

Paul Craig Roberts: Xi Humors Trump as His World Caves In (Inside & Out)

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#Nima

Hi, everybody. Today is Monday, May 18th, 2026, and our dear friend Paul Craig Roberts is here with us. Welcome, Axel.

#Paul

Thank you, Nima.

#Nima

And Paul, let me just read some of Trump's tweets today. You know, he tweeted today that Iran is dying to sign a deal. They want a deal very badly. And later on, he tweeted again, said, Iran talks about a deal and then sends me a completely useless paper unrelated to anything we discussed. Amazing. And the other point is, just moments ago, I think it was, you know, 15 minutes ago, something like that, he tweeted again and said that I was supposed to attack Iran tomorrow, but I canceled that attack because Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, all these GCC countries are asking me, don't attack Iran. So I canceled the attack tomorrow. There will be no attack on Iran.

And maybe he's trying, because people are talking about, again, he's trying to, they call it taqiyya, something like that. But the other point would be, maybe he's trying to do something, he's trying to deceive people, and he's going to attack Iran. By the way, what we know on the part of the Iranians, they're ready, and they don't see these sorts of tweets, and they don't see any sort of reason to follow Donald Trump, who one minute says something and the other minute just changes everything. Paul, how do you see the situation with Donald Trump? I think it's good to start with his visit to China and what he wanted from China. And what is your assessment of that?

#Paul

Of the China trip?

#Nima

Yeah. Yeah.

#Paul

Well, as you know, I don't think there's any point to any of these trips or any of these negotiations because they never engage the real issue. I did note that there was not a joint communique after the meeting. There was not a joint press conference. And I did note that Trump's account of the meeting was entirely different from the Chinese account of the meeting. So we have no idea if anything Trump says was a result of the meeting is true because the Chinese don't repeat any of it. So who do we believe? Well, it depends on who you have the most confidence in. And I don't think the confidence indicator is leaning very strongly in Trump's direction. For the reasons that you said, he's got one position now and a different one in five minutes.

And he's always blustering. And he's always acting as if Iran is either already destroyed or about to be. And he's always threatening to attack, and then he calls it off because somebody asked him to. And it's nonsensical. I don't know what the purpose of any of this is. I don't know if there's anyone in his government that can talk to him about the impact that he is making. He looks foolish. And I can't see how that helps him. You know, one of the things politicians have always wanted to avoid was looking foolish. Doesn't seem to bother Trump. So I think the only significant element of the meeting between Trump and the Chinese leader was the Chinese leader's statement to Trump: do not mess with Taiwan or there will be conflict instead of business deals.

I believe what the Chinese said, that if the United States can avoid trying to interject itself between China and Taiwan, which is part of China and has been since the 1970s when President Nixon acknowledged the One China policy, that if the United States can just leave that alone, China, I don't think, will bother us and will continue to be a good business partner. But if the American impulse to hegemony or just to causing trouble intervenes in Taiwan, we're going to pay a big price. So I think that's the only important part of the whole meeting. I don't think anything else means anything or matters. And why it was held, I don't really know. I guess the Chinese just decided to accommodate Trump. It was Trump, I think, that requested the meeting. So, okay, let's accommodate him. And they're not confrontational or looking for conflict. So that's about all I think there is to say about it. I mean, I may be missing something, but I think not.

#Nima

I think the point of the main issue for China is Taiwan, which they wanted to talk about with the Trump administration. But with the statement from the White House, we haven't seen anything related to Taiwan. They didn't mention anything. The Chinese side mentioned that it was discussed

during the meeting, the visit they had. And Paul, do you see any time soon the United States deciding about Taiwan? Because China really wants, you know, the unity of Taiwan with China, the motherland. And they can do it by force, in my opinion.

And at this particular moment that we're in, they don't need to attack Taiwan. They can do some sort of blockade or embargo on Taiwan and they would capitulate. There is no way to save them. It's an island. Is the United States going to facilitate that or escalate? Because Donald Trump has assigned a new sort of aid to Taiwan, which is more than \$11 billion in weapons. I don't know where those weapons come from because they don't have them right now, but they want to send them to Taiwan. And China knows that. China knows that Taiwan is on their side. It's not on the side of Donald Trump. How do you see that?

