last 16 years. And they were really urging to try it. And they tried it.

However, have they destroyed the nuclear facilities? Nobody knows. Because now Trump is saying the Iranians have the capability to make nuclear weapons, which means he is contradicting what he said at the beginning, after the last days of the war, that he destroyed the Iranian nuclear program.

Omitting the fact that the Iranian nuclear program, actually, it is not in Natanz or in any other place in Iran, it is in the head of the Iranians. And that nuclear program cannot be wiped out unless he kills all the scientists. And we're talking about thousands of scientists, nuclear scientists, who now have the know-how.

Therefore, the negotiation today, it is about the nuclear program. It is about the additional enrichment uranium above the 3.75%, and above the 20% needed for scientific and medical research. All the rest, Iran is ready to negotiate, as I said earlier, because this is not a material that Iran wants to use.

It is a leverage that Iran is using. And also about reopening to the business and companies and signing deals with the Americans worth tens of billions of dollars. This is the dream of Iran.

This was happening between 2015 - 2018. So these are easy to negotiate about. But Iran is very determined not to talk about the missile program.

And even if Donald Trump gathers all the carriers in the world in the Persian Gulf or in the Red Sea or wherever, it's not going to change because for Iran, delivering the missiles, it means committing the suicide.

[Helena Cobban]

I think I understand what you're saying when you say that the Iranians really want to reconnect with the US economy. But that's not the only economic path open these days. I mean, if the sanctions were lifted, for example, or whether or not the sanctions are lifted, there is the whole sort of BRICS-based potential international payment systems.

Nobody is any longer reliant on SWIFT system, which is under the control of the US Department of the Treasury. There is a role for surely countries of the Global South and China to help Iran deal with its very real economic problems. Are we seeing any of that happening?

Because it strikes me that back in March of last year, that was one of the first things the Trump administration did. This guy who's the Treasury Secretary, Scott Bessent, really tightened the screws much further. And it was that sort of economic tightening that led to the protests in late December and early January of this year.

And there really still are huge economic problems. Why can't the countries of the Global South help to resolve these without the Americans?

[Elijah Magnier]

Iran is selling its oil to China. And China always declared that it is not abiding by the Western sanctions on Iran. Turkey did the same.

Turkey is also acquiring from Iran a lot of energy. And it's saying exactly the same, is not abiding by the Western sanctions on Iran. Iran is selling the gas to Iraq.

So there is a lot of selling going on. Not as Iran would like, because Iran would like to be able to produce three and a half million barrels and then be able to sell these worldwide. But Iran doesn't depend only on the oil and gas.

Iran depends on so many other things. However, with all these sanctions, the life of the Iranians, population we're talking, not the regime or leaders or decision makers, the sanctions are crippling the Iranian population. When Trump is saying, I support the people of Iran, he's not.

This is a lie, because he imposed sanctions on the people of Iran. The Europeans exactly the same. They are the one imposing, contributing to the misery of the Iranian economy that is hitting the population.

Decision makers are few thousands. Among the 92 million people, the sanctions are hitting 91 million plus. So this is what the West is doing.

But Iran is trying its best to survive, but not to live comfortably. The Iranians would like to live comfortably. There are people who were not born during the revolution.

They were born after the revolution. However, these people were in the street defending their nation, not because they want this kind of government or they are happy, but because they don't want the Americans and the Israelis to change and to dictate on them who can rule them. As simple as that.

They can go and vote for whoever they want to vote for. And they voted for a pragmatic leadership that is not allowed to rule. So, yes, these countries, there are many countries in the global South, but the global South has a limited market, because also India is buying off Russia, who's going to sell to the Indian, the Russian and the Iranians.

But even that is not enough to say to concentrate on one market. The market should be open. The Iraqis are taking the Iranian gas, but they're not paying for it, because there are sanctions on the payment.

So the Iranians and the Iraqis need to find a way to pay some of the money, because Iraq depends. The Iraqi electricity, particularly in a very hot summer, depends on the Iranian gas. So all that is not taking the well-being of the population in Iran and around it.

Nevertheless, we need to admit that the Western market is much stronger than the global South. Secondly, the global South is under sanctions. Russia is under sanction, Iran is under sanction, China is under sanction.

And there is a limited amount of energy that the oil and gas producers can sell to a specific country who can pay the price in foreign currency or in local currency. And with the local currency, which means they have to exchange services. We have plans between Iran and Pakistan that are blocked because also of the sanctions, the gas project, because of the sanctions.

And Pakistan is delaying its part because they are afraid of the Americans. So yes, the sanctions can and are crippling Iran. So there is a need to reach a solution, but not to submit.

[Helena Cobban]

Okay, so I have a couple more questions. The first one is about the risks of miscalculation. I mean, if you have these very capable forces arrayed around Iran, and as you've pointed out, this actually goes right across West Asia and into the Eastern Mediterranean, the British forces in Cyprus, and others are all in part of the coalition with the US military.

And all of them presumably on a state of somewhat high alert, that you could have like an accident or a miscalculation. As far as you know, is there any kind of hotline where the two parties could communicate and say, you know, gee, sorry, that that missile fuse went wrong, and the missile went up, you know, and we didn't mean it.

[Elijah Magnier]

Iran is not going to bomb the base in Cyprus, where the Israelis have deployed interception missiles. Iran is not going to bomb Greece, where the Israelis and the Americans have installed interception missiles. Iran will bomb only the place where jets are going to depart, and missile will be launched against Iran.

So the source of bombardment is going to be respond to and Iran is not in a process of applying the preemptive attack, attacking first, because everybody is ready to attack Iran, this is not going to happen. The first hit must come from the Americans or the Israelis.

