

US political elites advance Israel's war on Iran

The Grayzone's Max Blumenthal and Aaron Mate address the Trump administration's drive for a full scale war on Iran, the anti-Iran machinations of Democratic leaders, and discuss why Israel will always undermine negotiations. ||| The Grayzone ||| Find more reporting at <https://thegrayzone.com> Support our original journalism at Patreon: <https://patreon.com/grayzone> Facebook: <https://facebook.com/thegrayzone> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/thegrayzonenews> Instagram: <https://instagram.com/thegrayzonenews> Minds: <https://minds.com/thegrayzone> Mastodon: <https://mastodon.social/@thegrayzone> #TheGrayzone

#Aaron

The prominent voices of opposition that are featured are those who are unabashedly pro-Israel and basically want to do Israel's bidding and get the U.S. to bomb Iran. Meanwhile, you have other prominent U.S. voices leading the charge for regime change, who openly talk about making ordinary Iranians suffer. For example, Nancy Pelosi joining the chorus of people like Scott Best and Trump's Treasury Secretary, who's been openly bragging about his role through the Treasury Department in imposing sanctions and crashing Iran's economy. And here's Nancy Pelosi endorsing that strategy.

#Speaker 02

Use economic forces. Use economics. There are ways to cripple their economy, and some of that has already been in the works.

#Aaron

It does feel very tenuous, though—the regime there, you know, more than it has in a long time.

#Speaker 02

I agree with you, I agree with you. But again, it's not about a threat of war. Hopefully, it's more about just weakening their economy. And that weakens the support they do have, because they do have support in the rural areas and among the more conservative imams and all the rest of that. But we have to make them feel the pain as well. Is there a way?

#Max

Inflict pain, inflict pain. That's all these maniacal Democratic leaders talk about—people who've never served in the military.

#Aaron

Inflict pain on ordinary people because they support their government—so the way to get them to stop supporting the government is to make them feel pain. I mean, again, who gives Nancy Pelosi, or anybody in a foreign government that's not Iran, the power to impose pain on ordinary Iranians? But that's what you can say when you're a hegemon, and when your hegemony is accepted across the spectrum—whether it's Scott Best and Trump's Treasury Secretary, or Nancy Pelosi, who's supposedly an opponent of Trump, always talking about how she stood up to him and led his opposition. They all support the same policy of hurting ordinary people to advance regime change. And, you know, who wants to get on board with that agenda of serving Israel and hurting ordinary Iranians? But that's the consensus among the regime change crowd.

#Max

That's the consensus of the Democratic Party leadership. That's the alternative to Trump—and to what will be J.D. Vance. And what will Trump do next? He sent a second aircraft carrier battle group. There are tens of submarines in the waters, Coast Guard ships, destroyer-class ships—about one-third of the U.S. Navy's assets—moving into position to encircle Iran. Why? Was there some threat from Iran to the United States, to American national security? Were we even sold some psyop about Iranian WMDs, or the smoking gun becoming a mushroom cloud unless we acted? Was there some national discussion? Was there a debate in Congress about going to war with Iran? No, it just suddenly came out of nowhere.

Because Trump has decided that he has to answer to his constituency among the Zionist Likudnik lobby that helped bring him to power—specifically the Adelsons—just as he has to answer to the South Florida, Miami Mafia, Gusano Industrial Complex that controls a few swing districts he needs to maintain his coalition. That requires him to starve Cuba to death, which we'll get to in a minute. And then, for the rest of the MAGA base, he'll send out ICE to shoot a blue-haired lesbian protester in the face—and that's what they get. Everyone else gets inflation, high interest rates, unaffordable groceries, and Howard Lutnick investing \$600 million in Tether while David Sacks steers crypto policy so that Howard Lutnick can make record profits.

And Eric Trump invests in an Israeli drone company that gets massive Pentagon contracts, along with Tesla getting State Department contracts to provide armored cars. It's just the most corruption—so much corruption we can't even keep track of it. But we have to go to war with Iran. We just have to. And no one even knows why. It's very simple: Donald Trump is controlled by Israel

on this issue. It's Israel that wants to do this. The American people don't want to do it, and I don't even think Donald Trump wants to do it. Did we cover Netanyahu's visit in the last—I don't think in the last livestream. I don't know if we covered it.