#Paul

Well, I don't see what the weapons can do. So Trump may want to send them just because it makes money for the United States armaments manufacturers. You know, we have this massive armaments industry, and so we need conflicts or expectations of conflicts so that people will arm themselves and buy the weapons. Otherwise, it's hard to keep the system going. It's huge and it's expensive and has always thousands, tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands of people employed, and their company stocks are valuable. And so to maintain all that, they need to move weapons. So they need, if not actual conflicts, they need the expectation. That's what NATO has been for. So one of the reasons Trump is down on NATO is that they don't buy enough weapons, and so it doesn't support our armaments industry.

So the point of the weapons going to Taiwan — they wouldn't help Taiwan in a war with China. There's no way Taiwan could deter China from taking the place over by force. But China doesn't want to do that. There's no need to. The Chinese plan has always been, we just gradually integrate their economy into ours, and then they see they're part of us. So I'm not sure what motivates the Taiwanese leadership. It may be bags of money from the Americans. Maybe we're paying them to be sort of antagonistic to China. But I don't think Taiwan wants a conflict — not a military conflict with China. There's no prospect for them in that. I don't think there's any prospect of us being able to save Taiwan should there be a military conflict, for the same reason that our ships can't enter the Strait of Hormuz — they can't get close to the Chinese shore.

So what can we do? There's practically nothing militarily short of nuclear weapons, but the Chinese have nuclear weapons also. And it was some years ago when somebody in the Pentagon said something about how we could nuke the Chinese and all. The Chinese instantly responded and showed the routes into the United States they would use for their missiles and how we would disappear. They weren't in the least bit intimidated. They said, okay, this is what will happen to you. So I think, Nima, this whole notion that somehow the United States has to control every country,

everybody, everything — this sort of hegemonic approach — it's always been a part of the liberal American mentality, that we are an indispensable country, somehow endowed with privileges and rights above other countries.

#Nima

Sorry for interrupting. You mean neoliberals. You're not talking about liberals, because liberals like Noam Chomsky were totally against it.

#Paul

Well, he's not a neoliberal. Chomsky is a liberal.

#Nima

Classic liberal, I'm talking about.

#Paul

I'm talking about the American political liberals of the 20th century. The political liberals of the 20th century, they believed in American exceptionalism. They've written books about it. You know, the professors in the universities, they were represented in the State Department and other important parts of the government. Now, that view was hardened with the Wolfowitz Doctrine when the Soviet Union collapsed, because at the time, China was not what it is today in 1991. And the Soviet Union was the only constraint on American unilateralism. And when it collapsed and we started dismembering the Soviet Union, you know, we broke off the entire Far Eastern part or Central Asia — Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan — all broke that off. We broke Ukraine off. We broke Belarus off.

And of course, the whole Warsaw Pact was gone, and the Baltics. And so, you know, this allowed the American neoconservatives to very boldly state the doctrine of hegemony. So this, I think, is the main problem everywhere. It's the problem with Russia, with Iran, with China, from the American standpoint. Now, the American problem with Iran is also influenced by Israel, by the Israel lobby. You know, Trump is very much in the hands of Israel. We attacked Iran for Israel. And this is officially acknowledged by the legal officer of the State Department, who wrote in the document that I posted the link to on my website, that the United States attacked Iran at the request of Israel. So that's the source of all the conflicts. It's the notion that we somehow have to be in charge everywhere.

And to be in charge, we will try to destabilize other countries to block their initiatives. And this is all multiplied in the case of the Middle East because Trump is such a total puppet of the Israelis. So we have the Israeli government hegemony in the Middle East, which they claim through Greater Israel. And Trump is a supporter of that. So these are the two problems, and they don't get discussed. You

don't see among the foreign policy community in Russia or China or Iran or Europe or the United States any discussion of the Zionist agenda of Greater Israel and how destabilizing this is. Basically, Israel has told all the countries in the Middle East, we're going to terminate you because you're in the way of Greater Israel.

