

# Iran deters Trump's aggression - Max on Judging Freedom

The Grayzone's Max Blumenthal joins Judge Andrew Napolitano's Judging Freedom

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Undeclared wars are commonplace. Tragically, our government engages in preemptive war, otherwise known as aggression, with no complaints from the American people. Sadly, we have become accustomed to living with the illegitimate use of force by the government. To develop a truly free society, the issue of initiating force must be understood and rejected.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

What if sometimes, to love your country, you had to alter or abolish the government? What if Jefferson was right? What if that government is best which governs least? What if it is dangerous to be right when the government is wrong? What if it is better to perish fighting for freedom than to live as a slave? What if freedom's greatest hour of danger is now?

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Hi, everyone. Judge Andrew Napolitano here for Judging Freedom. Today is Thursday, June 4th, 2026. Max Blumenthal will be with us in just a moment.

## **#Donald Trump**

Did Trump and Netanyahu fake their animosity? Well, who would believe them anyway?

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

But first, the bug-out bag designed for elite survivalists, preparedness experts, and field-tested professionals is now available to the public, including multiple days' worth of food and a water bottle with built-in filtration. That's right, our friends at My Patriot Supply have announced their fully stocked go bag with everything you need to escape a crisis and survive on your own—tools and gear for starting fires, making shelters, and staying warm, catching fish, trapping small game, cooking off-grid, and much more. It's everything you need, whether you're facing a natural disaster, power grid failure, or even civil unrest.

And it all comes pre-stocked in a tactical backpack so rugged and durable it's practically bulletproof. This kit was designed with elite survivalists in mind, and now it's available for you. And here's the best part: when you go to [preparewiththejudge.com](https://preparewiththejudge.com), you'll unlock a limited-time \$100 discount. Get your survival go bag today with \$100 off at [preparewiththejudge.com](https://preparewiththejudge.com). That's [preparewiththejudge.com](https://preparewiththejudge.com). Welcome here, my friend. Do you think that Trump and Netanyahu concocted this animosity, much like Joe Biden did a few years ago when he pretended to be angry at the Israeli leader?

## **#Max**

Well, I'm glad you brought up the context of Biden, because he leaked to the same reporters when he sought to continue the status quo and enable Israeli escalation from Gaza to Lebanon, which ultimately led to war with Iran. He would go to Barak Ravid, the former Israeli spy, Unit 8200 operative, who was an Israeli reservist until 2021 and is Axios' chief correspondent. Now, for Steve Witkoff, Jared Kushner, Marco Rubio, and Donald Trump, the Biden people would go to Barak Ravid. So that's who this leak was furnished to, along with his fellow receptacle for leaks, Marc Caputo.

This character, who would be applying for food stamps and various other welfare benefits if the government somehow collapsed because he would have no source of reporting, is a self-described Florida man whose whole career has focused on being the water boy, the Gunga Din for Marco Rubio. And so I assume this leak came from Marco Rubio based on what I know about these reporters. Actually, a couple of weeks ago, I called Marc Caputo Marco Rubio's water boy because he pumped out a totally fake story about Cuba planning to attack Key West with 300 drones. Obviously, it came from Marco Rubio.

And he responded by calling me Marxist Max Blumenthal, who's funded by Iran. That was his response. I mean, these characters are so thin-skinned. Barak Ravid, when everyone was calling him out for helping Trump manipulate markets and send all these fake messages about negotiations with Iran, accused all of his critics of anti-Semitism. So these are thin-skinned characters who are deeply unprofessional, and they're very useful to power. So Trump, and I think Marco Rubio, people around Trump, wanted this message out there that Donald Trump was livid at Benjamin Netanyahu.

Why? Number one, the Republican base is not happy. Elements in the Republican base are not very happy with Netanyahu, and they want to see Trump demonstrating some strength and independence from this tiny little apartheid state that seems to control him at every turn. Number two, Donald Trump had to call off, or had to impose pressure on Netanyahu, to not destroy or bombard the Dahiya district of Beirut, which had been evacuated a day before by the Israeli army. They were going to attack the civilian base, the Shia community, because they could not succeed in their campaign against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.

And this was also the result of pressure on Netanyahu from far-right elements in his own coalition, like Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich. We can talk about that in a second. The operation had to

be stopped because of Iran. The real reason was not that Trump finally decided to stand up to Netanyahu. It was that Trump was afraid that Iran would actually launch counterstrikes on U.S. targets in the region and even attack Israel, and that Iran was beginning to deter U.S. and Israeli aggression in a way that it hadn't before. In addition, Donald Trump wants to relieve the economic pressure that Iran has imposed by basically besieging the besiegers by closing off the Strait of Hormuz, and there are other economic cards that Iran can play.

