

Paul Craig Roberts: US Forces FORCED to Retreat as Iranian Retaliation Turns the Tables

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#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today is Monday, April 20th, 2026, and our dear friend, Paul Craig Roberts, is here with us. Welcome, Paul.

#Guest

Thank you, Nima.

#Nima

Paul, let me start with the latest post by Donald Trump on Truth Social, in which he says that the United States is in a very strong position regarding Iran. He then compared the Iran war to World War I and World War II, saying that it was perfectly executed and took only six weeks compared to them, compared to those World Wars. And he's claiming that he's not under any sort of pressure to put an end to the war, and the way the mainstream media is trying to say that he is under tremendous pressure is not correct. He says he has a lot of time to deal with the case of Iran.

Paul, one of the major events since this ceasefire started was the latest one yesterday — the attack or somehow the seizure of Iranian commercial vessels close to the Persian Gulf in the Arabian Sea. The United States is there because of the ceasefire. They can put all these beautiful, as Donald Trump likes to put it, aircraft carriers or destroyers. Yeah, exactly. Then, because of the ceasefire, if the ceasefire ends, they're not going to be there because they'll be within reach of Iranian missiles. They have to move from their position. What is your understanding of the way Donald Trump is somehow trying to negotiate — on one hand, put pressure on negotiation, and on the other hand, do the opposite?

#Guest

It doesn't make any real sense.

#Nima

And what does he want to achieve, Paul? Let me play a clip of Major General Randy Manor. He's describing the situation with the Trump administration, I think, in a very clear way. Here's what he said, Paul.

#Speaker 03

Very discouraging. As a retired military officer of 36 years, to see the lack of clarity in the military and political objectives of what has been going on in the Middle East. It seems like someone Googled "top 10 reasons to attack Iran," and they threw them up on the wall like spaghetti to see what would stick. It almost sounds like we have a couple of frat boys. The president himself said, "We're going to attack them again just for the fun of it." The geography is such that from anywhere in Iran, they can hit ships transiting that area if they so choose. They also, if they so choose, could put a handful of mines — a handful, one boat — that would literally cause the insurers to not insure the ships going through there and would continue to shut down the straits.

Anything to open that effort would require hundreds of thousands of U.S. military to occupy large portions of Iran, which, quite bluntly, is not possible. We are the strongest country in the world, but we have limited capability despite what the administration says. So we are depleting our key resources for what objective? I think the Secretary of Defense and the administration do not reflect an understanding of the risks they are putting our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines in. And we are paying for it with many billions of dollars of taxpayer money and the lives of American service members. It's actually a tragedy, what is happening.

#Nima

Yeah. Paul, what do you make of it? What do you make of what's going on? Many people have serious doubts and questions about it.

#Guest

Who was that speaking?

#Nima

It was Major General Randy Manor. He's retired U.S. Army.

#Guest

Well, he spoke the truth. Yeah, what he said was correct. So what is Trump doing? Well, it's hard to know. Either he's searching for a way to get out of the war that looks like he won, or he has no intention of stopping America's participation in the war, because that's what Israel wants. In other words, Trump's hopes of extracting himself from this conflict are inconsistent with Netanyahu's determination to keep the United States in, and the Israel lobby is extremely powerful in the United States. So I think that's Trump's dilemma. He can't get out because Israel won't let him. Well, how does he stay in? He can't use the Navy, as the retired general just pointed out. He can't force Iran to open the strait, as the retired general just pointed out.

And there's no possibility of the United States being able to land troops — a million or two million soldiers — on Iranian territory to try to take control of the country. So what can he do if he stays in? If he stays in, any remaining American assets in the Persian Gulf, in the oil sheikhdoms, will be destroyed. Any American Navy vessels that enter into the region will be destroyed. Israel will continue to be destroyed because they can't block the incoming Iranian ballistic missiles. The Israelis are out of interceptor missiles. And moreover, the more modern version of the Iranian missiles are not easily intercepted, even if you had the missiles. So staying in the war, if we keep it going, if it restarts with live fire, it looks like Israel gets hurt badly and any American assets get hurt badly, and Iran doesn't. We still don't know to what extent the Iranians have effective air defense.

#Nima

To a large scale.

#Guest

To a large scale.

#Nima

What? They didn't use many of their air defense systems until the final phase of the war before the ceasefire. That's why, in the days before the ceasefire, you saw various fighter jets hit by Iran's air defense system.

