

# Israel crashes out over reality of Iran victory

Max Blumenthal joins Judge Andrew Napolitano's Judging Freedom to discuss the US-Iran MOU

## #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 18th, 2026. Max Blumenthal joins us now. Max, a pleasure as always. Thank you, my dear friend. How did unconditional surrender become a ceasefire that the Iranians are celebrating?

## #Max

Well, not everyone in Iran is actually celebrating. There's cautiousness about this deal. There's caution about the deal. But one thing is clear: Iran won. And I said this many weeks ago — Iran won within the first week. This was a major strategic victory for Iran. It is a defeat of the U.S. empire that we have not seen before, possibly in the entire post-war era, possibly a more severe defeat than Vietnam, because the economic damage of Vietnam was largely contained, and this can't be.

And I think what this moment signals, regardless of how the MOU works out, regardless of whether Israel is able to whittle away at Trump's steadfastness and willingness to enforce this deal, is sort of a historic inflection point in which the American establishment is being forced to reckon with the illogic of Zionist logic, which is what compelled Donald Trump to launch this war. This war was based entirely on the Zionist logic that the U.S. had an absolute commitment to defending Israel's strategic depth and to actually defending the entire system of ethno-supremacism that guarantees the future of the so-called Jewish state.

And that meant that the U.S. found itself in a strategic and political quagmire in which it had placed itself outside the realm of normal international relations because it was following Zionist logic. Zionist logic, as I said, is based on the idea of a so-called Jewish state existing in a region in which the majority of people aren't Jews, and that demographic advantage of Jewish Israelis has to be guaranteed through violent engineering and consistent warfare. It also relies entirely on its direct line to the Gentile authority in Washington, which means the Israel lobby has to continue to be able to manipulate, blackmail, and bribe the Gentile powers in Washington and all across America.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Has its ability to blackmail and bribe been diminished by this memorandum of understanding and what Trump has said about it?

## **#Max**

Well, that's why we're hearing these comments from J.D. Vance, and you can play the video where he uses this term "reality," which I think is the most important term right now, because we're at a point where the contradiction between Zionist logic and reality—reality being a stand-in or a byword for normal international relations—has exploded. And that's why this is a historic inflection point, because an administration that was more under the control of Benjamin Netanyahu and the reigning Likud party than any other administration in U.S. history, all of which had been bought off by Israel to one degree or another, is now addressing the cold, hard reality that we've always discussed on this program: that Israel can't afford to lose the Gentile authority in Washington with this alienating behavior because it is not a normal state.

It is an anachronism, and the U.S. can no longer follow the Zionist logic that guides Israel because it will itself be dragged into a state of permanent war, where it will be in a munitions crisis. It won't be able to maintain its empire or even defend its near abroad, possibly, because of economic collapse. Donald Trump's presidency is in peril, and to restore his presidency and stave off catastrophic midterm losses, he has had to defy Zionist logic. And it's Zionist logic that is guiding Israel into being what J.D. Vance said today is the most hated nation in the world, that only has one leader who is sympathetic to it—Donald Trump—which it can no longer afford to alienate.

This position of reality will be more pronounced within the Democratic Party, where the constituent base is wholly opposed to providing billions of dollars of aid and weapons to Israel. So again, we're at a historic inflection point, whether or not this MOU holds. And I think I would also say the reality is that Iran had prepared for this assault with wisdom and with a clear understanding of the limits of U.S. power, and U.S. military power has reached its limits in the Strait of Hormuz.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Here is Vice President Vance. While the president is flying back from France, Vice President Vance held a press conference in the press room of the White House. Here are the comments that Max was talking about. When we come back from these comments, I'm going to ask you, Max, who in the U. S. is attacking this deal, because Vice President Vance is talking about Netanyahu's cabinet. Chris, go ahead.

## **#Speaker 1**

Thank you, sir. Jordan Conradson with the Gateway Pundit. I want to talk about the Lebanon component. Sure. There's a report in Axios that Netanyahu's fuming over this. Israel doesn't feel bound to the MOU as it relates to Lebanon. As you mentioned, your frustration with Israel striking in Beirut, hitting apartment buildings. If that continues, could it torpedo the deal? And what would the U.S.'s response be to a broader war in Lebanon involving Israel and Hezbollah?

## **#JD Vance**

Yeah, well, I don't want to get into hypotheticals that could torpedo the deal, because I think the president's expectation is that all of our friends — the Israelis, the Arabs in the region — we're going to work together and actually see this deal to completion. Now, I saw the Axios report that Netanyahu is fuming. That's not reflective of the conversations that I've had with him, but maybe he's saying something to somebody else that he's not saying to me. What I will say, and this does bother me, is that you have seen people within Bibi's cabinet who have come out and attacked the deal, and in some ways very personally attacked the President of the United States. And I guess my message to them would be twofold. Number one, Donald J. Trump is the only head of state in the entire world who is sympathetic to the nation of Israel at this moment in time.

