Piers Morgan Vs Prof. Marandi on "Death to America" chants in Teheran

Govornik: Marandi
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> Professor Marandi defends anti-American rhetoric in the Middle East by reframing 'Death to America' chants as opposition to U.S. imperial policy rather than literal threats, and contextualizes regional anti-American sentiment through historical U.S. military interventions, sanctions, and alleged support for Israeli actions in Gaza and Lebanon.

SAŽETAK

In this interview, Professor Marandi responds to questions about 'Death to America' and 'Death to Israel' chants by arguing that such slogans should not be interpreted literally, comparing them to expressions like 'Yankee go home.' He reframes the phrase as directed at the U.S. empire and what he describes as an oppressive regime responsible for killing civilians in Gaza, Lebanon, and Iran. Marandi contextualizes anti-American sentiment in Iran by documenting a series of historical U.S. actions: use of chemical weapons against Iran, the shooting down of an Iranian airliner, maximum-pressure sanctions blocking food and medicine, and three wars waged against Iran, including U.S. encouragement of Saddam Hussein's invasion. When confronted about Iranian regime sponsorship of groups the interviewer labels terrorist organisations, Marandi rejects the framing entirely and instead documents what he characterizes as Israeli genocidal actions in Gaza and Lebanon. He also presents what he describes as documented evidence of foreign—Israeli and U.S.—involvement in 2024 Iranian protests, citing Israeli media admissions and statements from U.S. officials. Throughout, Marandi positions Iran, Palestine, and Lebanon as victims of external actors and regional geopolitical dynamics.

KLJUČNE PORUKE

- 'Death to America' chants should be understood as opposition to U.S. imperial policy and what the speaker characterizes as an oppressive regime, not as literal threats to individual Americans.
- The speaker documents historical U.S. military interventions against Iran, including use of chemical weapons, shooting down of an Iranian airliner, maximum-pressure

sanctions, and three wars involving U.S. encouragement of Saddam Hussein's invasion.

The speaker rejects characterisations of Iran as a terrorism-sponsoring regime and asserts that 'the only terrorist regime in our region is the Israeli regime,' citing what he describes as ongoing genocide in Gaza and genocidal attacks in Lebanon.

The speaker presents documented evidence—citing Israeli media outlets and U.S. officials—of foreign involvement in 2024 Iranian protests, including provision of weapons by Israel and currency manipulation by the U.S. Treasury.

The speaker frames Iran, Palestine, and Lebanon as victims of external geopolitical actors and regional power dynamics, recontextualising questions of accountability and victimhood.

The speaker argues that comparative standards should be applied when evaluating rhetoric and violence: if the United States had suffered the same actions it inflicted on Iran, the response would exceed verbal chants and potentially involve nuclear weapons.

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The Meaning of "Death to America"

When asked whether he endorses chants of "Death to America" and "Death to Israel" seen in crowds, along with signs threatening Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu, Professor Marandi reframes the slogan's meaning. He argues that the phrase should not be taken literally, comparing it to the expression "Yankee go home"—which does not mean that every person carrying a U.S. passport should leave the country. According to Marandi, when people chant "death to America," they mean death to the U.S. empire and to what he describes as an oppressive regime that "slaughters our children."

Marandi offers a counterfactual to contextualize the sentiment. He suggests that if the United States had suffered the same actions it has inflicted on Iran—including the slaughter of leaders, civilians, and schoolchildren—the American response would far exceed chanting. He contends that the United States would likely have used nuclear weapons in such circumstances. From this perspective, he argues that words should not trouble the American government, particularly when measured against what he characterizes as the dead children in Gaza, Lebanon, and Iran, as well as what he describes as massacres and genocide.

On Threats and Comparative Standards

When confronted about having criticized threats made by others, Marandi points to an inconsistency he perceives in the interviewer's approach. He references a woman who appeared on the interviewer's show and made a statement about her body being reduced to "my little finger," whom the interviewer subsequently invited back multiple times. Marandi suggests this indicates the interviewer does not object to such rhetoric. When the interviewer clarifies that he would not have invited such a person again, Marandi notes that people frequently make similar claims about his own appearances on the show.

Historical Grievances and Regional Context

Marandi elaborates on what he views as the historical basis for anti-American sentiment in Iran. He lists a series of U.S. actions: the use of chemical weapons against Iran with U.S. endorsement, the shooting down of an Iranian airliner by the United States, the imposition of maximum-pressure sanctions that prevent food and medicine from entering the country, and three wars waged against Iran by the United States, including U.S. encouragement of Saddam Hussein's invasion. He argues that given these circumstances, the sentiment among Iranians toward the U.S. government becomes understandable.

Accusations of Terrorism and Israeli Actions

When the interviewer raises the question of the Iranian regime's sponsorship of what he calls terrorism across the Middle East—including support for the Houthis, Hezbollah, and Hamas—Marandi rejects the framing entirely. He asserts that "the only terrorist regime in our region is the Israeli regime" and notes that the interviewer has refused three times to answer whether he accepts the legitimacy of what Marandi describes as an ethno-supremacist regime.

Marandi documents what he characterizes as recent Israeli actions: carrying out genocide in Gaza, conducting genocidal attacks in Lebanon, and murdering a school principal, her husband, and their maid. He emphasizes that killings in Gaza continue daily, affecting children, men, and women. When the interviewer counters that Iran's regime murdered thousands of protesters in the streets early in the year, Marandi shifts to what he presents as documented evidence of foreign involvement in those events.

Foreign Involvement in Iranian Protests

Marandi cites what he describes as admissions from Israeli sources regarding the 2024 unrest in Iran. He references Channel 14 of Israel as having stated that weapons used to kill hundreds of Iranian police officers were provided by Israel. He notes that the U.S. Secretary of Treasury acknowledged manipulating the Iranian currency to incite

people to take to the streets, and that Channel 14 subsequently reported providing the weapons used against security forces. Marandi also mentions that former President Trump admitted to sending weapons for Iran and that former Secretary of State Pompeo acknowledged that Mossad was on the ground in Tehran during the riots. Additionally, he references Israeli Mossad's Persian-language media stating their presence and involvement in Iran.

On Victimhood and Regional Suffering

In closing, Marandi reframes the broader question of victimhood and culpability. He asserts that Iran, Palestine, and Lebanon are the victims, as are the peoples of the broader region. When the interviewer suggests that there are Iranians who are victims of the Iranian regime, pointing to their presence in the streets during protests, Marandi does not directly engage with this claim but reasserts his characterization of the regional dynamic and the role of external actors.

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