#Aaron

No, we didn't. And he's made so many visits it's hard to keep up with all of them, because he comes here more than pretty much anybody else. And he's coming here for one reason: to lobby Trump on bombing Iran and maybe furnish some concocted intelligence about what a threat Iran is—which he's tried to do before, and which is all completely phony. But yeah, you're right. It's true, we haven't gotten that kind of Iraq WMD-style push recently. It's shifted from "Iran might be getting nuclear weapons" to that supposed Iranian massacre of tens of thousands of protesters—but now that's fallen away.

And now it's just, the ships are there and Iran better make a deal. And if it doesn't accept our demands, then, uh, there's going to be hell to pay. And Iran keeps saying, "We're happy to make a deal on the issue of our nuclear program," which they made before, when Trump tore it up. But they're not going to back down on the right to defend themselves, which is expressed through their arsenal of ballistic missiles. But there again, the bipartisan consensus is that Iran can't have ballistic missiles—it can't defend itself. And here is Brett McGurk. He was a top Middle East official.

#Max

Before we get to McGurk—since he was an official under Biden—I just want to make a point about Trump and Netanyahu's visit, and then we can move on to that.

#Aaron

Yeah, sure.

#Max

All right. Netanyahu—I've lost track of how many times he's come to Washington, like eight times since 2025. They shut down the 695 freeway. He got presidential-level security this time, helicopters and all. He was here to sabotage negotiations between Trump and Iran by putting the two red lines on the table again, as you mentioned: ballistic missiles and support for Iran's allies like Hezbollah, Ansar Allah, Hamas, and so on. Those are red lines that would blow up negotiations. So he was here to cause a war with Iran. And if the U.S. does not go to war with Iran, Netanyahu—or Israel—will use other means, which means Israel is acting as an enemy of the United States. If the United States wants to make a deal, Iran will not blow up the deal.

If the United States wants to be at peace in the region, Iran will not seek to take the U.S. to war. It's Israel that will take the U.S. to war, and it's Israel that will come in and shatter the negotiations—through some means. What could they do? A false flag in Europe? Attack Iran as they did before? And there has been a breakthrough in Oman that we learned about today, where the Iranian foreign ministry and key Trump officials have announced some agreement on main principles, which means Trump might not be putting those red lines back on the table. But then here you have, Aaron, Brett McGurk, who's working for the Saudis and the Emiratis through his consulting firm, and he's on the Democrat-oriented MSNBC advancing Netanyahu's line.

#Aaron

CNN, same thing.

#Max

CNN, all right.

#Speaker 05

Over the next few weeks, we'll see. I'm very skeptical. Again, the elements are there for a deal—I hope so—but I think this is heading for a confrontation. I'll say one more thing: the missile program is not a superfluous issue, okay? The UN Security Council has imposed all Chapter 7 sanctions on Iran's missile program. They were reimposed last year because Iran has used its missiles—hundreds of them—in the sky. I was in the Situation Room back in October 2024, during the attack against Israel. It was an unprovoked attack. This missile program is serious. So to do a deal that doesn't address the missile program or Iran's treatment of its own people after the massacres we saw—I just think that's, right now, impractical and unlikely. Iran wants to focus just on the nuclear issue, but I think those days are over. It has to be a broader deal, and that is clearly not in the offing.

#Aaron

So that's Brett McGurk, a Democrat, saying you can't have a deal with Iran that only addresses the nuclear program. He's adopting the Israel-first position—that it's not enough to have a nuclear deal as Obama did. And by the way, Brett McGurk served under Obama, so he's kind of throwing the Obama position under the bus. He's saying you also have to address Iran's ballistic missile program, which is Iran's only way of defending itself from a country that has attacked it multiple times. And when he says Iran launched an unprovoked attack on Israel in the fall of 2024, he's omitting that, in the months before that, Israel bombed the Iranian consulate in Damascus.

