



Written by [Paul Dragu](#) on August 14, 2026

Iran's Revolutionary Guard Declares Victory on PBS — While Foreign Policy Elites Urge Full U.S. Exit

A general with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) gave a rare interview to American media that came off like a postgame interview with the winning coach. The war has gone so badly for the U.S. that even the globalists at *Foreign Affairs* magazine think America should leave the Middle East altogether.

Ironically, Iran would not be able to resist as effectively had American unipolar hegemony not kicked the global economy into hyperdrive after the fall of the Soviet Union. According to analyst Robert Pape, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago, globalization made precision technology widely available. That technology, specifically in the form of cheap and effective drones, is what Iran has used to shut down the Strait of Hormuz and shoot down expensive U.S. helicopters. As Pape points out, Iran is successful because “the objective is no longer conventional victory on the battlefield but rather creating leverage through disruption.” More on this later.



PBS NewsHour/Facebook
Mohammad Reza Naqdi

The Interview

IRGC advisor Gen. Mohammad Reza Naqdi recently sat down with PBS News, and said Iran is winning. He pointed to the chaotic messaging from the White House, with its day-to-day shifts, reversals, and premature victory announcements, as evidence that the U.S. can't figure out how to win this war. “It became a war without a strategy,” he said. “Every two or three days they announced a new objective.” He cited examples the American people have observed with their own eyes and ears. They include threats to invade Kharg Island, confusion over the Strait of Hormuz, and the mobilization of battle ships.

Naqdi said the longer the war lasts, the better for Iran. He even took a dig at American military might. “We had never seen a real war to gain real experience, to learn how to fight with America,” he said. “In these five months, we have learned how. We also see how the American military is weaker than we perceived.” Deterrence is the goal, he added. The Iranians want to make this as painful for the Americans as possible “so that if anyone else wants to attack Iran, they will know there is a cost.”

Naqdi said the Iranians are willing to drag out the war for the rest of Trump's term, if need be. It's



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difficult to know if this is true. The Iranian economy was already reeling before the war. Can it endure another two years of not just sanctions but a blockade limiting its most lucrative export? Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said on Thursday that America can block Iranian ports “indefinitely.”

The Iranian Advantage

As an authoritarian regime, Iran has an advantage. Autocratic governments don’t answer to the people. They’re not concerned about the hardships their decisions create. In America, however, the war has generated enormous political blowback for President Donald Trump and the Republicans. And it has leveled economic hardship so pronounced for the American people that it’s become hard even for our usually nonresponsive political class to ignore. The terms of the memorandum of understanding the president advocated in June suggest the White House desperately wants to end the war. While the decision makers have become increasingly immune to the will of the American people over the last 70 years, there still appears to be a threshold to how much discontent the White House is willing to ignore.

Iran’s Weapons

Naqdi [told](#) PBS that Iran makes more missiles than they launch, and that they make them in various parts of the country. This too is contestable. Iran is certainly not launching missiles with the same intensity it was at the beginning of the war. But one thing that’s clearly true is that they haven’t run out of missiles, despite assurances from Trump months ago that they were down to their last ones. The most recent report of Iranian missile strikes comes from two weeks ago, when news broke that they launched ballistic missiles at an American base in Jordan. Those were intercepted, according to the report, but the point is that, despite numerous assurances over a span of five months that Iran was running out, they continue to find missiles to launch.

Robert Pape agrees. He wrote in a recent [analysis](#) for *Foreign Affairs* that Iran has created a robust weapons-manufacturing system. The country can “disperse, hide, and rebuild its mobile launchers faster than those launchers could be eliminated.”

If, somehow, Iran does run out of missiles, it will become even more dangerous, Naqdi wants us to believe. How so? “Because America has thousands of economic interests throughout the world and all of them can be easily destroyed,” he answered. We’ve already gotten a glimpse of this strategy. Iran has attacked several Gulf States that are not only U.S. allies, but American business partners.

Nukes and Israel

Speaking of a dangerous Iran, PBS asked Naqdi if they wanted nuclear weapons. “Our nuclear bomb is the hearts of the people of the world that we won fighting oppression,” he said. “Islamic values and the divine values of the Islamic revolution are taking over the world. There is no need for nuclear bombs. There is no need for slaughter.”

This too should be taken with a grain of salt. Experts and analysts widely agree that Iran had enriched uranium to levels far above those needed for civilian use. Even the former director of the National Counterterrorism Center, Joe Kent, who’s an adamant opponent of this war, said Iran enriched to such high levels so that it could maintain the option of scaling quickly and building nuclear weapons if necessary.

The IRGC advisor also suggested that “death to America” talk is not about Americans per say. It isn’t directed at the American people; it’s directed at America’s leadership, which “has invaded or violated



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more than 70 countries since becoming a superpower,” he said.

As for Israel, Naqdi admitted that Iran wishes the Jewish state didn’t exist but said the preferable route for Israeli destruction is for it to crumble from within. “Iran has only one thing to say about occupied Palestine,” he said. “A leadership there must be chosen based on a majority vote by the people who are connected to that land. This will certainly not be done with a nuclear bomb. But we certainly prefer if the Zionist regime there did not exist.” He said the best way to make this reality is along the lines of how Afrikaners were toppled in South Africa.

