

Democrat sanctions 'expert' worries that Iran's economy will thrive

The Grayzone's Aaron Mate and Max Blumenthal on revealing comments by self-styled sanctions expert and former Obama and Biden official Richard Nephew, who frets that Iran will be able to provide for its citizens if it not economically terrorized. ||| 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

This is Richard Nephew. Now, Max, you've written about him. He wrote that book called **The Art of Sanctions**, which you dubbed **The Art of Sadism**, because Richard Nephew, an architect of the sanctions on Iran during the Obama era, bragged about raising the price of food for ordinary Iranians during a holiday season and what a success he thought that was. Here he is. Then he served under Biden again, and he helps explain why under Biden there was no return to the JCPOA, even though members of the Biden administration had negotiated the JCPOA under Obama. But you have a wing, people like Richard Nephew and Amos Hochstein — they were the dominant ones under Biden.

And so therefore, there was no return to the deal. So anyway, here's Richard Nephew, writing recently in **Foreign Affairs**. He admits that basically U.S. sanctions, which he helped design on Iran, are the cause of all of Iran's problems. This is what he says. He says comprehensive sanctions relief for Iran would help flood the country with enough money to overcome its legacy of mismanagement, corruption, and failed governance. In doing so, it might relieve popular pressure on the regime. So he's admitting that all the problems that we blame on Iran—its corruption, mismanagement, and so forth—that if the U.S. sanctions were lifted, all those problems would go away.

So he's acknowledging the U.S. sanctions are the main cause of Iran's problems. But that's why he opposes lifting those sanctions, because it would relieve popular pressure on the regime. So the answer then is to keep putting pressure on the people by denying them the right to have an economy, because if we relieve that pressure, then they won't pursue regime change according to our dictates. So that's Richard Nephew, and that's another reason why it's so difficult to have a change of policies, because Trump's policies have a strong bipartisan base of support.

#Max

Yeah, that's why I call it the U.S. regime. The Democrats under Biden, the Democratic foreign policy establishment, opposed a deal with Iran because they opposed sanctions relief. Any deal would require sanctions relief. Iran never got sanctions relief in any meaningful way from the JCPOA, and it's because of the mentality of people like Richard Nephew, who can never accept an independent, sovereign state in the middle of Eurasia. These are figures who are trained to dictate.

#Max

To other countries to terrorize their people in order to impose U.S. total hegemony on the globe, moving all the way towards a pivot with Asia that will eventually break China. And they're living in a fantasy world at this point. So I think Iran finally recognizes, and they had to learn the hard way, that the U.S. only understands force. This U.S. regime—not the American people—the U.S. regime has very little popular support.

#Aaron

And by the way, the one guy under Biden who favored diplomacy with Iran and restoring the JCPOA was Rob Malley. And what happened to him?

#Max

What happened to him under Biden? He was prosecuted—Biden approved of his prosecution.

#Aaron

He got basically framed by someone else in the Biden administration, and I have some guesses as to who, for leaking classified information to Iran, which is total BS. And so he was taken off his job and basically put on leave pending investigation. So the one guy who tried to do his job of diplomacy with Iran, his own colleagues in the Biden administration sabotaged him with a fake classified documents case. Who do you think set him up? I have some guesses, but you know, it would be people like Richard Nephew and Amos Hochstein, Tony Blinken, Jake Sullivan. Tony Blinken, who went to high school with Rob Malley. And they used to debate back in the day. Really? Oh, yeah. They went to high school in Paris together. And Blinken was a lifelong Zionist. And so they used to debate the Israel-Palestine issue when they were kids. And so they brought that feud into the Biden administration. And, of course, Antony Blinken won that round resoundingly.

#Max

I love that we had a Frenchman as our Secretary of State, who's been replaced by a gusano who doesn't even go to the negotiations. He goes to UFC fights instead because the negotiations are such a sham.