So all of this has to do with Iran finally getting out of the tit-for-tat dynamic that had colored U.S.-Iranian military conflicts in the past and actually establishing escalation dominance through asymmetrical warfare and pulling Trump's card. Trump is afraid now of going back to war with Iran. And so, in order to look strong, he leaked this story, or Rubio leaked this story, that Trump was just furious at Netanyahu for continuing to escalate. But this is actually a story of Donald Trump's weakness in the face of Iranian strength.

### **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

And of course, there was no noticeable let-up in the invasion in southern Lebanon, and even the attacks on the Beirut suburbs, was there?

### **#Max**

Okay, Donald Trump said he convinced Netanyahu not to send troops into Beirut.

### **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Well, he actually said the IDF is turning around his orders.

### **#Max**

Yeah, I think he was like back in 1982 in his own mind. Israel wasn't going to send troops; it was going to send U.S.-made GBU bombs into apartment buildings all across Dahiya and slaughter civilians and just destroy for the sake of attacking the Shia community. So Trump, I don't even think he understood what he had stopped. And so, as Israel was forced to pull back this air campaign from Dahiya, which is the southern district of Beirut that is the Shia-majority district, they escalated on the city of Tyre, which is a biblical-era city on the Mediterranean that is very close to the militarized frontiers of Israel and southern Lebanon.

And they just began attacking civilian areas in that city as they continued their assault on civilians across the south, killing first responders, killing just civilians in their cars, on motorcycles, and then claiming, oh, we attacked Hezbollah targets. This was in violation of the ceasefire that they've been violating since November 2024. It's also now a violation of this fake ceasefire that was just agreed upon by Lebanese authorities who do not represent the Lebanese public, who are a completely

illegitimate government operating absolutely outside the Lebanese constitution to negotiate with Israel through the U.S. for a ceasefire that puts all of the onus on Hezbollah to disarm and to stop defending Lebanese territory, but almost nothing.

No impetus on Israel to withdraw. And they're using the U.S., a government which is essentially controlled by Israeli forces, the Trump administration, as their mediator, not involving regional mediators such as, for example, Egypt or Turkey, powerful regional countries. So it's an invalid ceasefire, which Israel is violating. Hezbollah is retaliating. They have fired, launched rockets into northern Israel today. And their FPV drones, these first-person-view drones, which are linked to fiber optic wire and impossible to jam, they have foiled all electronic countermeasures, continue to torment Israel. An Israeli major general, one of the highest-ranking figures in the field, escaped an assassination attempt from one of these drones by just a matter of seconds.

This was just reported today. So Israel really has no clear means of winning this war except by attacking civilians. And that means that the pressure will continue to grow on Netanyahu, whose electoral coalition is coming apart at the seams, from the extreme figures to go back and attack Dahiya. And at some point, I think it's reasonable to expect, given the irrationality of Israel and the sheer bloodlust, that they will attack Beirut. And in that case, Iran will come back into the theater of conflict in defense of its allies in Lebanon, and war will begin again. And it will be a massive, massive diplomatic failure by the U.S., or maybe a success if you consider the forces that are really pulling the strings in Washington.

### **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Right. Here's Trump's posting on Truth Social. This is the day before the supposed shouting match was concocted. And I don't know when it was concocted, but when it was revealed, I had a conversation—I won't read the whole thing—I had a conversation with Bibi Netanyahu today, asking him not to go into a major raid of Beirut, Lebanon. He—here you go, Max—turned his troops around. Thank you, Bibi. This is just farcical, that the president would say this and expect the American public to believe it. So are these negotiations between the illegitimate negotiators for Lebanon and somebody from Israel actually going on in Washington?

### **#Max**

Yeah, but they're fake negotiations. Like, the real negotiations were what Trump hinted at, although he doesn't even understand what they are, when he said that he actually spoke to Hezbollah. That's who you have to talk to.

### **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Well, did he actually? I can't imagine Hezbollah spoke to him.