This is an assertion of hegemony over the Middle East. And no one says anything about the American policy of hegemony over the world. It's the whole reason that we're using Ukraine in a proxy war against Russia. The neoconservatives were determined to destabilize Russia. You know, they tried it first when they sent the Georgian army into South Ossetia. I think that was 2008. And then they overthrew the Ukrainian government and built an army and were about to launch it into the Russian Donbass. These are all efforts to destabilize Russia. We had a color revolution in Georgia, a former province of Russia, and for a while it was hostile, but the Russians overcame that. They got a government that was not hostile, and we tried to overthrow that government.

That was last year or the year before. I forget, you know, so much happens. But that American attempt to have a second color revolution in Georgia failed. So all of the aggression comes from Israel and from Washington. It doesn't come from China, Russia, and Iran. Russia was forced into the intervention in Donbas. They didn't want it. It's clear. Putin did everything he could to avoid it. For eight years, he hid behind the Minsk Agreement so he wouldn't have to do anything. China avoids any kind of real conflict. And Iran has not attacked anyone except in response to being attacked. Trump says it's a terrorist nation, but where's the terror? I mean, what terror do they commit? They suffer terror.

It's the assassination of their leaders, their scientists, by Israel and the United States. So when you have a situation like that, which is so obvious that it's this hegemonic claim — the United States and Israel — that's the source of all the trouble, and no one will acknowledge it or discuss it or say, hey, look, how can there be peace or negotiation when one side is claiming hegemony over everyone else? That doesn't permit peace or negotiation. So that's the great frustration. I've been stressing this for the longest time, and there's almost no response. People don't say, you're wrong, let me show you why. They don't... they don't say, oh, this is an idea, we better start thinking about this.

That's right. How can the Iranians negotiate with the United States and Israel when the United States and Israel don't think the Iranians have a right to sovereignty? And the Iranians don't even say that. Yeah, we've talked about it before. Why don't the Iranians raise the question of the Zionist agenda of Greater Israel? Why don't they? They should say, look, let's negotiate that — not whether or not we have the right, as we do under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, to enrich uranium or the right to control our coast, our waterways. Why are we negotiating that? We should be negotiating Israel's claim to the Middle East. So, you know, I'm just repeating what I said before. Go on to your next question.

#Nima

Yeah, yeah. Donald Trump wanted — it seems that one of the objectives in his visit to China was to convince them to buy American oil and somehow replace Iranian oil with American oil, which it seems has failed, because I don't see China wanting to be dependent on the United States when it comes to energy. Because energy is so strategic for them and so important for their economy. That's why they don't want... They may want a lot of things with the United States, a lot of trade with the United States, but that's not going to go down in the case of energy. And they don't want to be... Is that your assessment?

#Paul

Well, yeah, I think you're right. China doesn't want to be dependent on the United States for anything. But you see, Nima, energy is fungible. Oil is fungible like money. It's not quite as fungible as money, but there's an oil market. And why does it matter where you get the oil from? I'm not sure that the big American oil companies even know what part of their supply is American and what part is from Saudi Arabia or the oil emirates or Nigeria or where it's coming from. They're not categorizing the oil they have according to the country. I mean, they do want to separate heavy oil from light crude oil and all of that because the refining process is different.

But the notion that there's a supply of American oil and that it's sold differently from supplies of other oil, that's not the way the oil market works. And the big powerful companies that do the refining, they get the oil from the market, wherever the hell it is. And so I don't quite know how it is that Trump would be marketing them only American oil. It's a curious thing. And why does he want that? Well, you could say the reason Trump wants that is it gives him some control over China. And they clearly won't accept that. So it could just be Trump's expression of American hegemony. It has been a policy of the United States for a long time to seek to control oil flows. That's the reason.

