

Rod: Thank you for joining us on Beyond the Matrix. I am Rod Bryant and we have a fantastic show lined up for you today especially because of the news of things heating up between Iran, the United States and Israel. I would say that European countries are getting involved as well. Our guest is Mr. Ken Timmerman and we are going to be talking about the situation in the Persian Gulf. Jerry why don't you tell our audience about Ken.

Jerry: Ken is the bestselling author of [*Countdown to Crisis: The Coming Nuclear Showdown with Iran*](#) in 2005. In 2007, he blew the whistle with his book, [*Shadow Warriors*](#), on the intelligence apparatus here in the United States who gave faulty data to our leaders. In his 2014 book, [*Dark Forces: The Truth about what happened in Benghazi*](#), Timmerman revealed Iran's involvement in the attack that took four American lives. In 2018 he wrote a novelistic treatment of the rise of the Islamic state in Iraq in [*ISIS Begins*](#). Most importantly Ken is someone who knows how things operate in Iran. He has brought evidence of Iran's machinations in the Middle East and elsewhere from two out of the three defectors who have given massive information about the Islamic Republic's links to 9/11. He is fully conversant about the intentions and capabilities of Iran that he considers as the first Shi'ite Islamic state in 1979 decades before the rise of Sunni Salafist ISIS

Rod: What he is going to point out in this show is this regime declared war on the United States way back in 1979. That we have only rarely responded to that declaration. However, the current confrontation between the US and Iran now seems to be different. Jerry and I along with Ken Timmerman are going to explore what this latest defector, who was head of the Republican Guard Intelligence in Tehran, has revealed what is going on inside the Islamic Republic. We have important questions to talk about considering the latest news from the Mideast with the deployment of American assets in the region.

Jerry: Ken, why has Iran's Islamic regime raised the stakes confronting the U.S. in the Persian Gulf?

Ken: The Iranians are troubled. They feel the pressure. They feel the pain from the Trump administration's sanctions. This is what Obama freed them from. Now those sanctions are being re-imposed. When the Iranians are wounded, they attack. This is typical of the Middle East and they are behaving as typical middle

east players. They attempt to throw their adversary off balance, they attempt to make people believe that they are the strong horse when in fact they are the weak horse and we are the strong horse.

Jerry: What are the realistic geopolitical objectives of the Trump administration in confronting Iran by dusting off this war plan reported by the *New York Times* that called it, curiously enough, an “Echo of the Iraq War”. Is it protection of U.S. allies Persian Gulf oil production? Is it disruption of renewed nuclear enrichment or is it fostering regime change or is it all of the above?

Ken: Firstly, anything that the *New York Times* reports has an element of fake news to it. This is not an Iraq war plan dusted off. That is the *New York Times*. What they and the Democrats want you to believe is this is an entirely new way of dealing with the Islamic State of Iran. It is the first Islamic State by the way in the Middle East. They preceded by nearly four decades the Islamic State that we all talk about as ISIS. The Islamic State of Iran declared war on us on November 4, 1979 and we just never responded. I remember when I was a teenager there was a band who sang what if they gave a war and nobody came. The Iranians gave a war and we didn't come. They kept on hitting us, killing our people and we never fought back. Here is the sad irony of that 1960's blissful idiocy in Iran's case when they began a war, and nobody comes the ones who started the war wins. The Iranians have been winning that war for forty years. Now, finally, the United States is fighting back. It's about time.

Rod: Ken, I wish we had the statistics that show the number of casualties there have been as a direct result of this war begun by Iran that we have not been participating in. I think of the three hundred Marines killed in Beirut. You could go back to the time when the Delta Force was in Qatar trying to liberate our prisoners. I really think that if we were able to quantify that it would blow the minds of most people, especially the millennials who have no clue of how extensive this history is.

Ken: Let me give you a couple of additions to that list: the 241 Marines killed in Lebanon in 1983, 63 people killed in the Lebanon Embassy bombing in April of 1983, I was there when the Embassy was bombed. What about the war in Iraq?