#Guest

Yeah. Well then, so what does he gain by staying in? What does Israel gain? I don't understand why Israel wants the war to continue when they're so vulnerable. Unless the embarrassment to Trump of defeat gets so high that an okay is given to use nuclear weapons. It may be that Netanyahu figures that if the United States is on the verge of being defeated, just having all kinds of losses and no victories, that Trump, who is very unpredictable and unstable, may allow the use of nuclear weapons, if not by the United States, then by Israel. So that may be Netanyahu's plan. It's the only

plan that would make any sense — that Netanyahu keeps the war going until Trump is so frustrated he can't hide from defeat, and so out come the nukes.

It makes sense for Trump to get out of the war. The population at home is not for the war. They're against it. It's costing him supporters. His contradictory statements, you know, from one hour to the next, make him look like a fool. So the thoughtful kind of people that any president needs for support are writing him off. So it looks to me like it's a loser for Trump to try to keep the war alive when he hasn't got any prospects of success. For him to do that, it's either the power of the Israel lobby or he's just unrealistic and lives in some sort of dream of what a superman he is. So it really makes no sense. The other question that I would pose to you is, why does Iran continue with the ceasefire?

They agreed to one — it was 10 days or two weeks or something — but the Americans made it so clear that no one was abiding by the ceasefire that, why are the Iranians in it? Possibly because Trump got Netanyahu to declare a ceasefire with Lebanon. But the position of the Israeli government, as I understand it, is that they get around this by declaring Hezbollah to be terrorists. And so it's not a war. Israel has to deal with terrorists, and that's not included in the ceasefire. I don't understand Iran. They should just say, look, you know, we've done everything we could to be reasonable, and you break every agreement. So you better get out of our neighborhood, or we're going to drive you out.

I also think, as I've expressed before on your program, that the Iranians should start raising the question of Greater Israel. They should say, this is what the war is about. And Greater Israel means we can't exist. So what's negotiation about? There's no way we can negotiate whether or not we can exist. And if Greater Israel is to get rid of us, like Libya and Iraq and Syria, then we have to raise the question of this Zionist agenda, that this is the cause of conflict, not our enrichment of uranium or control over the Strait or any such thing. The cause of the conflict is the Zionist agenda of Greater Israel. And the Israeli prime ministers themselves hold up the maps.

So I don't understand why the Iranians haven't raised this issue, because this is the only real issue. If there was no Zionist agenda of Greater Israel, there would have been none of the wars in the 21st century in the Middle East. And this current attack on Iran wouldn't be ongoing. So it's a puzzle to me that the Iranians and the Muslim world in general don't make an issue of the Zionist agenda. It's not a conspiracy. The Israeli prime ministers espouse it. They hold up the maps. They talk about it. So it looks to me like the Iranians are not using the means at their disposal, and they're sitting there going along with negotiations.

But how do you negotiate with Greater Israel? You can't. The Israelis have to abandon that agenda. And if the Iranians don't make an issue of it, it's unlikely it will become a political issue inside the Israeli population. Remember now, Zionists are not a majority of Israelis. And now, for the first time, the Zionist agenda is causing hurt to Israel. People are getting killed, apartment buildings are being blown up, airports, all kinds of things. And Iran can restart that whenever they want. So it seems to

me the Iranians ought to make it very clear to the Israeli population what the cost to them is of this Zionist agenda. And they should proceed to destroy as much of Israel as they can to make the population wake up and say, why is this happening to us?

Because of this Zionist agenda to have the whole Middle East? What are we gonna do with the whole Middle East? It's too big for a tiny country. Where did this nonsense come from, and affect political change inside Israel? You know, Mossad and the CIA tried to cause political change inside Iran, but they didn't have any real tools. But Iran has a real tool — Greater Israel. It can say, look, this is the cause of the problem, and you're trying to exterminate us, so we're going to teach you what this is going to cost you until you give it up. Well, instead, they go to negotiations. But, of course, then they don't go because Trump breaks all the rules. Israel breaks all the rules.

And so when they go, the reasons they agreed to go have already been shattered. So that's the situation. I personally don't see how the war can go on, Nima — a real war — for the reasons I've already given, but also the cost it imposes on the whole world. If you substantially curtail the world oil supply, the world supply of fertilizers, then you cause world inflation. You cause world starvation. All sorts of bad things happen everywhere. All economies slow down. Unemployment rises. It becomes a worldwide thing. This is a very huge price for the world to pay for the Zionist agenda of Greater Israel. How can they agree to pay that price? So I think the continuation of this war is impossible unless the Israelis, the Americans, use nuclear weapons. And the consequence of that is not going to be good either for the United States or Israel.

