

# Iran's leadership stability, military power altering US strategy

## INTERVIEW

While the Trump administration confronts the most severe crises of credibility and efficaciousness within foreign policy, its 12-Day and Ramadan wars with Iran have fundamentally changed the security and economic equations of the United States. In an interview with Farid Marjai, an Iranian foreign policy and international relations expert based in America, an examination of Washington's strategic discombobulation vis-à-vis Iran has been undertaken.

In this interview, Marjai, referencing that Donald Trump has deviated from his professed foreign policy doctrines — the paramount one of which was the avoidance of initiating troublesome conflicts — emphatically asserts that the White House, in this dossier, finds itself ensnared within an impasse; a condition wherein the exhibition of Iran's asymmetrical proficiencies, the perpetuation of war management, and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz have reconfigured Washington's strategic calculations. A translation of this interview's transcript follows below.

Farid Marjai



The United States has, within less than one and a half years, experienced two wars (the 12-day and the Ramadan war) with Iran. Given that American society is generally fatigued by the unending entanglements of the Middle East, how does the public opinion in America perceive their nation's entry into this war?

**MARJAI:** Indeed, the public opinion is a very important matter. The reality is that the American public has become weary of war; particularly the Iraq, Libya, and Afghanistan conflicts, none of which yielded successful outcomes for this country. A segment of the populace perceives that these wars have imposed heavy financial costs; expenditures that could have been allocated toward development, medical treatment, and welfare matters, yet this issue is not that well-documented or well-articulated.

Nevertheless, one must consider that this fatigue is not one of perpetual and everlasting war and will endure only for a limited duration. We observed this same pattern during the Vietnam War era; subsequent to the defeat and extensive bloodshed in Vietnam, American culture remained under the influence of that event for a period, but later, the power system endeavored to extricate itself from this condition, calling it the "Vietnam Syndrome".

Therefore, one can sum up that the American public is discontented with this war because, during the past one or two decades, it has been directly engaged with it. However, in actuality, one must consider another dimension; American public opinion does not materialize within a vacuum and is profoundly oriented toward the mainstream media, which are powerful and fabricate public opinion. Noam Chomsky, in his numerous writings, elucidates that the media construct paradigms and serve that power bloc and the ruling system; whether that power belongs to bankers and capitalists, or the influence of the Israeli lobby. In reality, the Neo-Conservatives have, for the past 30 to 40 years, pursued a project according to which America must always be prepared for war. This "America, prepared for war," can support Israel. Thus, if this has been their objective, they have attempted to establish an associated political culture. And one must consider that the majority of the American or British populace lack access to alternative media, news, or narratives, and only the monopolistic narration of the dominant media prevails. In comparison, for example, you witness in Iran, West Asia, or Latin America alternative media that present divergent narratives relative to the established media.

Notwithstanding these factors, the majority of American media outlets, civil institutions, analysts, and think tanks do not endorse war with Iran. Within American society, the populace and analysts presently do not perceive this war as a conflict between America and Iran or



US President Donald Trump is running out of time and has to change course in his war of aggression against Iran.

● JULIA WYTRAZEK/GETTY IMAGES

as a patriotic war, but rather assess it as an aggressive war launched by Donald Trump against Iran. The crucial point is that Trump has experienced a precipitous decline in opinion polls, reaching 34 percent. In the past, whenever the US engaged in military confrontation and war, one would observe American flags in various locations; in public spaces, residential areas, and municipalities, but now, absolutely no flags are visible.

**During these two wars, toward which aspect has public criticism predominantly been directed? Do American critics primarily censure the war decision itself, or the war management and the failure to achieve a decisive victory?**

The Trump administration did not at all prearrange a period for preparing public opinion to accept the war; meaning that there existed no opportunity, prior to military action, to justify the war in the public sphere. Suddenly, in the midst of negotiations, an attack occurred, proposed and supported by Benjamin Netanyahu.

If one recalls, during the Bush-Cheney administration's assault on Iraq, they spent 9 months on propaganda, brainwashing, and preparing public opinion, but presently, no rationale for this war was presented to society in the public sphere. Even after the war commenced, Trump incessantly altered his justifications for the populace. Moreover, during this military aggression, the Trump administration could not define a strategic exit for the war; that is, it was not clarified how the war was supposed to conclude, or how victory therein would be defined. In actuality, American society is afflicted with absolute perplexity and confusion regarding this war.