One Insider’s Take

Iran deserves its victory lap — for now. “The war with Iran is an epic disaster,” says Michael Fuchs, a director at George Soros’ Open Society Foundations and onetime member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a globalist organization that works toward a one-world government. Fuchs notes the surprising degree of damage Iran has been able to carry out. “In the last five months, Iran has destroyed or damaged buildings and equipment on at least 15 U.S. military sites,” he [writes](#). “Iran’s retaliation has killed 18 U.S. troops and injured more than 600 on bases in neighboring countries, and people around the world are still reeling from the spike in energy prices caused by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.” As a result, it’s time America leave the region. “It is long past time for the United States to withdraw its forces from the Middle East,” Fuchs writes.

Whatever his faults and foibles, his assessment is correct. “In practice, the U.S. military posture has contributed to instability and destruction,” he says. “The war has generated the very dangers it was meant to prevent.” He elaborates:

With bases scattered across the region, threats to American interests are constant, and each one becomes a new argument for enlarging the footprint. Yet a military footprint can itself become a liability, exposing host countries to reprisal and drawing the United States into local conflicts.

This is exactly what has happened. U.S. presence in this hostile region has resulted in the death of numerous Americans. And with every attempt to quell hostility, we have only been ensnared in quagmire after quagmire, including the current war. Fuchs provides a great summary that could just as easily be lifted out of a Scott Horton book:

The United States’ occupation of Iraq after the 2003 invasion, for instance, not only mired U.S. forces in a long and bloody conflict but also made them vulnerable to Iranian-backed militias, prompting retaliatory U.S. operations in Iraq, Syria, and elsewhere. Meanwhile, the war in Afghanistan spilled into Pakistan, where the United States carried out hundreds of drone strikes against militants attacking American troops across the border. After largely extricating itself from Iraq in 2011, the United States had to send troops back in 2014 to fight the Islamic State, or ISIS, which emerged from the post-invasion chaos. The cost has been steep. The United States spent \$8 trillion fighting in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other theaters as part of its post-9/11 “war on terror.”

But make no mistake. Fuchs isn’t advocating nonintervention. His aim is to preserve America’s destructive potential for other arenas of war around the world. Leaving the Middle East, he says,



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“would free Washington to concentrate on higher-priority objectives, including deterring great-power war in Asia and Europe.”

Another Internationalist Agrees

Pape, who is associated with the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, another globalist-oriented organization, says the war signals that the age of U.S. unipolarity has come to an end. And it's the globalized economy created by America that brought this about. “With the Soviet Union disintegrating, Washington faced no major adversary and sat at the center of the world's financial, technological, and alliance networks,” writes Pape. “The same global economy that rewarded efficiency also rewarded accessibility. Firms competed by lowering costs, expanding production, and distributing technology across international markets.”

But this erased the technological edge that gave the U.S. a resounding and quick victory in the 1991 Gulf War. “The diffusion of precision technologies has flipped the script,” he [argues](#). For example:

A modern smartphone contains more computing power than many military systems possessed during the Gulf War and cameras that were once reserved for intelligence satellites. Civilian markets created enormous economies of scale for miniaturized inertial measurement units (devices that track location, speed, and direction), GPS receivers, lithium batteries, and optical sensors — technology of the kind that would previously have required state sponsorship. Sensors illustrate the transformation most clearly. During the Cold War, precision warfare required expensive military reconnaissance systems. Today, commercial satellites provide imagery once available only to governments. High-resolution cameras, thermal sensors, laser range finders, and navigation chips are produced for civilian industries including agriculture and autonomous vehicles. The barriers separating military and civilian technologies have steadily collapsed.

Among the best examples is the Iranian Shahed-136 drone. “It combines commercially available navigation chips, inertial measurement units, satellite receivers, communications modules, processors, and software — many originally designed for civilian electronics — with a simple airframe and engine,” Pape points out. “The result is a precision weapon assembled largely from components made possible by the same global commercial supply chains that power the digital economy.” That \$20,000 drone brought down a \$35 million U.S. Apache helicopter in June.

Nonintervention, or Empire?

It has been said that Americans are the only people who ended up with an empire against their will. The American spirit is inherently anti-imperialistic. The country was founded by people who left Europe because they wanted to be left alone. Before leaving office, the first president of the country delivered a farewell message that included advice to stay out of foreign entanglements. He warned against getting ensnared in other countries' disputes. Other presidents reiterated this posture. “America goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy,” John Quincy Adams famously said. Over the following centuries, millions of people who wanted to be left alone came to America from all over the globe.

The nonintervention spirit was strong until World War II. It took a brutal attack on Pearl Harbor to convince Americans that it was worth their blood to intervene in a war that was tilting toward the Nazification of Europe.



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But the spirit of nonintervention is rising again among the people. And perhaps this boondoggle in Iran, which has exceeded all expectations of turning into a disaster, will deliver a victory for the American people after all. Perhaps it'll provide us with no choice but to pack our bags and leave a region we had no business intervening in to begin with.



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