

Ray McGovern: Israel's Worst Defeat: Attacks That Could END It All

Follow me: Substack: [https://substack.com/@dialogueworks?](https://substack.com/@dialogueworks?utm_campaign=profile&utm_medium=profile-page)

utm_campaign=profile&utm_medium=profile-page X (Twitter): https://x.com/Dialogue_NRA

Patreon: [https://patreon.com/Dialogueworks?](https://patreon.com/Dialogueworks?utm_medium=unknown&utm_source=join_link&utm_campaign=creatorshare_creator&utm_content=)

utm_medium=unknown&utm_source=join_link&utm_campaign=creatorshare_creator&utm_content=

#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today is Saturday, May 2nd, 2026, and our dear friend Ray McGovern is here with us. Welcome back, Ray.

#Guest

Thank you, Nima.

#Nima

Ray, let me start with what happened yesterday. Donald Trump announced that the war is over and that he terminated the operation he started on February 28th. And this is one side of what's going on. The other side is how the United States is sending more weapons to the region. We've heard about hypersonic missiles being sent for the first time. If they use them, it's going to be the first use of these sorts of missiles in the Middle East. And on the part of the Iranians, they have updated the proposal, but the basics of this new proposal are still the same.

They didn't change it that much. Basically, they're talking about putting an end to the war on all fronts. It's about Iran, Lebanon, and Gaza altogether. And the second round, the second step, would be the case of the Strait of Hormuz. And the third round, if they survive the first step and second step, is going to be about the Iranian nuclear program. But when it comes to what's going on in the United States, what is happening? What is your understanding of the current strategy? Are they going to continue this war? If the war is coming, how soon is that going to happen?

#Guest

Well, Nima, you're asking me to predict the unpredictable. We have a loose cannon in the White House, a bull in a china shop. I'm through being logical and diagnosing what Trump is about to do. I've made some mistakes. A month or two ago, I said, you know, my God, despite all that weaponry arrayed against Iran, he must know that they can close the Strait of Hormuz, so he'll never use

those. This is just a threat. Well, how wrong was that, right? I mean, I was right about the Strait of Hormuz, but not about Trump. So what's going on now? Larry Johnson and I had a nice little colloquy yesterday with Judge Napolitano. And at the end, the judge also asked us to predict the unpredictable.

Will there be a renewal of the war within the next week? And Larry said, well, you know, my sources in the military and all that material, and military people going down into that area, I think chances are there will be. I said I didn't think so. And I've been wrong before, okay? Let me tell you why I don't think so. I think the new element here is a fellow named Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin. He's in with both feet now. The way this thing evolved was very artful diplomacy on the part of the Iranians, as well as the Omanis, and as well as the Russians. Why do I say all that? Well, you have to go back to before this new onslaught started on February 28th of this year.

What happened on February 26th? Well, the Omani foreign minister mediated talks between U.S. representatives and Araghchi, the Iranian foreign minister, and he was ecstatic. I mean, he didn't even go home to brush his teeth. He got on his personal jet and flew right to Washington to tell them the good news. Okay. They wouldn't let him see anybody except the vice president, Vance, who's no slouch, of course, but you could almost infer that he wasn't quite sure Vance was getting his message. And his message was—and the headline of this article was—Omani foreign minister briefs Vance: U.S.-Iran deal is, quote, within our reach, end quote, Omani mediator says.

#Nima

So what happened next?

#Guest

Well, again, this is inference on my part, but I don't know what kind of blank reaction he got from Dede Vance, who had not yet gotten his instructions from the president or from Netanyahu. But what did the Omani foreign minister do? Well, he went right to Margaret Brennan. Now, when you've got a lot of money and you're from Oman, you can call up Margaret Brennan and say, hey, I need to talk to you so I can get this message out before something really bad happens.

#Nima

Okay.

#Guest

That's what he did. And Margaret Brennan has this whole... I mean, she interviewed him. And what he said was, we're really close here. Um... He said Iran has agreed never, ever, ever to have nuclear material that could create a bomb. There'll be inspections, including perhaps U.S. inspectors. I

mean, we're this close. And he's—you can tell—you know, he has a stake in this. He's a mediator, and he's achieved success, as he thought. Now, that was all on the 27th. The day after—I mean, it takes time to fly across, even in your own personal jet—it takes a little time, right? So on the 28th, what happened? Well, we all know what happened.