So it looks to me that for Trump, this is a lose-lose situation. And I think it's a lose-lose situation for Israel because I think Netanyahu's bet is that frustration and defeat will lead Trump to approve the use of nukes. I don't think that will happen. I think there'll just be—since there's no support for the war now—how can there be support to use nukes? So it becomes a deadly, a deadly act for Trump. He would be impeached. He would be imprisoned. So we've got Trump tricked by Netanyahu, convinced it's a three-day war. There's no collapse of Iran, and there's no real way out that doesn't make it look like Trump was defeated. So maybe he's just trying to bluster himself into a position that can be called victory so he can exit victoriously. That may explain all of the bluster and the contrary statements.

#Nima

Paul, how do you explain Trump's total support for Benjamin Netanyahu? What is it? What is the connection between the two? And you mentioned the situation with the support in the United States that is melting down as we speak. People are mostly against the war in the Middle East right now. I think more than 64% of the American people — they voted, the recent poll shows that they're against the war in the Middle East. But still, you see Donald Trump insisting on the continuation of the war. How much leverage? Because it could be that Benjamin Netanyahu has some sort of

leverage on Donald Trump, because you don't see that happening with other candidates like Naftali Bennett. He's not like this. And nobody in Israel is like Benjamin Netanyahu in the way he's capable of manipulating Donald Trump and his administration.

#Guest

Well, I wouldn't know the answer to that. My impression is that it's the Israel lobby that's strong. And...

#Nima

But the Israel lobby was there during the Obama administration, during George W. Bush, during Joe Biden. They couldn't get the war in the Middle East, but Donald Trump gave them the war in the Middle East.

#Guest

Oh, they did get the war. 9/11 was the new Pearl Harbor. And the Israel lobby succeeded in using the United States' blood and money. We had a lot of deaths to destroy Libya, Iraq, Syria. And, of course, we were in Afghanistan for 20 years. I never did figure out why, what that was for. I don't think Afghanistan is part of Greater Israel. If it is, the Israelis will never get it. The Red Army couldn't get it. And the United States was there 20 years and couldn't get it. So it's for sure the Israelis wouldn't be able to.

So the United States has been fighting wars for Israel since 9/11. That was the whole purpose of 9/11. It was the new Pearl Harbor that would launch the Zionist agenda of seven countries in five years. This was all put out by the editor of Commentary, Norman Podhoretz. It was part of the neoconservatives' approach to American foreign policy, which they controlled for the first quarter of the 21st century. Trump is just the last in line so far of the presidents who went along with fighting for Greater Israel. You have to remember, Obama was going to invade Syria. Correct. Based on some phony story.

#Nima

And would have, except the next morning... False flag operation, you mean, that chemical weapons were being used against... Yeah, that's right.

#Guest

Obama drew a red line in the sand: if Assad uses chemical weapons, we're going to invade. And so then we pulled off the false flag and claimed he used chemical weapons. And Obama was preparing to invade. The next morning, the Russian Air Force was in Syria, and he realized that there was no

way we could invade if the Russian Air Force was going to be there. So. But Americans need to understand that these wars were not a war on terror; they were a war for Greater Israel. That's what they were. That's why 9/11 happened. It was a neoconservative inside job to create the excuse that Israel was needed in order to put into effect the announced program of the neoconservatives—seven countries in five years.

And Iran is just the follow-up. And you have to remember this—Bennett, the Israeli Prime Minister. When was that? 2001, 2002. He was in Washington in February, speaking to the annual conference of American Jewish organizations. And he said, "Turkey's the next Iran," because he expected Iran to fall to the attack that Israel and the United States were preparing in February. And it didn't. But you can see they have an agenda. Otherwise, why did he tell the Israel lobby in the United States that Turkey's the next Iran? Clearly, that's informing them, all right, now go and demonize Turkey. Turn them into terrorists.

#Nima

And Pakistan, the one after Turkey.

#Guest

Yeah.

#Nima

You're talking about the one after Turkey, which would be Pakistan.

