

Week 3 of World War III

Introduction

This is my analysis of week 3 of World War III. In my [article](#) on the logic of the war between Iran and the West I argue that we are about to witness a dramatic transformation in world history that can be compared to the transformations that occurred because of World War I and World War II. The article was written on Friday February 20, 2026. The next day the war started.

I recommend to follow the analyses of Mohammad Marandi, professor at the University of Tehran who provides excellent analysis of the war and developments in Western Asia. I administer his [website](#), where I publish all his YouTube videos that I can find.

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Vasilije Filipovic, a journalist for the oldest newspaper in the Balkans, "Politika", read my analysis and posed five questions to me. [Here](#) you can read the questions and answers.

How Iran manages the war: the escalation ladder

The military and economic dimension

After three weeks the pattern of how the war develops has become clear. As I explained in week 0, the main goal is to break U.S. power in Western Asia and the destruction of the apartheid state of Israel. Iran's military strategists use the concept of war management of the escalation ladder to outline their strategy. They stated again and again: Iran will decide how the war will end. Trump thinks that the war will end with a defeat of Iran and regime change. Iran is gradually escalating the war, step by step. The assassination of the Supreme Leader, top commanders and now top security official Ali Larijani did not affect the bombing campaign and the actions of Iran. It is impossible to defeat Iran, because the Islamic Revolution has a strong support of its population, who come out in the millions in the cities of Iran to support the army in this war. It is not reported in Western media, but they come out on the street despite the bombardments. They don't see death as a defeat in their Shia religion. They call it martyrdom and not death. They are strengthened by each martyr in their conviction that justice will prevail. The Islamic Republic is not diminishing but intensifying its offensive.

Iran started with the bombing of the military assets of Israel and the U.S.. They could have bombed the economic assets from the start, but in order to get the support of Russia, China and the Global South they act from the position of retaliation. If you bomb our bank, we are going to bomb all the economic assets of the US in the Gulf, which means the data centers of big companies like Amazon. On Wednesday US/Israeli bombed gas storage tanks at Iran's South Pars field in the southern city of Asaluyeh, halting production at two refineries with a combined capacity of about 100 million cubic meters per day. The IRGC warning said five complexes, two refineries, two petrochemical complexes, and a gas field in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have become now legitimate targets for Iranian retaliation.

This breaks the infrastructure for energy delivery, so even when the war ends, these countries cannot rebuild their infrastructure in just a few days. The economic impact of these retaliation will be long lasting and will severely weaken the economy of the West. Iran has not closed the Strait of Hormuz. It manages the Strait. Iran decides which ships can go through and which one cannot. It has a leverage to create a wedge between the

US and its allies. India is such an ally. Indian president Modi is a strong supporter of US and Israel and now he is begging Iran to allow his ships to pass through the Strait. Iran's deputy foreign minister Ismile Bagghai has responded by saying, that Iran and India have many common bonds and Iran attaches high importance to strengthening and continuing good relations with India. India was to come to terms with Iran and take a distance from the US and Israel, if it wants access to energy.

Iran opens the door for Chinese invasion of Taiwan

The management of the escalation ladder has another dimension. By weakening the U.S. military might, Iran opens the door for China to realize a long lasting dream: the unification of Taiwan with the mainland. The escalation of the war gives China a window of opportunity. Last week large formations of Chinese fishing vessels started operating near Taiwan. These are not ordinary boats. They are part of China's maritime militia. The longer the war lasts, the bigger the chance is that China will seize Taiwan.

The religious dimension

The management of the escalation ladder has a religious dimension like the Crusades. Hundreds of millions of Muslims come together every Friday in mosques around the world. The war in Iran is talk of the town. Reactionary forces will promote the Sunni/Shia divide, but in the memory of all Muslims is wish for the liberation of Jerusalem. A telling incident happened in Turkiye. Erdogan supports the U.S. and Israel. On March 18th Turkish women throw their scarves at men in the Al-Fatih Mosque and call upon them to defend the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The protest comes as Israeli authorities shut Al-Aqsa Mosque in Istanbul on February 28 following the outbreak of the war, citing security concerns and restrictions on public gatherings. The closure has remained in place since then, preventing Muslim worshippers from accessing the site during Ramadan.

This symbolic gesture dates back to the time of Saladin, when a woman threw her hijab into the Great Mosque of Diyarbakir in South Eastern Turkiye as a sign of protest and called for the liberation of Jerusalem, which Saladin would do in 1187!