Rod: Right

Ken: We know that there are more than six hundred U.S. Servicemen killed in Iraq by Iranian IED's. These explosively formed penetrators were much more sophisticated than normal roadside bombs that they gave to their Shi'ite Militia friends. That was six hundred U.S. troops. Now those same Shi'ite militia friends of the Iranians, and there are a hundred thousand of them in Iraq, are trying to open this land bridge between Iraq, Syria and Lebanon at the northern frontier of Israel. What about the Taliban. in Afghanistan? The Iranians have been supporting the Taliban from the get-go. Here is the kicker, 9/11. I was involved in the investigation of the 9/11 attacks - the September 11, 2001 attacks on America. The World Trade Center, the Pentagon and Shanksville in Pennsylvania were attacked. What people are not aware of is the Iranian regime was found by a U.S. Court of Law in the Southern District of New York, to have played a material and significant role in the 9/11 attacks for their support of the Al Qaeda teams that carried them out. The Iranians helped them, the Iranians devised the plan and the Iranians gave material support. Because of that there were 3,000 victims of the September 11th attacks that you can add to Iran's US casualty numbers. The families of these victims have sued in U.S. Courts, and won over ten billion dollars in judgments against the Iranian regime because of their involvement in the 9/11 attacks.

Rod: We didn't even list the numerous hijackings of aircraft that was in direct or indirect support of Iranian intelligence and funding. Let's move on to recent developments. What prompted Iran to attack Saudi tankers and a Norwegian ship at the UAE Port? What is going on with that?

Ken: I think the Iranians are hurting from U.S. sanctions, so they are trying to find some way to tickle the tiger. They want to provoke the Americans. They want to do damage to the Saudis. They want to do it in a way which is not immediately attributable to them, so we cannot blame them. We can't put our finger on them. For example, they are saying the Houthis rebels flew the drones that hit those Saudi pipelines. There is no such thing as Houthi rebels who have drones that they make by themselves in Yemen. It just doesn't exist. This is again one of those fictions of the *New York Times*. The Houthi rebels are Iran Inc. They

attacked Saudi pipelines. Why? Because the Iranians wanted to attack the Saudis but not have it immediately attributable to them, so they think that they can get away with it. They think there are not going to be any fingerprints. The Saudis are not dumb.

We all get it - the United States, the Saudis, the Gulf allies and even Europe. By the way, that is why Secretary of State Pompeo made a side trip to Europe. Iran is behind these attacks and Iran is going to pay a price.

Rod: Do you think there was some direct intelligence the administration received that Iran was threatening U.S. allies and assets in the region that could have been fed from Mossad?

Ken: I don't think it came from Mossad. This is a very interesting story. We learned from Iranian media that the head of the IRGC, the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps Intelligence, was fired in mid-April by the supreme ruler in Tehran. We didn't know why. Then he disappeared and a successor was named. Then it became so convoluted and politically radioactive that the head of the Revolutionary Guard was also fired. What we learned after that was this individual, General Ali Nasiri, apparently was a defector, he came over to the United States and brought top secret intelligence on everything that the Revolutionary Guards were doing. Why? Because he was their intelligence chief. He knew all the secrets.

Rod: This is major

Ken: He knew everything that they were doing with nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles, their terrorist attacks, their plans in the Gulf. He knew about hostages, probably about Robert Levinson the former FBI agent who has been held hostage for over ten years. General Nasiri knew the whole shebang and he went over to the United States. Do you think the Iranians don't have a problem? They have got a major one.

Rod: This was not some intelligent guess work. This was direct information from the horse's mouth. That's amazing. I didn't know this.

Ken: I believe that is the case. I have worked with Iranian high-level

defectors for many years. I have been personally involved in the defections of previous senior officials including a Deputy Minister of Defense, an official who was the head of the Revolution Guards networks in Lebanon. I was not involved in this one.

However, I read what is coming out in the public media and understand what is going on behind the scenes. This Iranian defector came out with stellar information and it led immediately to a response by the President and the Secretary of State, and to the military re-deployment the Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group to the Persian Gulf. This is so unlike what happened during the Obama and Bush Administrations.

Rod: You had talked about the pressures being put on them and the fact that they had gotten some good direct information from a person who was a senior Iranian intelligence defector.