We know what happened because two days later, our Secretary of State, who is also the National Security Advisor, explained to the press. And what he said was this: oh, the Israelis told us that they were going to attack Iran. And we thought, wow, the Iranians will probably retaliate against us. And so we had to go after the Iranians with a preemptive attack so that the casualties we suffered by virtue of an Iranian attack on us would be less. That's what he said. So, you know, it's a roundabout way of saying Netanyahu made us do it. But I'm sure this was something that was blessed or at least acquiesced in, not only by Rubio, but by the president himself. It was a really bad idea.

And the New York Times, of all places, has explained to us in a pretty credible way how this whole thing went down, with the head of Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency, appearing on the screen so that Netanyahu and Trump could watch this excellent briefing showing how—no problem, we got it all wired, we're going to kill that Ayatollah and the people will rise up. This is going to be a quick, clean war. Now, what did those people around the table say? Well, if you remember that old, you know, Uncle Remus tale about Br'er Rabbit, the one with the tar baby, right? He didn't say nothing, right? He didn't say nothing. And these guys didn't say nothing until the next day, right? Then the New York Times—Haberma and somebody else—said, well, what do you think of this? Oh, well, we're not really sure. Did you speak out then?

#Nima

Well, we're not really sure.

#Guest

They didn't speak out then. Ratcliffe, all these people, not even General McKenzie. So, you know, this obsequiousness toward the commander in chief on the part of the very top military in his very narrow circle of advisors prevailed. And Trump says, sounds good to me. Any objections? No, not today. Tomorrow with Maggie Haberman. So that was, you know, that's the way it went down. Now, let's just continue here because it's a really interesting string of events. Next thing you know, it was just last weekend, if memory serves. These things happen. So anyhow, Araqchi, the Iranian foreign minister, goes to Istanbul. Istanbul. Not Istanbul, I'm sorry. Islamabad. Islamabad. Yeah, right. Yeah, exactly.

#Nima

They're similar.

#Guest

Yeah, yeah. So he goes to Islamabad, and Trump says, oh my God, good. Good to talk to us again. And so he gets Kushner and Witkoff to get ready, get ready to play. We're going to go there too. And then Araqchi says, huh? Look, you can come to Islamabad if you want, but I can't talk to you guys anymore.

#Nima

You're a bunch of finaglers.

#Guest

You know, I'm through with you guys. Yeah, I'm in Islamabad. I'm leaving before you ever get here, you know. So he leaves, and then Trump says, oh my God, well, don't go on the plane. And the way he explains it is, I'm very conscious of the distances involved and actually the expenditure of jet fuel, which is bad for the environment. So I told this guy, hello, you know. They had nobody to talk to. So what does Araqchi do? After leaving what he wanted to leave with the Pakistani mediators in Islamabad, he goes to Oman. Oh, who does he talk to there? Well, he talks to the Omani foreign minister, who is better clued in on what is going on than anybody else in the whole world because he mediated this first thing, right? So they work out a deal on the strait. After all, if you look at the strait, Oman is on the southern or the western part, right?

And so they work out this deal. And then Araqchi was known to be going to Moscow, but not next. No. Where did he go? Back to Islamabad. Why? Well, because they worked something out with the Omanis, and they wanted to give the Pakistanis something to present to whoever might be interested on the U.S. side. Then he goes to Moscow. This is a big deal, okay? Now, people say, oh, he met with Putin. Well, I don't want to exaggerate. He's met with Putin before, but he was very ceremoniously welcomed. And the photos or the videos of Putin and him meeting each other are very warm. But more important, not only was Lavrov there, not only was Ushakov there, the main advisors on these things, but so was Kostiukov. And who's he? He's head of military intelligence. Military intelligence is sort of like the opposite number of the Defense Intelligence Agency in our country.

In other words, you compare if Zelensky came to Washington, and included in the very first discussions at the highest level is the head of the Defense Intelligence Agency. You know, they would get the message that, oh, the U.S. is going to continue to supply all kinds of intelligence to Ukraine. Well, similarly, Mudo, here you have Kostiukov, who's a big deal, right? Head of military intelligence for Russia. Then he pretends, he talks to, he shares with Putin not only what they gave to Islamabad, the Pakistanis, what the Omanis have sort of agreed to and is sort of regulating the strait, but he spells out, and he says this, right? He spelled out the whole kind of, the whole kind of, the whole nine yards, the whole thing about how they're approaching this.