Saladin's conquest of Jerusalem in 1187 was a pivotal event in medieval history, marking a turning point in the Crusades. It occurred after the decisive Battle of Hattin and resulted in the peaceful surrender of the city, contrasting sharply with the violent Crusader capture 88 years earlier.

Pete Hegseth, the U.S. secretary of war, sees America's military aggressions, especially against Islamic nations, as part of a larger crusade seeking to bring about Armageddon. His extremism is reflected in his tattoos, including the Jerusalem Cross, a religious symbol associated with the violent Crusades of Europeans to reclaim al-Quds from Muslims and the phrase "Deus Vult" ("God Wills It") inked on his body, a rallying cry of the Crusaders.

The technological dimension

In week 3 Iran revealed two important technological features. The first is the successful hit of a US Air Force F-35 stealth fighter jet in central Iran's airspace by fighter drones, not by rockets fires from air defense installations. CNN cited U.S. sources familiar with the incident as confirming that a US F-35 fighter jet made an emergency landing at a US airbase in West Asia after being struck by Iranian fire. This is a breakthrough in air defense installations. Now they can send fighter drones after jet that enter Iran's airspace.

The second breakthrough is that the missiles that Iran has used up to now had a limited range of 2,000 km. Last week they fired missiles at the US/British military base at the island of Diego Garcia, 4,000 km from Iran. The range of Iran missiles has increased dramatically. CNN writes: *"This marks what appears to be the first known attempt to target the base, which was deliberately built in a remote location beyond the reach of many adversaries."*

The U.S. was bragging about their military might with their aircraft carriers and their mighty army. Now it appears that Iran is not Venezuela. Iran is hitting the U.S. bases and economic interest very hard.

These technological breakthroughs bring up the question: does Iran already has a nuclear bomb. They have enriched uranium to produce 10-12 nuclear bombs. One military official said that if Iran wants, it can produce a nuclear bomb in 24 hours, without the need to test it.

Iran now used the doctrine that Israel has used for decades: nuclear ambiguity. We don't tell the world whether we have a bomb or not, so you will find out when the time is there. This is a veiled threat, that now is used by Iran.

According to the BBC Israel's health ministry says that 180 people were injured - some seriously - in Iranian missile strikes on two southern Israeli towns close to a nuclear facility in Arad and Dimona. So now Iran is looking to bomb the sites that produced Israel's nuclear bombs.

Iraq: the first to expel NATO

Hundreds of NATO troops making up the "cornerstone" of the alliance's Middle East presence have been withdrawn from Iraq last week. NATO has relocated its personnel to Italy.

The U.S. embassy is a permanent structure which has provided a base for the 5,500 Americans living and working in Baghdad. It is a powerful center for manipulating Iraq's political system. The embassy has called upon all Americans to leave Iraq. American military bases in Iraq are being attacked.

The first goal of Iran was the expulsion of Western military power from West Asia. This is the first result.

The liberation of Al Quds

When the war progresses, it will arrive at a point when tens of thousands of Muslims will invade occupied Palestine to liberate Jerusalem or Al Quds as it is known in Palestine. The apartheid state of Israel will cease to exist. And this is the result of how Iran manages the escalation ladder.

There are frantic efforts to force a ceasefire, but Iran has put conditions on how the war will end, that makes it impossible for the U.S. and Israel to agree. Iran demands reparations. And if they don't get it, they will destroy the economic infrastructure of Israel and the U.S. allies in the region that is equivalent to the value of reparations.

Each week brings us closer to a new world. The ruling elite in the family dictatorships in Western Asia are now realizing that a new world is being born. Qatar's minister of state for energy affairs said after the bombing of its LNG facilities: *"I never in my wildest dreams would have thought that Qatar would experience such an attack, especially from a brotherly Muslim country in the month of Ramadan, attacking us in this way."*

State-owned QatarEnergy will have to declare force majeure on long-term contracts for up to five years for LNG supplies bound for Italy, Belgium, South Korea, and China due to the two damaged trains. US oil major ExxonMobil is a partner in the damaged LNG facilities, while Shell is a partner in the damaged GTL facility, which will take up to a year to repair. Texas-based ExxonMobil holds a 34 percent stake in LNG train S4 and a 30 percent stake in train S6. Train S4 impacts supplies to Italy's Edison and EDFT in Belgium, while Train S6 impacts South Korea's KOGAS, EDFT and Shell in China.

All this is changing. An new economic order is in the making. Next week we will see how the changes are progressing.

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