Ken: The United States got information from an Iranian defector who was at the very top of the Revolutionary Guards. I think these attacks are just beginning. I think you are going to see more of them in the coming days and weeks. The Iranians have a wonderful capacity of believing their own fake news. They believe that the world believes that they weren't behind these attacks while in fact everybody understands that they were behind the attack against the tankers in Fujairah, in the United Arab Emirates. Everyone understands that they were behind the attacks by the Houthis against the Saudi oil pipelines. I'm convinced that there are going to be more attacks like this in the coming days and this will escalate. The United States is going to whack them hard and they are not going to know what hit them. The last time that the Iranian regime had a direct military naval confrontation with the United States of America was in 1987 and we sank two-thirds of the Iranian Navy in about twelve hours.

Rod: Few people even remember that.

Jerry: Do you think the Revolutionary Guard Navy small fast patrol boats can stop a juggernaut like the USS Abraham Lincoln carrier battle Group?

Ken: Possibly yes. That is the new wrinkle. The Iranians have been practicing and co-developing with China a ground based ballistic missile which has

been designed specifically to attack U.S. aircraft carriers. It does this with terminal guidance provided by an overflying aircraft, not an AWACS sophisticated aircraft, but some targeting aircraft that the Iranians and Chinese may have.

A smaller civilian aircraft with the radar in it that would track the aircraft carrier and provide terminal guidance coordinates to the missile as it's flying. It is not a simple thing. Aircraft carriers are going at phenomenal speeds. Most Americans don't realize how fast they are going as their real speed is classified. These are fast boats. When carriers launch aircraft, they are already going at something like thirty-five knots and that is not their top speed. They can turn much faster than anybody believes. I have been on aircraft carriers and they are amazing technology. So, the Iranians have been practicing with this special land-based ballistic missile developed with the Chinese designed to attack and to sink a U.S. aircraft carrier. That is the big wrinkle in the story. Now I'm sure that we have a defense against it.

Jerry: Previously, you and I discussed how powerful is a carrier attack group with missile-equipped aircraft, cruisers, destroyers, frigates, and submarines. It has a virtual air wing on top and below decks. Given this Iranian anti-ship missile threat, perhaps, the wisest course of action would be for the USS Abraham Lincoln to stay off the Straits of Hormuz in the Sea of Arabia. The reason I say that is because an ally of the current administration in Washington has positioned its submarines off the same commercial ship channel, I am referring to Israel and its nuclear weapons-equipped Dolphin submarines.

Rod: We also must remember that we have considerable amount of air assets that are in bases in the region around Iran in Iraq and elsewhere.

Jerry: The US has a Navy facility and Air Force B-52 base at Diego Rivera in the Indian Ocean that was used during the Vietnam War.

Rod: We have an Air Base in Azerbaijan, Jordan and the Al-Asad base with 5,500 US troops in Western Iraq. You would think that Iran's proxies in Iraq would hit those assets first with long range rockets and missiles.

Ken: Here is the thing. The Iranians are extraordinarily arrogant. They are sure that they could do great damage to us and that we will turn tail and run. I say

this from knowledge the former head of the Revolutionary Guards was convinced that once they attacked us in Beirut in 1983 the United States turned tail and ran which was true.

We pulled our Marine forces out of Lebanon. How do I know this? Because the former head of the Revolutionary Guards' son defected to the United States and lived in my basement for six months learning English from Jackie Chan movies. This was one of the many stories that he told me about his father about the Revolutionary Guards. The current commander of the Revolutionary Guards, General Salami, believes the same thing. They believe that if they hit us hard, we will retreat, we will not respond. They have not understood that Donald Trump is a different type of President that we have had before.

Jerry: The Supreme Ruler said he doesn't want to have a war with the United States at this juncture. Of course, we can't put much credit in that. He said if the U.S. attacks Iran or its assets he is going to have war with Israel. Now having said that it seems to me that Israel has spent the last few months undergoing training exercises in the eventuality that Iran would unleash its proxies, whether it is Hezbollah or those hundred thousand Shi'ite Militia men in Iraq and in Syria. Therefore, Israel is poised at this moment, U.S. engages in an action against Iran and Iran chooses to move against Israel, it is prepared. The question to you is why would Iran pick a fight with two of the strongest forces in the Middle East?