And what does Putin say? Way to go, you guys. You're facing into imperialism. Wow. What else did Putin say? Well, we don't know too much else of what he said to Araqchi, but we do know what he said to Trump. The next day, he, that is Putin, calls up Trump. That's very unusual. Almost all of these conversations have originated with Trump, these one-on-ones. I can remember just one that originated with Putin. That was when Trump was considering putting Tomahawks into Ukraine. Remember that? Okay. So Putin called Trump, and Trump said, oh, I never really intended to do that. And so he didn't. Okay, so when it's important for Putin to call first, he does. So he calls first. And we know that Ushakov, who always does the readout of such, Ushakov is not only Putin's right-hand person on Ukraine and the West, but most people forget that he spent 10 years as Russian ambassador in Washington.

Okay, so he knows this thing like the palm of his hand. So he gives the readout. And he says, now, this took place at our initiative. Can you hear that? You can't? Okay, I'll just dismiss it. This took place at our initiative. And it took... it took one and a half hours plus. This is Ushakov's words. And then he says, you know, let me see if I can find it. What he says, it was very businesslike. It was cordial. And then he says, the president of Russia congratulated Donald Trump for dodging the bullet once again. This is diplomacy. And then he congratulated President Trump for having such a wonderful wife who has done such great service in terms of reuniting families and so forth. This couldn't be done without her intervention. And then he says... but, you know, the Russians have a, what is it, conjunction, *odnako*.

#Nima

They always use it, but okay.

#Guest

But look, to renew the war would be extremely damaging not only to Iran but to its neighbors, okay, of course. Remember, look at the map. We're one of its major neighbors. Yeah, there's the Caspian Sea — we're one of its neighbors, and historically a very sensitive point for us, okay? So not only a threat, so it really would be a bad idea to renew the attack on Iran. And then he said, the notion of putting ground troops in Iran is altogether not inappropriate, but altogether unacceptable is the word in English, okay? It's the strongest language they can use. The Russians are pretty consistent.

Way back to the Soviet times, *неприемлемо* is “unacceptable.” About as strong as you can get. So... then he finished up, they finished up, Ushakov finished up the readout by saying that they finished in a very warm atmosphere and they wished each other all the best in their endeavors. Okay. Now, when I say that's diplomacy, that is diplomacy. Okay. Putin knows exactly how to be appropriately deferential, at least in rhetoric, to Trump. But he makes the point, look, don't do it. Don't attack

again. And if you attack, that's completely unacceptable because we're a neighbor, okay? And if you even think about putting ground troops in, that's altogether unacceptable. I can't remember the English word, okay?

#Guest

So then the next paragraph starts, Однако, however, we are willing to mediate. We have lots of experience in mediating this thing. We have really good ties with all the parties, including you, U.S., but we have good ties with Iran, with the Omanis, with the Israelis. So, you know, we did this before. If you want help with the highly enriched uranium, we could do that. We did it under the JCPOA, the so-called Iran deal, 11 years ago, okay? So, you know, we're available. You call on us. We can really help you out of this thing. And can the Russians help? Of course they can. They can help the Iranians, and the Iranians are no slouch at diplomacy — put some lipstick on this pig of defeat, a fiasco — so that Trump, here's an example, Trump can say, well, I got them to give all the highly enriched uranium to Russia, or to keep it in Turkey or somewhere, and they promised never, ever, ever to build a nuclear weapon.

That's what the Omani foreign minister said they promised to do in Slovakia, right? Okay, well, that's a canard. It's a red herring because, as you know, and I've said countless times, since 2003, the intelligence community has said, or since 2007, that the National Intelligence Estimate said that the Iranians stopped working on a nuclear weapon in 2003 and had not resumed work on that. And that was reiterated every year since, except this year when Tulsi Gabbard forgot to include that in the annual threat assessment. Okay, so what am I saying here? There's, in my view, an easy out for Trump.

It's a function of the widespread ignorance on the part of the American public that has been taught, has been brainwashed to think Iran is certainly working on a nuclear weapon. Why would we be so disturbed that Iran couldn't be a threat unless it had a nuclear weapon? So, oh, hey, Trump has prevented a weapon. So, in other words, those who don't know the real story might be persuaded that this thing didn't come out as badly. That's kind of hard to find. With the straits still closed, it's going to be really, really bad. So you get the strait open, you get Trump saying, oh, well, we got them to agree to this and so forth. That's how I see this going. Now, that's all Pollyanna.

#Nima

Guys are watching the military buildup in the area.

#Guest

And, you know, I've been Pollyanna before, so I confess to having been wrong before. This time, I think things are so bad that, as I say, I lean to the interpretation that with this warning and with this dodging of the 60-day requirement, which you, I think, mentioned in the beginning, it's really an

artful dodge for Trump people. I mean, it doesn't work in legal terms, but he could say, and he did say, and actually Hegseth sort of gave an early indication that this is the line they were taking. Okay, no more need for notification to enable a war or approve the war. War's over, okay? Now, maybe I'm Pollyanna again. But isn't that going to make it a little more difficult for Trump to resume the war? Well, Larry Johnson says, no, no, he'll just start the 60-day period. It's a new war. Well, maybe.