That's one of the reasons. Maybe it's not. Well, I think the real reason we got so entrenched in the Middle East was the Cold War. We were trying to keep the Soviets out. But certainly a very important reason for American entrenchment in the Middle East is to control oil flows. And so this is a method of American control. But the oil is a world commodity, and it's not compartmentalized. There's not a price for American oil over here and a price for Saudi oil over here and oil from Iraq or Syria or the Gulf States. I mean, it's just not like that. So my own view is that the United States cannot impose hegemony. Israel has been successful in using the United States to impose its hegemony in the Middle East.

We destroyed Libya for them, and Iraq and Syria. We agreed to attack Iran, which was a mistake. And we have supplied them with the means and the diplomatic cover to destroy Palestine. So Greater Israel is a real thing, and it has progressed. And the first real obstacle it hit was when Putin sent the Russian Air Force into Syria to stop the invasion by President Obama. But then Putin pulled out and left, and now Syria is gone. And the second obstacle that the Israelis hit was this attack on Iran. It wasn't at all successful like the Israelis and the Americans thought. In fact, it was a defeat for Israel and the United States. Remember, it was not Iran that asked for the ceasefire.

So this is the first time that Greater Israel ran up against something. And clearly, Trump doesn't want to renew the war because how can he? What can he do? We know he can't do anything. I mean, other than nukes, I think that's pretty much off the table for Iran. It's just, there's no threat that justifies using nuclear weapons. Iran is not an existential threat to the United States. It's a regional threat if we attack it. So Trump can't do anything, and he's frustrated, and so he blusters and threatens and acts as if he has Iran by the throat, and at any minute they're going to realize that fate and do what he tells them. Well, that's not going to happen. It's not true.

#Paul

He clearly could not intimidate the Chinese. He may have more luck with Putin. Putin has shown no inclination to fight about anything. So other than that, I don't see much room for the Israeli agenda of hegemony or the neoconservative agenda of hegemony. I think they've run up against the boundaries. It can't go any further, you know, unless Iran's political will collapses, unless the Russians permit Putin to sell out the country. How likely is that? It's not very likely. But other than that, Trump's frustrated. Netanyahu's frustrated. They're helpless. They can't do anything.

#Nima

Paul, what I see right now in Israel, you know, you've mentioned that Israel is progressing with their sort of agenda with Greater Israel. But what I see right now, compared to what it was before this war started, they were talking about the Abraham Accords. They were talking about improving the relationship between Israel and GCC countries. Right now, Saudi Arabia is talking about a non-aggression pact between GCC countries and Iran. They see how dependent, because the outcome of the war so far is somehow changing the conditions of GCC countries, because they're more dependent on Iran right now with the case of the Strait of Hormuz. And they cannot send everything out of their countries by these pipelines.

It's impossible. It's impossible to do that. That's why they're going to be independent, I think, for the rest of their, you know, sort of strategy. But don't you see that what Israel did was just destroying everything they had been trying to build up for such a long time? And I see, literally, I see the United States is not going to get back to the way it was in GCC countries. I see these Arab states getting closer. I don't care that much about the UAE because the UAE doesn't have any sort of weight when it comes to the GCC countries. The more important countries are Saudi Arabia and Qatar, together with Oman. And what is your assessment of that?

#Paul

Well, that's what I was saying. I thought that the era of Israeli and American hegemony was over. It had run up against barriers it couldn't penetrate, except possibly Putin, who has created the image of a very weak person. So there's nowhere further for the U.S. and Israel to go. Maybe they can

destroy Lebanon, but not if Iran takes the side of its historic ally, Hezbollah. And I think of all the countries, the Iranians strike me as being a little more principled and a little more guided by a sense of honor in the old-fashioned meaning of the word. So I don't think the Iranians see it in their interests to abandon allies, particularly if they have this opportunity of pulling what remains of the Arab world, which isn't very much, back toward them.

If they have this opportunity of pulling the Gulf States and Saudi Arabia into association with that instead of Israel and the United States, then they can't abandon Hezbollah. Because then it shows, well, they're not reliable either. So, yes, I mean, that was the point I was trying to make. You made it perhaps clearer than I did. I think the boundaries are kind of exhausted for the United States and Israel in the Middle East. The whole appearance of drones and hypersonic missiles that can change course and have so many warheads, many of them dummies — these are not things that traditional military force can deal with. And so the whole notion of a superpower doesn't mean anything anymore.