And he happens to be the head of state of the world's superpower. If I was in the cabinet of the Israeli government, I might not be attacking the only powerful ally that I have anywhere left in the entire world. And the second message I would give to some of those cabinet members — Bibi, to his credit, has not gone down this path — but to some of these cabinet members in Israel who are attacking the President of the United States, the other thing that I would say is that over the last three months, two-thirds of the defensive weapons that have protected your homeland have been built by American hands and paid for by American tax dollars. The problem for Israel is not Donald J. Trump. And anybody in Israel who thinks their biggest problem is the President of the United States needs to wake up and smell the reality of the situation that country is in. Thank you all.

## **#Max**

Well, J.D. Vance is putting forward the reality from Washington's perspective, which is a perspective that we don't actually hear very often from the Trump administration, which has been putting forward up until this point largely Zionist logic and concealing the reality of normal international

relations. J.D. Vance has exposed the absurdity of the U.S.-Israeli special relationship with those comments, by noting that Israel depends, unlike possibly any other state I can think of in history — maybe like Ulster, Ireland, or something — on support, on funding, on political manipulation by a minority group in another country. Actually, the minority of a minority group.

It's a small minority of Jewish Americans who have been ponying up the money to basically bribe Donald Trump and compel him into this war. And Israel can't keep going down this road of attacking Donald Trump and sending its proxies within the Republican Party — the Mark Levins, the Mark Dubowitzes, the Mark Thiessens, all of these Marks — against Donald Trump without alienating Donald Trump, someone who's a very mercurial figure who has a temper and is very vengeful. So J. D. Vance is threatening them with that. But the contradiction is Zionist logic doesn't correspond with that reality. According to Zionist logic, Israel cannot allow Iran to have even ballistic missiles, let alone nuclear breakout capacity.

That could threaten Israel's demographic advantage by causing a brain drain, for example. Members of the Ashkenazi elite will seek residence in Germany or move to Cyprus or another country if Iran solidifies its power in the region and potentially forces Israel into some sort of negotiations. If Iran is successfully able to liberate southern Lebanon, Israel loses this so-called buffer zone or kill zone that it thinks it needs. And then what could happen in the West Bank, where Israel needs its Lebensraum for its settler class? What happens if resistance factions in the West Bank gain access to the FPV drones that Hezbollah has been using with such great effect?

This is the Zionist logic that has come up against the hard rocks of the reality of American power that J.D. Vance is putting forward, because Donald Trump and Marco Rubio are too afraid, actually, right now to go out there and make those statements. So this is actually a very good moment for J. D. Vance. And just one other quick point: notice how he's attacking Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich, the nutcases of the Netanyahu coalition. He's been instructed, I think, not to attack Netanyahu directly, but all the attacks are being directed by Netanyahu. Netanyahu has released the hounds on Donald Trump. And now the Marks, the Mark Levins, the Mark Dubowitzes, are all exposed because there's no one else in MAGA who's standing with them because of their loyalty to the president.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

What groups in America are going to do their best to undermine or sabotage this agreement?

## **#Max**

Well, I mentioned the Israel firsters, like the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, or the Destruction of Democracy, which is actually an Israeli cutout in Washington led by Mark Dubowitz, who's been responsible for all of the false predictions, all of the bad ideas, all of the catastrophic plays imposing Zionist logic on the Trump administration. Basically, they're the ones who sort of

wrote the plan for this war, all the way up until the naval siege, which was just lifted on Iran. They're now exposed, and everyone can see this was a war based on Zionist logic, which caused enormous economic harm that will continue to play out for a year or years, and that the only figures who want more war are basically either bought off by Israel or are Israel ideologues.

And they're willing to see more killing of schoolchildren, more destruction of buildings, destruction of power plants, and achieving no military objectives. They're willing to experience all of this global economic destruction that has caused bread riots in Asia, all for this tiny little apartheid state. And so they're totally isolated right now. To the extent that J.D. Vance is out there making these basic reality-based statements, they're isolated. But then you have another faction, Judge, which has been consistently one of the most odious and insidious political factions in American political life. They're called the Democratic Party. And the Democratic Party's foreign policy leadership—Susan Rice, Adam Schiff, Shifty Schiff, who was the key face and voice of the Russia collusion hoax—are attacking Donald Trump.