But Trump is losing a lot of support, even in Congress, even that Republican senator from Maine who's a weathervane, you know, so she'll always bend where the prevailing winds are. She voted against Trump the last time around. So I'm hopeful, but I've been hopeful before, and my hopes have been definitively dashed. So take that for what it may be worth. Sorry for going this long, but the background, I think, is really fascinating in the way I piece it together. Putin has finally spoken. Will Trump heed him? The fly in the ointment, of course, is Netanyahu. We can talk about him if you wish. I hate to talk about him, but he is the fly in the ointment. And he could, in my view, easily mount a false flag attack, blame it on Iran, and give Trump and his Zionist advisers no choice other than to come back in with both feet.

#Nima

Ray, I think it's a good point to continue with Benjamin Netanyahu and the situation that Israel is in right now. We had the reports on CNN yesterday. Finally, we have something official coming in the mainstream media, because we've been talking about what's going on, what has happened so far with American bases in the region, with the radars in Israel. Right now they're putting out, little by little, what has happened in American bases in GCC countries. So it shows how the situation with the Israeli air defense system is fragile.

They cannot defend themselves if something happens in the case of war, the third round of the war. But you see, they're still insisting on having this war. The Israeli defense minister said that they're waiting for the green light from the United States to start this. They're hoping that the talks will fail because these are the desires on the part of Israel. Where is Israel if you compare Israel today to what it was before this war started? How do you evaluate Israel militarily and the way they're somehow feeling that they can continue this war?

#Guest

Well, if you go back to when Vice President Vance was talking to Arachi, and he had the two real estate agents with him monitoring what he said, I guess. He was on the phone, some people say 11 times, because the White House wanted to talk to him. And not only that, he was on another phone with Netanyahu because he was interested in having an input, okay? And then when it was all done, and Vance said, we can't come to an agreement, even though they were actually, in Arachi's words, very close to an agreement. All of a sudden, the last telephone call says, no, throw the book at them

— and they did. So who broke off the talks? The U.S. Actually, the Iranians fully expected to go the next day as well. So that was it. What did Vice President Vance do when he got on a plane? Who did he call? His wife? His kids? No.

#Nima

He called Netanyahu.

#Guest

He said, this is the way it went, and he gave a full report. Vance says that. Netanyahu says that. Netanyahu says, this is not unusual. He gave a very good report. The Americans give us a good report every day. And now the defense minister says, oh, we're waiting for a green light from Trump. My God. Talk about chutzpah. Talk about not even disguising who's in control here, or who the Israelis think are in control here. So, would Israel flail out and, worst case, not only do a false flag attack, and if the U.S. didn't come in with both feet, then would they consider using nuclear weapons? As you know, I've always thought that the chances were greater than even that in extremis he would.

I mean, a guy who does grand genocide, forced starvation—my God, why would he not use what he's got right before, before not only losing the war but then going to jail, right? Okay. Now, I think that's what worries the Russians and worries the Chinese. My God, we can't tolerate this. No matter which way the wind is blowing, I mean, physically, we can't have the use of nuclear weapons. And that, I think, is why Putin and the Chinese have jumped in with both feet here. Now, Putin more dramatically, with Arachi coming to Moscow. But I think they're really disturbed at this. And what does that mean? I think the Russians will try to persuade the Iranians: look, we know that you can finish off Israel.

I mean, the Israelis might even know that now by virtue of the fact that you have all these hypersonic missiles and you've only used a couple of them. And you could—please, don't do that just now. Please, please. Let's see if we can work something out, because God knows what Netanyahu is going to do if you do that. So the Iranians are very powerful, very good negotiators, and have a samud—a lot of what in Arabic means steadfastness, right? They hang on there and are willing to hang on for the duration. The Russians are the same way. And in extremis, in a situation where you have a person like Netanyahu and like Trump being the major actors here, totally unpredictable.

You know, that's the problem. Well, you know, if Netanyahu decided to do that—that is, use nuclear weapons—do you think he'd ask Trump? My God, I don't know. Okay, let's say he does. Would Trump say, no, no, no, don't do that? I think he might. Would Netanyahu obey him? I think he might not. And I think the Kremlin is looking at it in those terms, and the Chinese as well. So I don't think

they're out for blood, you know. I think they're out for just winning this war and making it as easy as possible for not only Trump to back down, but the strait to be opened and the Israelis to be assured that they're not going to be obliterated—pardon the word.