True, they may have more powerful weapons, but in a normal kind of war environment, the United States has no advantage that Iran doesn't have. In fact, Iran seems to have more effective missiles. So I think this is a frustration for Trump. I think he really believed we're so powerful that Iran would collapse, or, you know, the people would rise up and overthrow the government. I mean, how can you believe these kinds of things? I don't know. They actually believed — they may not believe it now — but they actually believed that about China. And there's a province in China that borders Kazakhstan, I think, if I remember my geography. And for years we were in there, and there are Muslims in that part, that Chinese province. We've been trying to stir them up and cause trouble inside China that way.

And just like we managed earlier to stir up Chechnya inside Russia and cause a problem. But I think all of that has reached its limit. And I think Trump is sort of discrediting the United States. I mean, we've already been discredited. But his behavior is really atrocious, isn't it? Look at the demeaning language he's brought into politics. You see, today he's out on the campaign circuit trying to destroy Thomas Massie, the Republican congressman from Kentucky, a longtime Trump supporter but a critic of Israel. So now he said, get rid of him. There's \$30 million that have been injected into this primary. This is a primary. It's not even the election. It's a primary campaign.

The Israel lobby came up with 10 million, and there's 20 million more that Trump and the Republicans have got to defeat Massie because he's a critic of Israel. Well, this isn't going to go down well. Trump's already run out of the Congress Marjorie Taylor Greene, who was a big favorite of Trump people. He behaves so foolishly. He makes so many absurd charges against people. And also, let me say this: I think Trump is the first president in American history to be in business while he's the president of the United States. You look at this ballroom he's building in the White House — it's his own construction company. He's going to make money from this. His Bitcoin, his electronic money — he made money. His wife had one. There are all kinds of businesses.

#Nima

His sons are producing missiles.

#Paul

Yeah, the family. And Trump himself. I mean, the notion that the president creates companies to make money off of him being president. We saw some of this with Biden selling influence and Hunter, his son, getting paid \$50,000 a month from the Ukrainians for protecting them. But Trump is making billions, according to reports — billions. Well, how in the world — I don't remember Eisenhower being in business, or Nixon, or John Kennedy, or Reagan, or Jimmy Carter. I don't remember George Herbert Walker Bush being in business while they were president. Now, I'm sure they did favors for people, and later they got something out of it.

They got put on boards like that. They got something, but they didn't — they weren't running businesses they organized while they were president to make money from being president. This is, I think, the first time this has happened. Maybe it happened a long time ago. The railroads, I think, made a lot of money out of Abe Lincoln. But for the president himself to be acting as a businessman while he's also allegedly in charge of the country, this has got to be an amazing conflict of interest. And it doesn't get any remarks. There's no comment. It may be the Democrats are just saving all of this up, and when they get back in, they may lower the boom on this guy.

#Nima

But I don't see how this can really be legal.

#Paul

You see, this is the practice — at least this is what Americans were always taught. The practice in third world countries, in Latin America, in Africa, in parts of Asia — the practice is, the person in control of government uses it to get rich. So the reason people want to be in power is to use the government to make themselves rich. Well, Trump has now brought this to America. Well, that's the way it looks to me. I mean, maybe I'm wrong. I'm just beginning to think about it. I'm thinking about it out loud with you. But now, if you look at all of this as a sign of deterioration...

#Nima

I think the numbers are on your side, and they support what you think. The numbers, everything that you've just mentioned, it's in the news. Nobody can ignore that.