## **#Max**

No, he would have gone through the Speaker of Parliament, Nabih Berri, who represents a Shia party and has traditionally served as a back channel to Hezbollah. At the same time, Iran's government was speaking to Nabih Berri and emphasizing—I think it was his counterpart, Mohammad Ghalibaf, or someone like that—emphasizing that Iran is not going to leave Lebanon out of the ceasefire, especially after establishing deterrence and claiming dominance on the escalation ladder through asymmetrical force and control over the Strait of Hormuz. Why would Iran, you know, go limp at the negotiating table? This means that Trump has to force a real ceasefire all across southern Lebanon in order to get Iran to the table, to relax its chokehold on the Strait of Hormuz, and to relax Trump's political crisis, which is the economy. I mean, strategic reserves of petroleum globally are now at a 43-year low, and this is because of Trump's refusal and inability to negotiate an end to the conflict with Iran.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

So you have the summer driving season coming up, and you have the strategic reserves very low. Gee, I wonder what gas will be like by the end of July. But here's a clip from Trump. This is June 3rd, yesterday, Max, claiming he spoke to Hezbollah, and then a bizarre answer to a question about how do you define ceasefire. Cut number three.

## **#Donald Trump**

We actually spoke with Hezbollah for the first time ever. We didn't know they spoke.

## **#Max**

How do you define a ceasefire?

## **#Donald Trump**

Pretty much the way it is. It's a different part of the world. I'd say in that part of the world, a ceasefire is when you're shooting in a more moderate manner.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

You're shooting in a more moderate manner. Now he's like Joe Stalin, defining his own words, redefining history. Well...

## **#Max**

Yeah, well, I don't think that Iran understands a ceasefire in that way—more moderate firing. What Iran seems to have recognized, though, and this is based on public statements I see in their media, is that they're going to be a target of hybrid warfare for as long as it takes to actually get a real deal, or for the U.S. to stand down, or for U.S. elites to finally break from the special relationship with Israel. And that's what Trump seems to be hinting at. And at the same time, he seems to be accepting that Israel can wage this campaign of terror all through southern Lebanon, which really is about ethnic cleansing. Israel is actively aiming to destroy as many homes of Shias in southern Lebanon as possible and pit Christians against the Shia population to keep them out of their communities.

I've seen reports of Christians actually setting up roadblocks in their communities to keep Shia out because of the amount of pressure they're getting. "We'll bomb your neighborhood if you let too many Shia in," because they'll say they're Hezbollah. This is a campaign of ethnic cleansing. And Trump isn't taking it seriously. And that means that at any moment, war can return with Iran. I don't think he understands the seriousness of Iran. But Iran sent a clear message by attacking Kuwait's airport and by attacking targets in Kuwait, a country which has been playing host to U.S. aggression—continued U.S. aggression on Iran—after the U.S. attacked Qeshm Island in Iran, that Iran will actually escalate for each U.S. attack. So Trump, he talked about a deal two weeks ago. There was enormous pushback from all the Israel-first operatives, like Mark Dubowitz, who got him in this mess. And now here he is, unable to even define what a ceasefire is.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Here's Prime Minister Netanyahu being asked—he gives a snarky response about regime change in Iran. This is yesterday, June 3rd. I think it's a Fox interview. Clip number five.

## **#Speaker 1**

You were talking about regime change. Why is nobody talking about it now?

## **#Benjamin Netanyahu**

Why do you say we're not talking about it? I said it the other day.

## **#Speaker 1**

Because President Trump seems ready to make a deal with the current regime.

## **#Benjamin Netanyahu**

Yeah, but it doesn't mean that he wants this regime to remain.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

What is he driving at? That a deal would not be a deal? That after Trump and Iran enter into a peace agreement, Bibi attacks again?

## **#Max**

There is every reason to believe that Netanyahu will attack Iran again or will use hybrid warfare to create the conditions for a renewal of warfare in order to draw the United States back in. And the clock is ticking on Netanyahu. He doesn't look healthy when he's in public. There seems to be something kind of wrong with him. He may actually be unseated as prime minister. There's a seesaw of polls that last week showed he might hold on by two seats. A week before, Likud would lose. The clock is ticking. The midterms are coming up in the United States.

So he needs to get the U.S. back in. There was an article in Israel Hayom, which is the pro-Netanyahu, Adelson-funded paper in Israel, hyping up Mossad's new Iran hybrid warfare division. And in that article, which was basically public relations or Hasbara for this previously secret division that was instituted by outgoing Mossad director David Barnea, one of the directors of the division said, if you give us all the resources we need, by the end of the year, we can have regime change. So Israel is constantly trying to create this illusion that regime change can be imposed on Iran.

But they also acknowledge in the same article that everything they tried, including the Kurdish option, when they were going to arm all these Kurdish militias to destabilize Iran along with the protesters, had completely failed. Everything they have done has completely failed. They got Trump into this war, and now they need to continuously fuel the illusion of regime change to try to keep Trump interested. But I think once Trump finally decides there is not going to be a replacement of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and that there's not some Delcy Rodríguez figure there, which was part of his original fantasy that led him into this morass, then the Israelis are—I mean, they don't have anything left to sell him.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Who could blame New York City Councilmember Zohran Mamdani for refusing to march in the Israel Day Parade with people like Randy Fine and Bezalel Smotrich?