#Nima

Ray, the other point is the situation right now with the case of the Strait of Hormuz. You remember during the war, one of the main problems for Donald Trump and his administration was the price of oil and how it was increasing during the war. Then he stopped the war, announced a ceasefire, the price of oil came down, and you see again with this blockade and what's going on right now, the price of oil is going up. And it seems that the achievements of Donald Trump with the ceasefire are fading away. And if he starts the war again, it's going to get even worse, I would say, with the price of oil.

So he's somehow trapped. And I don't see anybody in Iran being willing to help him save his face. So the only way out for Donald Trump is in Washington, in my opinion. And his sort of attitude is because the guy is so powerful when it comes to making new rhetoric, you know, feeding the media—basically Fox News, those outlets that are following him, that are feeding the base, those people who support Donald Trump, will vote for Donald Trump. This is the way out for Donald Trump. Do you see any sort of other outcome for him, as a sort of off-ramp for Donald Trump to get out of the war?

#Guest

Well, he has to be concerned about the price of gasoline. I mean, you know, I'm told it's \$8 a gallon in California, \$5 a gallon around here in North Carolina. But, you know, I wanted to say, they should have known that before this. They should have known that they could.

#Nima

But either he didn't, or he said, "No, no, no."

#Guest

The most sad guy says, we've got it all made. Let's just do it really quick. So you're right, he's completely unpredictable. But there are signs that, you know, some people are advising him, "Look, make this announcement on Sunday, so when the market opens on Monday, it won't be so bad. Make it on the next Sunday." So he's very sensitive to the market and to the price of oil. And, you know, when you think about fertilizer, for God's sake, there are millions of people at risk now of not having enough food, mostly in the southern part of the hemisphere.

#Nima

I think Africa—nobody's talking about Africa—but the situation in Africa is dire as well. That's exactly right.

#Guest

And, you know, there are people who care about Africa. I mean, like BRICS cares about Africa. The Russians have been, and the Chinese have been, very much invested in bringing the anti-colonial past of Africa into the trash bin of history. So there are all these things working on Trump. His Secretary of the Treasury is as deranged a person as I've ever seen. He doesn't seem to get it. He was brought up thinking that the US is a superpower and will always remain so. That's history. It ain't that way anymore. And when he makes these recommendations, these naive assumptions, it's crazy. You've got Mario, you've got Marco Rubio, you've got Hagseth, my God. Maybe we can talk about him later. And Vance is a weather vane. He's a windsock, you know. He's in a tough position.

He wants to be president. So does Rubio. And so how do they conduct themselves with the base, you know? So, you know, it's a very bad throwback to the situation before the attack on Iraq in 2003. I remember that so well. That's when we formed Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity in January of 2003, because we saw that President Bush was being besieged by Cheney and Rumsfeld and this concocted intelligence that even the CIA didn't have the guts to move against, to sort of acquiesce in all these made-up tales about a nuclear weapon or weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. So what happened? Well, we saw Colin Powell get up before the U.N. on the 5th of February, 2003, and we thought, oh, what are we going to do? And we saw that, and we were only five at the time.

I was designated primary drafter, and we drafted it, and we got out on the AFP wire by five o'clock that afternoon, telling the president, look, don't be deceived by all this stuff. This is crazy stuff. When Colin Powell says that there's a sinister nexus between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda, what he's trying to do is say Saddam Hussein was responsible in part for 9/11, for God's sake. Now, we had to assume that Bush didn't notice. I suppose he knew it. But how do you talk to the president without assuming that he's got some? So at the end of that thing, we said, look, Mr. President, we strongly advise that you broaden the circle of your advisors beyond those clearly bent on a war for which we see no cogent reason, and from which the unintended consequences are likely to be catastrophic, period, end quote.

Okay, what's my point? My point is that he had to expand his advisors beyond anyone, beyond the CIA that was playing the same game, for God's sake. They didn't have the lead anymore, but, you know, were they going to face up to the vice president who used to visit them in the morning on his way to work? He never extended to the CIA headquarters, for God's sake. So, were they going to do it? No. So, they caved. Now, this time, Trump has this narrow circle of advisors. He admits it, you know. He's got Rubio. He's got Hegseth, vice president maybe, the secretary of the treasury, for God's sake. It affects the secretary of energy. I mean, they're all nobodies.