#Paul

But they are. Yeah, they are. They are ignoring them. And so I can see why the Republicans would, but why are the Democrats? And maybe they're just collecting all of this. If Trump loses the midterms, the Democrats may use this stuff and come after him. The real question is, will he lose the midterms? Because what have the Democrats got to offer? If you look at the Democrat leaders, they're as bad or worse than Trump. There's no white knight out there in either party. It's horrific. It's not just the United States — no Western country has a viable leader. You know, in Britain, the Labour Party wants Starmer to resign. He has very poor public support. The same for the German Chancellor, the French President. Wherever you look, there's no support. And there's nobody in the wings waiting to come in and take over and do a good job. I mean, the Republicans don't have anybody. The good ones they've got, they're trying to get rid of, like Thomas Massie.

#Nima

Paul, how do you think, if Thomas Massie, you know, defeats Donald Trump and his supporters? Because the Zionists are, as you've mentioned, trying to put a lot of money into this campaign against him. And we've seen Pete Hegseth, the Vice President of the United States, J.D. Vance, Donald Trump himself — they are all attacking Thomas Massie. And if he wins, if he overcomes these difficulties that he has right now, what does that mean for the future?

#Paul

Well, it means the Israel lobby is weakened because this clout failed. And so others who are no doubt tired of being bossed around by the Israel lobby — you know, if you were a United States Senator and you got somebody from the Israel lobby telling you what you have to do, it doesn't go down well, you know? So if this attack on Massie, which is organized by the Israel lobby — because Trump is just a puppet of the Israel lobby, that's all he is — he represents Israel more than he does the United States, and he's more concerned about that than he is about Americans. So if that fails, then the power of the Israel lobby has been jolted.

It's weakened, and it may be possible for others to resist it, and it may break up, and the United States might regain its sovereignty over its own foreign policy. Right now, the United States does not have sovereignty over its foreign policy in the Middle East. It's not a sovereign country. It follows Israeli directives. I mean, why else did we attack Iran? It's just like the legal officer in the State Department who wrote a report justifying the war said the United States attacked Iran at the request of Israel. Now, Trump denies this, but this is the official position of the legal advisor to the Department of State. So it's true. We know why Trump attacked Iran.

#Nima

Rubio said that on camera, Paul, you remember. Rubio said that it was because of Israel we attacked Iran.

#Paul

Right. And this is now an official State Department document that says it. So, I think if Massie can withstand this assault — and it's all just wild accusations and demonizations — and of course, Massie hasn't got \$30 million to fight the lies with, I think normally he would lose. But in a primary, who's going to turn out are going to be his committed supporters. A lot of other people aren't going to bother. So it may be he will survive this. If he doesn't, what does it tell us? It tells us that it's not possible for any member of the United States Congress, House or Senate, to represent their constituency instead of representing Israel. So if they get Massie, the power of the Israel lobby will solidify. Nobody will ever again criticize Israeli policies.

And so the hold they will have on the United States will be total. You know, we've talked about it before. They have a fantastic hold. You know, we talked about red states like Texas and Florida. The Republican legislatures have passed, and the Republican governors have signed, legislation that if you're a Texas resident or a Florida resident and you criticize Israel, you cannot have a job with the state and you cannot have a contract to supply the state with goods and services. Well, if Israel can get state governments to pass laws like that, you can see the enormous hold they have. And we've talked about it before, I think. The universities... They got the Black woman who was president of Harvard fired because she let the students protest the Israel genocide against Palestine.

So they fired the president of the university as if she could do anything about the protests. And then Trump says, okay, if you protest Israel, you're expelled from school. Well, how can Trump tell the school that they've got to expel students? That's not Trump's business. And then he says, if they're foreign students and they criticize Israel, I'm going to deport them. Well, this shows the hold that Israel has. And anyone who criticizes Israel, the Israeli-influenced newspapers demonize you. You're an anti-Semite. You're a Holocaust denier. They try to get you fired from your job. If you're a schoolteacher, you get fired. I mean, it's an amazing power. So if Massie wins, it's gonna shake that power, and we'll know tomorrow. If he loses, we know that the Israelis have us in an iron grip.

#Nima

Paul, Donald Trump, before being elected, said that he wanted to separate Russia from China. He didn't want Iran and Russia to be enemies of the United States. He said the sanctions are nonsense and we have to do something about it because they're killing the dollar and the power of the dollar. Right now, in the situation we're in, he has the war in Ukraine, he has a new war in the Middle East, and he managed to somehow bring all these players — I'm talking about Russia, China, and Iran — together. And Putin is going to be in China tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, on Tuesday and Wednesday.