Having said that, the Israelis are trying and have carried out a few sabotage operations in Iran in the last week.

The Iranians understand the message of the Israelis, they want to drag Iran to respond, because they are afraid Donald Trump can change his mind. Therefore, this is not going to drag the Iranians into a war. The Iranians will start launching the first missile, the day a war will be declared, the day missiles will rain on Iran, not one or two sabotage operations, or the assassination of its supreme leader, that is Saeed Ali Khamenei, because he is a religious leader.

Not if they kill the president, or they kill the chief of the army, that doesn't trigger a war. Because this can be replaced, even Sayed Ali Khamenei can be replaced and will be replaced. However, assassinating a religious leader, it's an insult to all those who believe and follow him.

And we're talking about millions, they will want, regardless the cost and the consequences, a response. They want Iran to respond. And Iran responded to the Americans for the killing of its top general.

But today, these are different days. During the 12-day war in last June, Iran responded by destroying several military Israeli military bases, because Israel killed several top leaders in the country. So I don't think the Iranians will be easily dragged into war because of one or two or a dozen of sabotage attacks.

There were sabotage attacks for the last 30 years in Iran carried out by the Mossad and the CIA. And Iran did not go to war because of that.

[Helena Cobban]

So in a sense, that's kind of reassuring. I don't know, I hate to be totally reassured, because there is always the possibility of miscalculations. But I want to take a step back, finally, and look at the interaction between these tensions between Iran and the US-Israeli axis, and the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

Because to a certain extent, there's a whole historical series of events between October 7, 2023, going through, obviously, the Pager attacks on Hezbollah. And then, when was that? That was September of 2024.

And then the attacks of last year, and the collapse of Hezbollah and then the Syrian government. So these were part of the axis of resistance. The axis of resistance has been very badly damaged by the events since October the 7th of 2023.

And Hamas and the resistance in Gaza have always been a steadfast part of the axis of resistance. So, all of these events are linked in so many different ways, including when you're talking about the mediators between Tehran and Washington, it's the same bunch of mediators. You know, Qatar and Egypt and Turkey, and they have actually, you could say, to a large extent, betrayed the Palestinian resistance in Gaza by going along with the Trump 20-point plan and UN Resolution 2803.

Where does all this lead? I mean, in terms of the relationship between the genocide, which we know is actually escalating right now, and world attention is not on saving the people of Gaza right now. World attention is on Iran.

How can Iranian resilience help the resilience of the people of Gaza?

[Elijah Magnier]

Iran is committed through its constitution, Article 154, to support all the oppressed people around the world, Muslim or non-Muslim. The Iranians supported the people in Venezuela. They are social Christians.

Iran supported the Kurds in Iraq. They are atheists and some of them are Sunni. So, supporting the oppressed is not going to stop.

This is one of the points that Donald Trump is negotiating on behalf of Israel, for Iran to stop its support to Hezbollah, to Hamas, to all the, or any other resisting group, like in Iraq or in Yemen. So, the whole Middle East submits to Israel. That is the objective of Donald Trump.

He is not interested in the Middle East. He wants the Middle East to be under the control of Israel and under the security control of Israel, not for Israel to go and occupy the Middle East, but the policemen of the Middle East, what Trump wants Netanyahu to be, these policemen, and he's not interested in any other thing. He took the money that he wanted from the oil rich country.

He took three to four trillion dollars, and they are committed to sell their oil and gas in dollar. So, he's happy with that. Now, for Iran to support the Palestinians, that will never stop.

It's an ideological and institutional commitment to support the oppressed people around the world. If the Palestinians want to continue their struggle to recover their land, they will always find in Iran a supporter, but not someone who will dictate upon them the policy they need to follow. To confirm that, on the 7th of October, Mohammad al-Daif, Hamas military leader, asked all the countries, Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Syrian, the Iraqi, the Yemeni, the Iranian, to come and help him, which means he did not coordinate what he was doing, but he said, now I need your support.

So, whenever the Palestinians are in need of support, the Iranians are there to support them. Now, it is up to the Palestinian to decide what they want. Do they want to continue the struggle against the Israelis?

They want to continue calling for the recovery of Palestine? What's going to happen to them? The war is not over yet.

Rafah crossing was open, but again, the Israelis transformed it into kind of the West Bank. Nobody can go in and out without their approval. No person can do that.

The Rafah was supposed to be open in phase, in part one, not phase two. And the Israelis were not supposed to be in control of the crossing. Today, they're not present, but they are the ones giving the approval of anyone crossing in or out.

Gaza is destroyed. 90% of the strip is destroyed. Are the Israelis going to accept to allow the reconstruction of Gaza? The answer is no. Netanyahu wants to delay everything. He wants to keep Gaza in ruin. So, the Palestinians will think about leaving Gaza, not staying in Gaza. There are 70,000 Palestinians in Egypt who left Gaza, waiting to return. Benjamin Netanyahu is not allowing them.

So, the war is still long before we can say it's over. What the resistance is going to do, we don't know. Again, it's up to the Palestinians.

But nothing is going to happen because the Iranians are ready to help Palestinians if they want to continue. And they are already helping the Lebanese and the Iraqi and the Yemeni to continue their struggle. So, I don't think anything is going to change there.

[Helena Cobban]

Well, it's kind of depressing and sad to think about the genocide in Gaza. But it's always good to talk to you, Elijah. And thank you so much for bringing all this wealth of wisdom and knowledge to our viewers.

We're going to be posting this in a few hours from now. Hope to talk to you again soon.

[Elijah Magnier]

Thank you for having me. It was a pleasure.