They're all, you know, red-hat Trump people. And they don't know from nothing. So that's the core of the problem. Will he have learned by now that the world has fallen apart, literally? That people are going to be dying in millions because of the lack of fertilizer, lack of other foodstuffs, and the price of oil and all that kind of stuff? Well, my God, you know, a sensible person like me would say, oh, he's got to realize that within the next couple of weeks. But, you know, I've been wrong before. And there is another element here, Nima, bothers me greatly. We are celebrating 250 years. Terrific people that set up our country. Division of powers. Constitution that just won't quit and has been emulated everywhere in the world. Bill of Rights, okay?

That's all been eroded now — the separation of powers. Congress has shown itself devoted to Israel, above and below, you know, and not willing to stop this war, evil though it has shown to be, not even able to speak out against genocide, for God's sake, okay? So how does Trump, a narcissist like Trump, look at this? "I got this thing made." Well, but what about the courts? "I may get to appoint yet another justice. Don't worry about the courts," you know. So he's got no rein on him. And so why does he feel confident to do these things? Isn't he afraid of the midterms? That's one of the logical assumptions I made in saying he'd never do these things. Well, apparently not. I mean, how do you explain him gratuitously getting into a fight with the Pope, for God's sake?

I mean, to my great regret, 55% of us Catholics voted for Trump the last time around. Does he not give a patootie? Does he not really care? And if so, does he have other plans? Is he listening to people like Steve Bannon? "Don't worry about the midterms. They can be postponed, or we can regulate them. We can have ICE. Yeah, that would be a good idea. We can have ICE protect the ballots, or maybe even the National Guard." Now, just a little comment on the use of the National Guard in this kind of role. There was a fellow named General Smedley Butler, who was a Marine general, came up from the ranks, and he got two Medals of Honor by enforcing Citibank and others' interests in the Caribbean and elsewhere in America.

When he got out, he said, "My God, what have I been doing? War is a racket." Okay, so David Swanson, a good friend of mine, has written a book about how war is still a racket, okay? And he takes Smedley Butler's unknown letters and speeches, in addition to his major one where he says war is a racket, okay? War is a racket overseas, even though it's in the Caribbean and Latin America, it's also a racket at home. Now, why am I at that point? Because Smedley Butler, in 1935, writes, "It is awful to use the National Guard to coordinate the activities of protesters and put them in a corral with barbed wire all around it. I've seen it done. It's unconscionable to use the National Guard in that role."

#Nima

1935.

#Guest

Now, there are all kinds of warehouses being cleaned up and refurbished in our country in less populated areas. You know, this is true. I'm not making this stuff up, okay? And people are asking why. Well, it may be that—not you, Nima—but I may end up in one of those little coordination centers somewhere for speaking out. That's what seems likely now, in my view, with respect to the midterms. Will they take place? Will they be honest? Can they be defended? I'm not so sure. So this is just a long way of saying that if Trump doesn't give a rat's patootie about the midterm elections, that would help explain not only why he takes on the Pope, but why he's willing to tolerate the disdain of the whole rest of the world. Even Western Europe is coming against him.

Giorgia Meloni had a terrific critique of his critique of her, saying she's not a follower of Jesus, she's an insult to Jesus. And she comes back and she says, you know, Jesus took care of the orphans and the widows and the refugees. Jesus liked peace. You know, I'm not an insult to Jesus, you are. Anyhow, so things are coming to a point where one can't predict what Trump will do. But the stars, in my view, are aligning. And let me just add one other thing. Well, I guess I already mentioned that when Putin calls Trump, it's really important because Putin wants to warn Trump not to do something, okay? Now, I mentioned the Tomahawks that were supposed to be given to Ukraine, at least reportedly. What happened right after that? I think, I think Trump said, well, let's have a summit.

Let's have a summit. Let's talk about all this stuff. Now, that's the same as when Putin scared Joe Biden. This goes back months before the Russians entered Ukraine. But there was a time when the U.S. was going to sail frigates into the Black Sea. And Putin called Biden, he said, not a good idea. We can't be held responsible for what might happen to your frigates, your freaking frigates, as they go into the Black Sea. What did Biden do? He said, oh, OK, I got your word. He told the Navy to send those frigates to Greece, you know, to have some sunbathing in the Aegean, not to go into the Black Sea. And then Biden said, hey, let's have a summit. I'm sure of that. It's a very odd set of circumstances. And they had this summit in June of 2021, right?