One must consider that the Trump administration is a really weak administration. If one examines its personnel, all appear amateurish and inexperienced; the secretary of

state (Rubio), the secretary of defense (Hegseth), the vice president (Vance), and particularly the chief of staff of the Army (Dan Caine). Caine did not ascend the military ranks as a capable general, but rather was initially an Air Force pilot, then became a general, and later was promoted to this position by Trump.

Throughout this process, Trump could neither assemble nor summon allies within a unified political structure. Consequently, relative to all three axes you mentioned, this administration is subject to criticism: the war decision lacked justification; the managerial approach was also weak because they presumed that the Venezuelan model could be implemented upon Iran, despite their vast differences; and finally, they possessed no conception of victory nor a definition thereof.

But the significant point is that an exceptionally important article was published on April 8 in the New York Times, which generated substantial commotion. This article addressed two secret meetings of the Trump circle and explained in detail what topics were discussed therein. When one studies this article, one realizes how inexperienced these individuals are and that they possess no cognizance of warfare. The chief of staff's remarks exhibited a tactical understanding from a military perspective, but no strategic understanding was articulated therein. The quantity of military

equipment they possess and how that equipment should be replaced were not well-defined.

**Donald Trump, in his electoral campaigns, consistently emphasized the slogans "ending endless wars" and "America First". But we know that he entered these two wars with Iran through the encouragement and accompaniment of Israel. What impact has this manifest contradiction had upon Trump's traditional and loyal base?**

Indeed, particularly during the 2016 electoral campaign of the first Trump administration, the discourse of "endless wars" was raised and constituted a significant portion of Trump's platform. The overarching message was that the wars initiated by Republican and Democratic globalists imposed a high financial cost upon American society; while these capitals could have been expended on America's own development. In effect, the populace's livelihood and economic condition were of concern.

Now, concerning the demographic you referenced, a fissure appears to have emerged within Trump's traditional base, which is simulta-



US Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer speaks during the Senate Democrat policy luncheon news conference at the Capitol on May 19, 2026, in Washington, the US.

● ROD LAMKEY, JR./AP



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neously right-wing and anti-foreign military intervention. Prominent figures from the "MAGA" movement, for the first time in America, have explicitly articulated positions regarding Israel's influence and its role in this war. This is not necessarily because aggressive wars are morally and politically unacceptable to them, but rather the central point is that they oppose them due to the harm these wars inflict upon the economic conditions and livelihood of the populace.

Simultaneously, one must note that although this public dissatisfaction is tangible and considerable, it lacks a conduit, institution, and media apparatus capable of exerting influence within power relations. On the other hand, matters pertaining to the cultural right have not yet caused conservatives to distance themselves from Trump, nor have Republicans in Congress openly opposed him. In reality, in the Congressional midterm elections of November of the current year, we shall witness the outcome of this process; whether this dissatisfaction will prevent this spectrum from voting for Trump.

**Many analysts believe that the current cease-fire is more a "diplomatic capitulation" to extricate the US from a military impasse. Within America's domestic arena, have the Democrats and liberal media managed to consolidate this cease-fire and the potential exit without a tangible victory as an "absolute failure for Trump" in the electoral arena — whether for the midterms or for public opinion?**

Generally speaking, the globalists believe in American hegemony in the Middle East region and vis-à-vis China, but they contend that Trump's methodology, performance, and management have, in actuality, damaged America's strategic position. Trump is inexperienced and possesses personality disorders; meaning that if he were experienced, as a robust politician, he should pursue only one front, but he incessantly opens new fronts.

He instigates altercations with Europe and European Union members, and creates dissatisfaction over the Greenland occupation issue. He also insults European leaders, imposes tariffs against his own allies, and generates friction with the Pope and hurls insults at him. Within the NATO military pact, he fans the flames of discord and internal disputes, and launches an indiscriminate war with Iran from which he cannot easily extricate himself. For this reason, an atmosphere has emerged in America; an atmosphere wherein the globalists are discontented and perceive weakness.

Of course, the cease-fire is supported by everyone because it distances one from military actions, warfare, destruction, and the ensuing crisis. But the fact that Trump has not achieved a decisive military victory has damaged his image and