And then, after a round of hostilities there, Iran went and assassinated not only the Hezbollah leader, Hassan Nasrallah, in Lebanon, but also Ismail Haniyeh of Hamas in Tehran. So Israel

launched an attack on Tehran and killed a Hamas leader, and then he says Iran responding to that is “unprovoked.” He’s totally distorting history to advance the message that basically Iran should not be able to defend itself, and that any agreement that doesn’t restrict Iran’s ability to defend itself should not be made. And he’s a Democrat making that argument—he’s a “golfocrat.” It’s so funny how they have these contributors and never acknowledge what their conflicts of interest are. The Iranian foreign minister, Araghchi, made a speech last week in Doha that I recommend people see.

It's a great speech. It's a great speech. And if you listen to it, it's so clear why Iran is seen as such a threat by the U.S. and Israel. It's because Iran insists that the root of all strife in the Middle East is Israel's Greater Israel project of constant territorial theft and denial of Palestinian self-determination. And he says, if that could be addressed, we could have peace for everybody in the region. And as long as it's not addressed, we're going to have conflict. And because Iran insists on not selling out the Palestinian issue, that's why, in the eyes of the U.S. and Israel, it has to be destroyed.

And the U.S. is basically forcing everyone to make a choice—like, if you don't want to be destroyed, you have to go along with our line, which is that the Palestinians have no rights. And that's the fault line in the Middle East right now. It's really the fault line of all strife: between those who refuse to accept Israeli-U.S. dictates that Palestinians get no rights, and those who accept that and those who don't. Because Iran doesn't accept that, they constantly get targeted for regime change.

#Max

Yeah, it puts Palestine in a global—well, it sees Palestine through a global lens, and especially through a regional lens, and through the strict framework of international law. Araghchi’s speech in Doha really lays out the stakes well. And I think if I were to give a similar speech, I wouldn’t be speaking as a foreign minister with the same constraints. I think you could say that Greater Israel has no borders and that it poses a threat to everyone around the world. Just look at the threat it poses to the First Amendment in the United States, or to the right to organize on campus, or the poison it’s pumped into our political system through figures like Randy Fine, who said, if you have to choose between Muslims and dogs, the choice is obvious.

It's a threat to everyone, but Araghchi lays out the stakes very well. I read that—yeah, glad you brought up that speech. I don't know if it's possible, with Israel in the picture, for Iran to make a lasting deal with the United States, especially with the Trump administration, even though there seemed to have been a breakthrough. They're supposed to meet again in two weeks. And we have to remember there was supposed to be another meeting—scheduled on, was it June 12th?—when Israel attacked by surprise, without provocation, killing off-duty commanders and nuclear scientists, activating Mossad cells across Iran. That was in the midst of negotiations, and Netanyahu said Trump basically used the negotiations as a ruse to keep the Iranians off guard.

They're not off guard this time, and they must be seeing this with clearer eyes than before. As long as there's Israel, with this Zionist supremacist philosophy guiding all its actions—embracing

occupation in a way it hasn't before, essentially formalizing control of the West Bank, attacking southern Lebanon with more fury than ever in the middle of a ceasefire, plotting to go back to war in Gaza, and pushing the U.S. toward war with Iran—as long as there is a Greater Israel, war will always be on the table with any government that stands up for Palestinians and international law. And so... there's not going to be a resolution, an ultimate resolution, in Oman.

#Aaron

I share that prediction. I mean, look, for Obama to reach a deal with Iran—the Iran nuclear deal—he had to overcome Netanyahu coming to Congress and trying to undermine him with the support of the Republican Party, who brought Netanyahu in to speak to them as if Netanyahu were their president, not Obama. And so Obama was able to overcome that, but ultimately the Iran nuclear deal collapsed because Trump canceled it. And so for Trump now to basically go around Netanyahu and put him in his place, when he's never, ever done that—even in reaching the so-called ceasefire, where people were pointing out that Trump, unlike Biden, used some U.S. leverage—okay, but what ultimately happened? Israel violated the so-called ceasefire anyway. It's killed hundreds of Palestinians since it went into effect. And Trump puts Netanyahu on his Orwellian-named board of peace. So really, has Trump ever defied Netanyahu? Not that I've seen, and I don't expect that to change here.

#Max

As I said, even if he does defy Netanyahu, Israel can still attack Iran and force the U.S. to defend it, redirecting THAAD and Patriot missile stocks from Ukraine and Taiwan. He won't—he's like, you know, the roommate you just can't get to go away, the one who drains your entire existence. He'll never go away unless he's forced to.