#Guest

Yeah, well, or Saudi Arabia.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Guest

I've never understood if Greater Israel includes Pakistan or just goes up to the Pakistani border. Because you see, when they said from the Nile to the Euphrates, it meant the Euphrates was the border. It wasn't all of Iraq; it was just half, because that river splits the country in two. And so when they say from the Nile to Pakistan, I've never understood whether they mean Pakistan is part of Greater Israel or whether that is the border, because they moved the border, you know. Originally it stopped at the Euphrates, and then it was half of Saudi Arabia, and then it was all of Saudi Arabia. So, and you can see Israel...

#Nima

Here is the map, Paul.

#Guest

Yeah.

#Nima

It's going to be part of Egypt and all of Lebanon, going to Syria up to Damascus, I think. Yeah.

#Guest

And Baghdad.

#Nima

This is Saudi Arabia here.

#Guest

Yes, part of Saudi Arabia.

#Nima

Part of Saudi Arabia, part of Kuwait. You know, the whole Iraqi territory going to the borders of Iran, right to the borders of Iran.

#Guest

Well, is this the latest version or the original version?

#Nima

This is the latest version, it seems. The latest version.

#Guest

Well, that's a very large territory.

#Nima

Yeah, it's all the Middle East, West Asia, all together.

#Guest

And it's unrealistic because there are only, I think, about 10 million Israelis, but two or three million are not Jews. They're Palestinians who were included as part of the Israeli population at an earlier point in time. So you've got seven million Israeli Jews. How are they going to occupy that territory? How many—you know, they can't do it. It's not possible. So it's an unrealistic program that the Zionists have. It's unrealistic, but it means violence for every country. And I don't understand how this can go on for so long and no issue is made of it. How come the UN hasn't discussed it? What is this? What are you talking about, Greater Israel? You're talking about countries? You're claiming that all these countries belong to you?

#Nima

I think it's a very serious question, Paul, not only for Iran, but for each and every country in that region. So I think Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, all together should ask themselves, what does it mean?

#Guest

That's exactly, Nima, you're totally correct. And that's been my position for a long time. And I mention it and I get no answer—blank faces, like, what's he talking about?

#Guest

It's quite amazing, and it's inexplicable to me. I've never understood why this issue—it's not like the Israelis hide it. No, they don't hide it.

#Speaker 03

They boast about it.

#Guest

They hold up the maps. And, you know, just recently, one of the Israeli ministers, who's a member of a party that's more hardline than Netanyahu's, said, look, Greater Israel is advancing. Now we've got all of Palestine. We've got great chunks of Syria. We've got this part of Lebanon up to the river. And we're going on from there. So how can a minister say that and nobody pays any attention? And then everybody says, oh, we have to negotiate it, we have to negotiate. How do you negotiate? You can't negotiate. You know, the Russians don't have a clue.

They keep talking about negotiating, negotiating. The Pakistanis don't have a clue, and it now goes up to them. They don't have a clue. The Chinese, they all talk about negotiation. How can you negotiate this? It's not negotiable. It has to be an agenda that's abandoned and renounced, given up. Negotiate? You can't negotiate with an agenda that is determined to exterminate you. It's amazing to me. You can't find any sense made of this anywhere in the American foreign policy discussions. The Council on Foreign Relations—at least they don't have a clue. Everything they say is pointless.

#Nima

I think that's why the Trump administration is trying to say to Iranians that what's going on with Lebanon is a separate issue between Israel and Lebanon, which is not a separate issue. It's totally connected to what's going on between Iran and the United States. And they have defined a yellow line right now, Paul, and that is the same line that they've drawn in part of Gaza. They draw that yellow line and say, whoever passes this yellow line is going to be shot, it's going to be destroyed, and anything crossing the yellow line is going to be destroyed. This is the problem, I think, after all.

And Iran recognizes that. I think, Paul, that's why they said, in the case of Lebanon, we are not going to negotiate. We are not going to do anything politically with the United States. And they have achieved so far this ceasefire. It is not a ceasefire because Israel is attacking Lebanon, as we know. This yellow line shows that they're not serious about that. But it's the same sort of ceasefire that they had before, since 2024. And there has to be some sort of understanding for all these countries in the region. You know, today it's Iran, tomorrow it's going to be another country. It's not going to end there.

#Guest

Well, that's true. I mean, it started with Iraq. It started with Afghanistan, but I don't know why. I think Afghanistan was where they said bin Laden was, and they blamed 9/11 on bin Laden. And so the excuse for going into Afghanistan was to get bin Laden.