And the bridal party from the U.S. side, with Blinken and Nuland and Sullivan and those guys, showed themselves to be completely incompetent because all we know about those talks was that Biden, before he got on the plane, said, you know, I told Putin that we're aware that he's really under the gun, that the Chinese are squeezing him, that there's this very long border, I think several thousand miles, between China and Russia. And China aspires not only to be the major economic power but military. So we know that. I told Vladimir, you know, I told him that we know you're being squeezed by China. Oh my God, you know. So anyhow, summits don't have a real good reputation, but they have been used when the U.S., out of the blue—Biden first, and then Trump later—suggests, oh, let's get together.

And they do get together, and the Russians take the measure of the kind of advice Biden was getting. And now in Anchorage, the same thing, I think, happened. But there was some progress at Anchorage, and the Russians are trying to hold the U.S. to that. And to Trump's credit, at least he's not renegeing on that. Part of this Ushakov readout says the U.S. and Russia pretty much agree on

the fact that Zelensky is not the fly in the ointment—he's the impediment to peace in Ukraine—whereas the Europeans, they're aiding and abetting his worst instincts. So you have the Russians and the U.S. agreeing on Ukraine? Well, that's not like it was with respect to Biden, was it?

And what does that mean? That means, and this is really hard for me to say, Russia wants the U.S. to stay in Europe. After a career of knowing that Russia wants the U.S. out of Europe, I've come to believe that in this set of circumstances, the U.S. can play the essential role in getting Russia's core interests taken into account with a new architecture for defense in Europe. It may not be possible, but at least that's what the Russians are holding out for. They don't want another attack from what will become Western Ukraine. They want some sort of regime that will make that unnecessary and impossible under the law, at least.

So that's why, strange to say, Russia wants the U.S. to stay in Europe, and Russia is gloating at the fact that NATO itself is sort of falling apart, and that people like Giorgia Meloni and the Spanish prime minister and so forth, they won't even let the U.S. use their bases, U.S. bases in their countries, to pursue this godforsaken war against Iran. So people say, oh, isn't Putin clever in splitting NATO? It's not Putin. It's Trump that's splitting NATO, for God's sake. NATO is no longer in being, as far as I can tell. I saw that at the last NATO summit when Trump arrived a little late, and what was his name—Rutte, the secretary.

#Nima

Oh, daddy's finally here.

#Guest

Then he found out that daddy's a deadbeat, right? He doesn't pay child support. He doesn't pay alimony. You're free to buy stuff from daddy, but he's not going to help you in Ukraine anymore. So NATO is no longer a real force. Article 5, in my view, no one can take that seriously, least of all the Estonians, Latvians, or Lithuanians. And if they stir up trouble with Russia, I think Putin... I think Putin will not attack them, but will make it clear that, you know, their place in the sun is not attacking Russia, not even allowing Ukraine to attack Russia proper by overflowing their airspace with drones.

#Nima

Yeah. Ray, before happening, we have this case of the aid to Gaza, you know, the boats going there, had Flotilla going there. And I know that you were part of these sort of activities in the past. And here is the book and the, yeah. And I think right now what is important, what is happening, Ray? What has happened to the, yeah, here is your photo here.

#Guest

And the whole—there's Alice Walker there in the top photo, Alice Walker with a baseball cap on. I think that's Ann Wright right behind her. Yeah, exactly. This was a really neat group of people.

#Nima

Yeah.

#Guest

Yeah. Well, it's really bad right now. May I? Yeah. Go ahead. A lot of my friends are on that flotilla. I think there were 58 boats altogether going in the first wave. They were attacked mercilessly by the Israelis as they approached Gaza—no, as they were leaving the Greek islands, for God's sake, hundreds and hundreds of miles from Gaza, okay? The Israeli Navy did something just as fierce as what they did to the Mavi Marmara, that great big Turkish ship back in 2010, okay? Killing people, like they killed nine people. One of them was an American citizen, but the U.S. didn't say boo to the Israeli killing of an American citizen in addition to, I think it was eight or nine others. That was 2010. Ann Wright tells me just last night that 34 people are in the hospital now in Crete and others have been sent to Istanbul.

Suffice it to say, they were boarded and many of their engines were shot up so they couldn't navigate anymore. And there were 175 people on these boats who were apprehended and then released to Greek authorities. And that rang a bell because in 2011, so a year after the Mavi Marmara was shot up by the Israelis, we refurbished the boat and we called it the U.S. Boat to Gaza. I want to say we, several of us, most of the Jewish Voice for Peace folks up there in New York, okay, they solicited funding and they got this, they bought the boat, refurbished it, got it shipshape, literally, and they were flying an American flag because we registered it in the U.S. So there's Ann right there with the American flag.