## **#Max**

Well, it's Pride Month now, and there are going to be a lot of Pride parades. And I think if anyone wants to be marching with out and proud gay people, they would go to a Pride parade. If you want to hang out with rollicking Cajun revelers and Black Indians, you go to New Orleans, and you can go

to Mardi Gras. Also, some topless women, and you throw beads at them. And if you want to march with genocidal, wanted war criminals and out and proud baby killers who worship an ethno-supremacist apartheid state, you go to the Israel Day Parade.

That's what it is. That's just kind of what it's about. Zohran Mamdani understood that. This is a guy who has been involved in Palestine solidarity activism since he was in college. He knows who's going to be at that parade. And he really dodged a bullet there politically. And I don't know, I mean, he might have dodged a real bullet because they seem to really hate him, these people. Kind of like a JFK-going-to-Dallas scenario, where they're like, we dare you to come to our parade, and we hate you and want to destroy you.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

He certainly dodged a political bullet as soon as it was revealed that Smotrich was there. The criticism of him died down because it just dropped off the front page.

## **#Max**

No, I mean, what happened was truly amazing. I mean, I think this was a signal moment in the unraveling of the special relationship, especially as far as Democrats are concerned. Because, well, you know, Eric Adams went because he's on the Israeli payroll. Like, he was just making a pilgrimage to the Rebbe's grave, the Moshiach of the Chabad cult, recently. You know, he's getting, like, you know, Israel crypto deposits in his account every week. So we don't expect much of him, but like, Letitia James, the Attorney General, Jessica Tisch, who comes from a very Zionist family and is the police commissioner — but these are, like, liberal Democrats.

They all went, and they became collateral damage and all had to issue these statements like, "We condemn Bezalel Smotrich. He's an Islamophobe." No, he's not an Islamophobe. He's an ICC-wanted war criminal who is the finance minister in Israel's government, who is personally responsible for the settler violence in the West Bank, for authorizing mass annexation of Palestinian land — a war crime. It's like Wasserlauf — let me get his name right — Itzhak Wasserlauf, who is a member of Knesset in Israel, was at this march. This is a figure who was filmed cheering on soldiers as they entered Gaza and urging them to seize babies and dash them against the rocks. Who else was there?

Amihai Eliyahu, who is another minister in the Israeli government, has called for the Israeli military to drop a nuclear weapon on Gaza, referred to Palestinians as Amalek, meaning kill them, commit genocide, and called for blowing up the Al-Aqsa compound and replacing it with a third Jewish temple. They were all brought there by the Israeli consulate. And now, to turn down the temperature, the Israeli consulate said, well, we didn't tell all the Democrats marching. Well, what do you think attracts them to this parade? Again, it's like, you know, gay people go to a pride parade. Zionist fascists go to an Israel Day parade because it's an ethnosupremacist state that is filled with fascists in their ministerial positions.

I personally had wandered upon the Israel Day Parade many years ago. I was just walking through Central Park. I didn't even realize it was the day of the parade, and I was shocked by the displays of hatred that I saw and wound up having a half-hour conversation with members of the Jewish Defense League, handing out placards that said "Kahane was right" and telling me how much support they were getting. You have to understand what Israel is to know what you're getting into. And so that's how Mamdani dodged this bullet. And the rest of these Democrats need to be held accountable for participating in this parade.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

I can't resist asking, have you heard from Congressman Fine since he ran away from you in the Capitol Building?

## **#Max**

Well, I mean, again, like Randy Fine is very outspoken and one of the nastiest, most incendiary anti-Muslim, anti-Palestinian figures in Congress. But the thing that struck me when I challenged him was just how meek he was and how he kind of crumpled once he was lightly questioned. And so you'll never see him going into an adversarial atmosphere anymore. All of his appearances in the media are limited to Fox News or Newsmax and, you know, those sorts of channels. These are figures who can't be challenged directly. I would love to see a debate with him and his opponent, Dan Bernal. I mean, that would be worth watching.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

This is his opponent for his reelection bid in Florida. Yeah. Yeah. Wow. Max, thank you very much. Thanks for all of this. As always, all the best. We'll look forward to seeing you again soon, my friend.

## **#Max**

Thanks a lot, Judge. Thank you.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Wow. A terrific analysis that you really don't get from anybody else of this depth. Coming up at two o'clock on all of this, Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, and at three o'clock, Colonel Douglas Macgregor. Judge Napolitano for Judging Freedom.