#Nima

But it was all about destabilizing Iran because Afghanistan is right on the border of Iran.

#Guest

It was our entry militarily. And we then expanded the war on terror into Iraq because the neoconservatives claimed he was an ally of bin Laden and that he was creating weapons of mass destruction. It's the same kind of argument that they make now about Iran. They're creating weapons of mass destruction, nukes. It's always the same lie. So I think Afghanistan was their entry

into the Middle East with no intention of ever leaving. And they didn't, because the next was Libya. Yeah. And then it was to be Syria. And Syria fell, and so then the path was open to Iraq.

And so the Iranians should try to show some kind of leadership in making an issue out of Greater Israel. This is basically about the Zionist agenda of Greater Israel. It's not about us enriching uranium or any of our other rights. It's not about our rights. It's about their claim to dominate the entire Middle East. That's the problem. And this is the problem that has to be addressed. So if we're going to have negotiations, then let's put that first on the schedule. Let's discuss the Israeli claim to the entirety of the Middle East. And this is the only issue. That's why I don't understand why the Iranians haven't done that.

#Nima

I don't.

#Guest

By now.

#Speaker 03

You know.

#Guest

But Iraq missed the opportunity. Qaddafi missed the opportunity. Assad missed the opportunity. Hamas missed the opportunity. You know, Hamas defined this as an issue between Palestine and Israel. It's not. It was an issue of Greater Israel, which the Israelis recently made clear. So that's... that's a puzzle to me, and I don't think anything else is really relevant or pertinent. And I think this current ceasefire works for Israel if they ignore it by calling Hezbollah terrorists, and they're just dealing with terrorists. You know, they learned this from Putin.

When the Russian strategic bombing force got attacked by the United States, of course, it was from Ukraine, but it was our missiles, our targeting, our control. And Putin announced, well, this wasn't an act of war, this was a terrorist act. And he called it a terrorist act so he didn't have to do anything about it. Well, of course, the Israelis call it terrorism so they can do something about it, because that takes it outside the realm of war. So I don't know, maybe eventually the Iranians will realize there's no prospect for them in any negotiations other than a negotiation about the existence of Greater Israel.

#Nima

Paul, here is what, just moments ago, the head of the parliament in Iran, who was the head of the delegation to Islamabad, said. He says Trump, by imposing a siege and violating the ceasefire, seeks to transform what he imagines to be a negotiating table into a table of surrender. He's talking about how they want to put us in that position, or to justify renewed warmongering. And we will not accept negotiations under the shadow of threats. And over the past two weeks, we have been preparing to play new cards on the battlefield. It seems that the Iranian part, even we had other officials saying, sending a message to J.D. Vance, it's better to unpack his suitcases and not head to Islamabad.

With the current delusional and unrealistic demands and the continued naval blockade, no one in Tehran is willing to negotiate with him, with J.D. Vance. And these are obvious, clear signs from the Iranian side to the Trump administration that they're not going to negotiate under the current situation that they're seeing against the United States. What is, Paul, the other important issue is the way that, for example, the UAE, which is so close to Israel, they're running out of money, out of cash in the UAE. And they said to the United States, if the situation continues this way, they're going to get closer to China and they're going to use yuan instead of the dollar.

Look at the situation. It's not just about the situation between Iran and the United States. It's about the whole region being somehow under tremendous economic pressure. And these countries, GCC countries, you know them. You know well that basically the foundation of their economy is based on oil and gas. And without that, they're going to die. And they're going to die fast. How do you see the pressure of that sort going to Washington? Because Iran is not willing to negotiate. It seems that we're headed toward a new round of war.

#Guest

Well, first of all, I don't think Washington cares what happens to those little countries. They don't care what's happening to Palestine. They don't care what's happening to civilians in Yemen. I just looked it up.

#Nima

Who cares? I agree with that. But who cares are Jared Kushner and those people who invested in these countries, who have a lot to lose.

#Guest

Well, I think that those countries are already lost. And nobody—they're not power centers. I think if the Iranians wanted to, they could take them over and just make them part of Iran, and they would control both sides of the Persian Gulf. And I'm surprised they haven't done that. What's missing here is, okay, the Iranians say they won't negotiate. Well, they shouldn't. But what are they going to do?

They are yet to seize the initiative. They're always responding to the initiative of Washington or Israel. For example, the negotiations—this was not an Iranian initiative.