And how do you see it? Do you think that Donald Trump still thinks of the petrodollar or the power of the dollar or anything of that sort when it comes to the economy? Or is his main concern right now going to be—you mentioned the situation with Israel in the Middle East—but when it comes to

China, when it comes to Russia, you have to have some sort of grand strategy. I don't see anything of that sort happening right now with the Trump administration. And he knows that. When he went to China, he saw that. He experienced that, in my opinion.

#Paul

I think the grand strategy with regard to Russia is to cut them off from Europe, to have Europe purchase everything from America, nothing from Russia, especially energy. I saw that Putin was entertaining the idea that the Americans would be allowed to take over the Nord Stream pipeline, and that Putin would supply the natural gas, but the Americans would have the pipeline and the Americans would sell the gas to the Europeans, not the Russians. So I think Putin is the weak element in the Iran-Russia-China triangle. I think he's very weak.

And his negotiator, Dmitry, is a representative of the oligarchs. And what he's really negotiating is not Putin's conditions for ending the war in Ukraine, but business deals that give the Americans more of the benefit than the Russians, in the hopes that as the deals that the Russians make favor the Americans over the Russians, the Americans will be satisfied with their larger share of profits and give up on the sanctions. So I think this makes Putin a very weak figure. He's willing to sell out Russia's sovereign interests for business deals that please the oligarchs. So that's not a strong position.

We see too that he does next to nothing to prevent Ukraine from continuing the war. And the Ukrainian intrusions into Russia get deeper and deeper into the country. The other day, there were a thousand drones hitting far inside Russia, killing civilians, doing all kinds of damage, when Putin has the power to end that war almost immediately, but he won't use it. He won't use the force. So I don't think Putin is any longer taken seriously like he was, say, in 2007 when he spoke at the Munich Security Conference—a very confident person who spoke in a very firm way. We've seen nothing of that anymore. So...

#Paul

I think that China has got its own way of dealing with things. I think Iran, ensuring that it could withstand a combined American-Israeli attack—not only withstand it, but prevail, which they did—to the point that neither Israel nor the United States wants to renew the attack. How long has Trump threatened to renew the attack? How long has this been going on? And he always backs off. He backs off because he cannot renew it. So I think this is a big change in the world, and it's probably you are correct in your reading that this may bring the Arab world into alliance with Iran and away from the U.S. and Israel, because Iran has shown that it's predominant. And if Massey wins, I think this will crack the power of the Israel lobby in the United States. More people will challenge it. And so we have to pray for tomorrow that Massey withstands the—you know, we've never spent \$30 million on a primary. It's shocking.

#Nima

It's shocking.

#Paul

It's shocking. And that \$30 million is just the money being used against Massey.

#Nima

Of course, he hasn't got any comparable money.

#Paul

So it's almost all the money that's being spent is Israeli money, Israeli-raised money. So it would be great because then we would have two defeats for Israel—big defeats—and that would hasten the kind of development that you were talking about. So we can only hope. My own view is there can't be any peace ever if there are parties claiming hegemony over others.

#Nima

Exactly.

#Paul

This is inconsistent with any kind of peace. So as long as these two countries are claiming hegemony—Israel's is regional, the Americans' is worldwide—as long as this is happening, no peace negotiation means anything. It's a contradiction in terms. And we have to get this into discussion. If we don't, all of this mess is going to end up in a very bad way. You can't go through life completely unaware of the facts on the ground. You can't do it. And that's what's happening, though. We're going along as if these threats of hegemony have no effect on anything, and we can still have peace and goodwill and get along, and it's total nonsense.

#Nima

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

#Paul

Well, thank you, Nima. I look forward to this.

#Nima

Okay.

#Paul

See you later.

#Nima

Send me the URL. Sure.

#Paul

Okay. Bye-bye. Goodbye. Goodbye.