Ken: Ha! Because they are arrogant because they believe their own fake news. There is a third reason. Their Shi'ite eschatology teaches them that when they lose, they win. It brings back the Mahdi, the 12th Imam, to return and lead them and the armies of Islam to conquer Israel. That is why they say if the United States attacks them, as you just mentioned Jerry, they will attack Israel. Their ultimate focus is on Israel, they want to bring the Mahdi back, the 12th Imam back. They believe that the United States will help them there by engaging them militarily. That they will have a war with the United States, that they can destroy the United States. By the way, let us not underestimate their capabilities when it comes to an EMP Strike with the United States whether it's an Iranian strike or North Korean Strike. This is a take-down. They can do that so that is something that we also need to take into consideration. The Iranians believe that they have the winning

cards. They do not understand the resolve of Donald Trump, the President of the United States. They do not understand the resolve of U.S. Military Forces. Their last encounter with our military face to face was when they captured a patrol boat crew off the shores of Kuwait and caught them surrendering on their knees on videotape and held them for 48 hours. A pathetic example was made of them by the Iranians. That is what they think the whole U.S. Navy and all of U.S. Forces is about. They are about to be sorely corrected.

Rod: The advantage we have is that they are so arrogant that they honestly think that is who our Navy and our Armed Forces are really like. They are setting themselves up for a tremendous fall.

Jerry: I think what Ken is telling us is really stunning. This is not going to be like the 1987/88 Tanker War in the Persian Gulf, where the U.S. basically creamed Iran. In fact, we took over their offshore oil platforms. This possible conflict Ken said is ideologically driven. That the Iranian Shi'ites really think that the contract they signed with the 12th Imam will enable them to win.

Rod: That our response is going to be different than what it has been all the way back to 1979. This response is going to be a renewed approach to how we deal with Iran and its proxies.

Jerry: Ken, why did Secretary of State Pompeo go to Brussels and then on to Sochi to talk to Mr. Lavrov?

Ken: He had originally been scheduled to go directly to Russia. This trip to Brussels was a side trip made urgent so the Secretary of State could directly communicate to the Europeans, who have been major proponents of the bad nuclear deal with Iran. It enabled him to communicate new intelligence to them that the U.S. has learned from this high-ranking defector who up until just a month ago was the head of the Revolutionary Guards Intelligence Department. He must be, if not the highest-ranking Iranian defector, one of the top three. I was personally involved with the defection of the other two. This defector is right at the top of the intelligence matrix in Iran. He came out with top secret intelligence documents; we are led to believe from a public news reporting. It made a lot of sense for Mike Pompeo to take a side trip to Brussels to give a private briefing to

his counterparts in Europe. God bless him for doing it. I must say the Europeans had been good so far about not leaking all the information that he provided them.

Rod: Doesn't it make you wonder how bad the conditions are in Tehran, for a high-ranking official like that to defect. You have a job that is secure at the top and you are willing to pack up and leave. What does that tell you?

Ken: You know that's a great question Rod because you are right. When you are at the top of the Revolutionary Guards or the top of the military or the top of the regime you have everything. Your children have everything. You live in a special compound. You have mansions that were built by people from the Shah's era and your children go to very special schools. They have their Instagram channels for the children. They are called the Rich Kids of Tehran. They are driving around in Lamborghinis and Ferraris in Tehran. These sons and daughters of high-ranking officials, like the one who just defected have it all. Money is not an object. I met one of these people, he came out and he said well, I had an eighteen-million-dollar mansion and I left. Why? Because he felt the regime was on to him for whatever reason and was about to arrest him. That is why they leave. They believe that they have been compromised for real reasons or fake reasons. It doesn't matter. I don't know if this individual General Nasiri had been working for the United States before he defected or not. Maybe not at all. However, he was led to believe that the regime was on to him and that is why he left.

Rod: So, it is not because they are a highly patriotic loyal people to the regime, or they want to help deliver the nation out of the clutches out of a wicked regime. They are just leaving because they are saving their own necks.

Ken: In the big scheme of things I know other defectors who have left because they wanted to save the Iranian nation. Yes, they repent to a certain extent for what they have done in the past. The proximate cause for their departure is imminent death.