This was Trump. So the Iranians seem to be trapped into never exercising the initiative. So what is their plan? Their plan seems to be, well, we'll defend ourselves when we're attacked. Well, this is not successful. So the Iranians, if they want to end this, they have to take the initiative. They have to say, look, this is a fight to the death. We've got to destroy the American presence in the Middle East—all of their fleets, every ship of the fleets—and Israel. So how are we going to do that? And they have to make their war plan and attack and do it.

#Speaker 03

But they're not going to do that.

#Guest

They're going to continue responding to our initiative, to Israel's initiative. And in that sense, the thing will go on. Of course, not continuously. It'll stop. There'll be a ceasefire for a while. And then it starts. And then it'll stop. Look how long there have been negotiations since—between the Russians and the Ukrainians and the Americans—nothing has happened. The war is still there. We don't hear about it anymore because all the focus is on the Iranian situation. And the Iranian situation is more meaningful to the world because of the oil and the fertilizer. It's just a bigger picture.

So it seems to me the Iranians have to take the initiative. At first, they have to create the ground for that, and that is to make an issue out of Greater Israel. And you see that the Iranians have let the Israelis and the Americans present themselves as the threatened people. It's Iranian terrorists and Iranian nukes. And so Iran has been positioned as the threat. Well, why did they allow that? They should have positioned Israel as the threat—Greater Israel. It's easy to do it. You don't have to tell lies, right? Like the Israelis and the Americans have to do for Washington and Tel Aviv to position Iran as a threat, they have to tell lies.

But Iran can position Israel as a threat without telling lies. Just tell Greater Israel. That does it. And so then the threat is no longer Iran, it's Israel. And then Iran prepares a war plan and gets rid of Israel. If they don't do that, this will go on until eventually nukes are used against Iran. And that's the way I see it. And for some reason, no one is ever prepared to use the initiative except the Americans and the Israelis. Putin has never used the initiative. Never. His intervention in Donbass was forced. He didn't want to do it. He was forced into it by the United States. He's never used the initiative. He's refused to win the war.

He's flatly refused to win the war. And so it just keeps going. So, and the Chinese, what initiative do they ever take? So that's the way I see it. As long as no one exercises the initiative but the U.S. and Israel, they will continue to be the prime actors, and everybody else is the receiver and has to figure

out some defensive means. And the way Iran has fought this war has been tit for tat. They have not attempted to deliver a knockout punch. It's tit for tat. You do this to us, and we'll do it back to you. Well, that's not really a war. That's not really fighting. That's responding.

And so in that sense, it's not really a war. And I don't know what Iran's plan is. It seems to be to do nothing unless they're attacked, or they will attack back. Well, that doesn't have an ending. And if it doesn't have an ending, it continues. And the negotiations are pointless. They mean nothing. Nothing can come out of them unless it's the negotiation about Greater Israel. And so that's my take on the situation, and it's the reason I'm beginning to find it all kind of boring. It's kind of boring, you know. Somebody says this, somebody says that. It doesn't matter what they say. It's what they do.

And I don't think the Iranians have yet come to the conclusion that they've got to fight for their life. If they don't, they're going to go down. So they might as well fight. And stopping when they had us on the run, Israel on the ropes, and they stopped. They agreed to a ceasefire when they said they would never agree to one. You never agree to a ceasefire when you have the upper hand. They could have finished this, and they didn't. And so if it goes on, it's Iran's fault. If this restarts and goes on again, it's the fault of Iran because they had the upper hand and they wouldn't use it. It's like Putin for over four years in Ukraine. He has the upper hand.

#Nima

He won't use it.

#Guest

There have never been wars like this. Try to imagine World War II, World War I, you know, the Korean War.

#Guest

It's not the way a war is fought. And so I would say it's not really a war yet. It might turn into one.

#Nima

Well, the reality, Paul, is that there is no good deal out of what's going on for Donald Trump. There is no— you know, when it comes to the Iranian nuclear program, to the Strait of Hormuz, I think he doesn't have the upper hand to get something to sell in the United States to the people, to those people who are, you know, the ultra-Zionist or the Zionist lobby. He doesn't have the upper hand right now.

#Guest

This is the reality. Of course he doesn't have the upper hand. As I said, Iran has the upper hand, but it's not using it. So it doesn't much matter that Trump doesn't have it, because Iran's not making use of the upper hand. I'm trying to emphasize that this way of looking at it is totally different from the way everybody looks at it. And the way everybody looks at it is nonsensical. It's meaningless the way they look at it. And you can't deal with a problem that you can't diagnose. And I think I've diagnosed it correctly. The problem is the Zionist agenda of Greater Israel. And this is not acknowledged. It's not recognized, despite the overwhelming evidence that that's the problem. It's not debatable whether the problem is Greater Israel or not.