That is when we got out of the harbor of Piraeus and we got almost into the Aegean. What happened? Well, we were told that we couldn't sail. We were all ready. We had permission, three inspections, three inspections, okay? And then they did another inspection and said, no, you're unable to sail because you have a defect in your air conditioning system. Oh my God, you know. It's a small little boat. So we had a council of war that night, and the other leadership of this—there were about 50, 55 people, including a New York Times reporter, Alice Walker, and other dignitaries far more famous than me, or Medea Benjamin and the others.

So anyhow, the Council of War... we're gonna sail anyway, okay? At first, like boom, slip in the morning, we're exhilarated, we're nine miles out, we're just about to enter what leads to the Aegean when the Greek Coast Guard boats come along. Okay, the Greeks, the seafaring nation par excellence. They were apologetic. They had loudspeakers: "Sorry, we really don't want to do this,

but we follow orders, and our government has said we have to bring you back to port." We stood there for a whole hour pleading with these guys: "Look, you know, we're just trying to bring letters and provisions to Gaza."

We know that, but this is really embarrassing, but please turn back. Then they prepared to board us, and the captain, a really gutsy guy, said, well, you know, you don't want to be boarded, right? So we turned around. We lost the boat. We had to bail out the captain, who was put in jail for a whole week. And then we had to raise enough money for his defense so he wouldn't stay in jail. Well, bottom line was, why was our air conditioning perceived to be lacking? Well, what happened was, and we know this, that the White House couldn't get the Israelis to cease and desist. I had a contact in the National Security Council who warned me that Obama is not going to be able to persuade.

He's not even going to try to persuade. No, he'll let you guys get through. And he'd just as soon see coffins with American flags on them of American citizens, because that would enhance his standing politically with the Israel lobby. I couldn't believe that, but I reported it, and when Craig Murray, my friend, the former ambassador in the UK, saw that, he contacted his people in the State Department, Hillary Clinton's department, and got the same exact result, okay? So what did Obama do? Rather than even trying to persuade Netanyahu, he leaned on the Greeks. The Greeks needed an IMF loan. You remember when the Greeks were in dire straits economically, okay?

They needed an IMF loan. And Obama told them, look, Papandreou, look, you need this loan? Forget about the loan if you let these guys out into the Aegean. So that's how that ended up. At least none of us were shot at or ended up in the hospital. We were really terribly disappointed, and so were the Gazans that were waiting for us with open arms. So here we have a repeat of that with extreme casualties. We were not allowed to leave Piraeus, but these people were out near Crete, and the Israelis didn't even let them come within 100 miles of Gaza. So what's the idea here? The idea is to show the world what courageous people. The thing is named the Global Samud. Samud, I mentioned before, means steadfastness, persistence under duress.

And whether the world will learn about this, I asked my wife before, have you seen any reporter do this? No, there's nothing in the mainstream press. And I had to have private conversations with Anne Wright to find out what really happened. And these people are going to do it again. They just want to show the Gazans, first and foremost, they have friends who care about them. And isn't it interesting that among their friends are the people in Iran? Okay, Gazans, Palestinians, and you have oil-rich sheikhdoms that don't give a rat's patootie about the Palestinians or the people of Lebanon or anyone else in occupied territory. Now, these are peaceful people. We didn't have any weapons or anything. All we had was food and letters.

And the U.S. is accusing what happened yesterday and saying, well, these are people influenced by Hamas. These are terrorists. These are people supporting terrorists. Well, look, even if that were true, which it is not, okay, how about the U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 of November 1967, which said Israel is required to leave territories occupied during the 1967 war—unanimously, U.S.

voting right for it. Everybody's saying, look, you have to leave the occupied territories. Now, what does international law say? Let's say there was a terrorist, which there wasn't. Are people able to resist occupation? Yes, of course they are. Are they able to resist it with use of arms? Yes, they are, okay?

Now, I'm not defending violence, but when the United States government, as they did this morning, accused people of violence, of being associated with Hamas, well... The reason that Hamas won that election back in 2006 was because they take care of their people. They take care of their widows, their orphans, their refugees. And there's a fringe that does violence. OK, that's why they won. And that's the history of this whole thing. So, you know, Americans need to know this, that they're being deprived of this. So a lot of Americans watch this show. Nima, I'm glad to have this opportunity to do that. And on our website, I have a lot of information about this, in particular about what we encountered as we prepared to go on that trip with the U.S. boat to Gaza. By the way, this was under Obama, as I mentioned. We named our boat the Audacity of Hope.

#Nima

Thank you. Thank you so much, Ray, for being with us today.

#Guest

Thank you. Keep up the good work.

#Nima

Thank you. Thank you.