Rod: Right, which makes sense

Ken: They had been exposed for whatever reason or they feel that they have been exposed and it's just time to get out of Dodge.

Jerry: Ken, what are the realistic prospects if the U.S. has a conflict with the Iranian Islamic regime that somehow the magic switch will be pulled, and regime change could occur? I know that is the secret desire of Mr. Bolton, perhaps the secret desire of you and others who have been advocating for that. But realistically could there be regime change if there is a dust up?

Ken: Well it's not my secret desire. I have talked about this publicly and I have been doing it for over twenty years. It is a complicated subject. I have always in the past used the image of two clocks, the nuclear clock, how close are the Iranians to achieving a nuclear weapon and then the regime change clock how close are the Iranian people to seizing power from the regime? I think today the nuclear clock has already reached midnight. They have nuclear weapons so what we need the Iranian people to do is get in position to overthrow the regime through popular dissent, through a massive popular uprising. What they need to do, and this is the most important, is to defang the Revolutionary Guards. In other words, to keep themselves from getting killed by the Revolutionary Guards. That is the real conundrum that everybody is facing today. I have many friends working in the pro-freedom movement in Iran. We are working on building bridges to the Revolutionary Guards, believe it or not, to ensure that there won't be a blood bath when the regime goes down. Because one thing that the Revolutionary Guards and the opposition are both convinced of is that the regime is going down. What they don't agree on is what is going to happen afterwards.

Rod: The big thing is what kind of instability ensues after that occurs. It's hard to even point to one of several things that could happen.

Ken: I must say that across the Iranian body politic people are united about one thing, whether they are pro-regime or anti-regime. They all are united. They do not want Iran to become another Syria or Libya. They don't want that level of destruction, lawlessness, chaos and mass murder to happen in their country. So, they are actively seeking some transition from dictatorship to freedom because it is not an easy thing.

Jerry: Ken are these prospects going to affect what Israel does in the space of the next several weeks before a government is formed? Realize that Netanyahu has been given an extension for time to cobble together a working

coalition. So, if something happens before the ruling coalition is formed what does Israel do?

Ken: I have had a long dialogue with senior officials in Israel about this. Netanyahu is going to do what his predecessors have done for decades, put Israel's interests first. If Israel is attacked, he will respond in an appropriate manner. He is not going to wait for a mythological beast to appear in Tehran called a moderate Mullah. He is not going to wait for an impossible solution called a democratic revolution to occur in Tehran. He is going to do what he needs to do for the safety, the security of Israel and of the Jewish people. I have to say I don't know Bibi Netanyahu very well. I have only met him once or twice. He has played brilliantly against adversaries on the borders of Israel. Israel is encircled by Iranian missiles to the South from Gaza, from the North from Hezbollah in Lebanon and from the East from Syria. Yet he has managed to keep them all at bay. The worst these Iranians have been able to do so far in the latest barrage of seven hundred missiles from Gaza is a limited number of casualties. I mean if you really think about it very few casualties. It reminded me of the 2006 war. I was in Israel during that 34-day conflict. I was in Haifa and then up along the Lebanese border and saw all these amazing catastrophes. The lack of preparedness of the Israeli tank crews, the Golani brigade and the Special Forces of Israel. They didn't know what they were doing. They had no strategy. The government had no clue what they were going to do in 2006 against this Iranian – backed Hezbollah rocket onslaught. Today I think it's very different. I think Netanyahu has learned those lessons from 2006. It may have been the first time I met him in the summer of 2006 in a bunker in Qiryat Shemona up along the Lebanese border when he was in the opposition. He was there talking to the town leaders, the elected municipal council of Qiryat Shemona, in a bunker because they were being attacked daily by Iranian missiles from Lebanon. He said we can't let this continue. We must go forward and end the threat. Obviously, the government at the time did not end the threat. I think today Bibi will end the threat.

Rod: I hope that you are correct. I am also hoping that the information that you have provided today is going to show that the United States response to Iran is perhaps going to be a different response we have had in the last forty years. Ken, thank you so much for joining us. You have been listening to Beyond the Matrix

and we will see you next time at this same place here on Israel News Talk Radio.

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