#Speaker 03

It's obvious. The Israelis declare it over and over again.

#Guest

And yet there's not a word about it in the UN, in negotiations, not even from Iran. It's of amazing propaganda value for the Iranians. It gets them off the position of being the threat. Maybe if they could use Greater Israel to get off the position of being the threat, they could seize the initiative and do what they need to do. It's a big country. It has a large population. It seems to be a fairly united country, which is rare. It's very rare. Try to name united, determined countries. Where are they? There aren't any in Europe. The United States is not united. So, if the Iranians won't take the initiative and resolve it, they don't continue.

#Nima

I think they need to do this. There's no other way to solve the problem.

#Guest

There's no other way.

#Nima

And it's going to be on the battlefield, Paul. It's going to happen on the battlefield. It's not going to end any other way.

#Guest

Do you agree with me?

#Nima

Yeah.

#Guest

Yeah. I don't think it can happen not on a battlefield with soldiers. Where are they going to come from? The Israelis don't have any. Yeah. We haven't got an army big enough now. If we sent every member, it couldn't succeed. They couldn't even land. How would they land it? Boats? They'd all be sunk. This is not World War II technology. Those missiles and drones, I mean, you know, landing craft are not going to be able to protect themselves. The Navy ships can't protect themselves. Are we going to parachute 2 million? We don't have 2 million paratroopers. It would take us years and years to raise that kind of force and train it. It doesn't exist. There's not an army large enough.

#Guest

The Americans are against the war anyhow, so they're not going to fight it in any enthusiastic way. It seems that all of the Israeli propaganda against Iran is failing. It's not succeeding. If 65% of the American people have a negative attitude toward Israel—you know, three or four years ago, 80% of the people had a favorable attitude—now almost that many have an unfavorable attitude. I think, Nima, I can't say anything more about it. I'm into repetition.

#Nima

I think we talked a lot about the details of what's going on. This is the reality, and there is no other way of getting out of the war right now. It's going to be Iran that has to decide about it. But I think what you've just put out is so important, so crucial for Iranians to understand—for the whole region, not only Iranians, I would say, for the whole region to understand.

#Guest

The whole region, yeah. Turkey needs to understand it, Saudi Arabia too. Certainly the Russians and Chinese need to understand it, and the Indians too. They need to understand it. And they don't. And so I appreciate you letting me harp on it. Maybe somebody higher up in the Iranian Revolutionary Guard will see your program.

#Speaker 03

And they'll say, "Duh."

#Guest

It's not that I'm advocating an Iranian victory because I'm on the side of the Iranians. I actually do think they have the just case, that they are the aggrieved party. They didn't initiate this trouble.

They didn't initiate this war. And they're suffering tremendous injustice from Washington and from the Israelis. But sooner or later, somebody has to be successful in resisting the American aggression, which always comes at them through a third party. Like we have attacked Russia through Ukraine, using the Ukrainians. I mean, you know, Ukraine has lost half its population—not all to casualties, a lot just fled.

But, you know, the men of fighting age in Ukraine, they've been decimated in numbers. You know, it's kind of like a World War I situation for the British, you know, with all their mad charges against machine guns and barbed wire and infantry. I mean, it's madness. But if this kind of unopposed aggression goes on and on, or barely opposed aggression—like Putin, he's been suffering aggression since 2014 and still hasn't done anything about it—well, that's 12 years. Twelve years. Sooner or later, it's going to end up in a great nuclear war simply because there are no more cheeks to turn. There's no more backing up.

There's no more avoiding. And that's what happens when you don't stop things early enough. If they go on too long, they become a force on their own. And it becomes beyond the power of decision makers. They just have a momentum that can't be stopped. This is the way World War I happened. It just, a momentum forced itself. And so that's the reason that I think that Putin should have behaved differently. That's why I think Iran should behave differently. It should take the initiative and use the upper hand. And it establishes then that you can stand up and win. And that is a lesson the world needs to learn before it's too late.

#Nima

Yeah, yeah, exactly. Thank you so much, Paul, for being with us today. A great pleasure as always.

#Guest

Thank you, Nima. Thank you very much.