So is Chris Murphy from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for this, what they call an unconditional document of surrender. And yeah, they are right that this war was a major setback for U.S. power, and that the Strait of Hormuz was open before this war was waged, and that the U.S. has actually lost strategic ground against Iran, and Iran is stronger now following this war. But what they're wrong about is, number one, that Iran is an enemy of the United States. Iran is an enemy of Israel. And to the extent that the U.S. and Israel are joined at the hip, it's an enemy of the United States. But that's not the reality that we have to exist in. Iran is a country that would happily negotiate and exchange economic benefits with the United States if we could just accept the Islamic Republic as it is and allow it to reform from within instead of imposing regime change riots and chaos agents and sanctions on it.

And the other thing that they don't understand is that they have never offered a better idea than the JCPOA. The Democrats under the Biden administration, after Trump shredded the JCPOA, embraced a policy of no negotiations, avoiding any deal with Iran, and intensifying sanctions. Then, following October 7th—which the Biden administration is heavily responsible for because it allowed Gaza to languish under siege—following that, Biden, Blinken, Sullivan, these mediocre Zionist ideologues, shattered every possibility of a Gaza ceasefire in order to escalate in Lebanon and followed Zionist logic into Lebanon with the fantasy that they would defeat Hezbollah and bring Lebanon into a kind of normalization deal.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Let me ask you a few questions about Lebanon. Did Trump know what he was talking about when he suggested that Al Qaeda in Syria would fight Hezbollah on behalf of Israel?

## **#Max**

I think he was, but let me just make this one point about the Democrats. Biden, Blinken, and Sullivan laid the foundation for Operation Iron Swords by breaking Gaza ceasefires, encouraging Israel to escalate in Lebanon, which paved the way for this war. And Amos Hochstein, who was Biden's envoy to Lebanon, explicitly stated that in an interview, I think a couple of months ago with CNN, that they were planning to attack Iran as well. Their only problem was in the execution. So the Democrats cannot be trusted as critics of this MOU. And you just brought up Syria. There would not have been regime change in Syria were it not for the zealous support for the Syrian dirty war from the Obama administration and the Biden administration.

And actually, there were elements in the Trump administration that attempted to end U.S. support for these al-Qaeda elements, which are now in power in Damascus. Now Trump is all in with Ahmad al-Sharaa, the president formerly known as Abu Mohammad al-Jolani, who was jailed in Camp Bucca when he was involved with al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia in Iraq. Trump brought him into the White House and sprayed Trump perfume on him. It looks like they may meet at the upcoming NATO summit in Ankara, Turkey. And Trump has even proposed the idea of the former leader of al-Qaeda in Syria and former deputy founder of ISIS replacing Israel as the key U.S. proxy against Hezbollah. It's an absurd idea. Syria is not prepared for that. Their military already would probably lose.

Al Qaeda already lost against Hezbollah in Syria once, and they would probably lose again. But it really just shows how fantastical the Trump administration's ideas are about Lebanon, when what's really taking place in Lebanon is an Israeli ethnic cleansing campaign where the Israeli army has been given explicit orders to not allow Shias, who are citizens of Lebanon, to return to their homes in the south, are killing dozens of civilians a day, and the U.S. is doing nothing about it while Trump wants to enforce a memorandum of understanding in which Lebanon is included. And so Lebanon will be the major lever for Israel to unravel the MOU. And it's time for the Trump administration to start taking this seriously. And it starts with allowing Lebanese citizens to go back to their homes and not be ethnically cleansed by Israel. Wow.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

So Mark Levin and Ben Shapiro are losing their minds, and some neocon Republicans are as well. I want to switch gears a little bit. What became of Turning Point within days of Charlie Kirk's murder?

## **#Max**

Well, I just published a piece about a story. I just thought it was a huge story that hadn't really been written about or covered anywhere, even in alternative media, although it's been discussed on social media a lot, which is that the Charlie Kirk Show is now distributed by a foreign agent for Israel. And this deal went through eight days after he was killed. Now, I'm not pointing to that deal as evidence that Israel killed him. I have no evidence of that. But it really tells you a lot about the political environment we're in and what has happened to MAGA, particularly since Charlie Kirk was killed.

Salem Media has distributed the Charlie Kirk Show since 2020. Salem Media was brought in on one of the biggest lobbying contracts ever for a foreign agent in history, probably the biggest, with Brad Parscale, who is Donald Trump's former chief of staff, and his Clock Tower X company. The Israeli foreign ministry contracted them to buy influencers, cater to Gen Z, cater to conservatives, and cultivate support for Christian Zionism in the U.S. through geofencing of churches.

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Is Brad an actual registered agent of the government of Israel? No.

## **#Max**

So an actual federally registered foreign agent of the government of Israel, Brad Parscale, became chief strategy officer of Salem Media, which is in charge of distributing the Charlie Kirk Show. Would Charlie Kirk have supported that deal?

## **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Oh, absolutely not.

## **#Max**

Based on his public statements, in which he was agonizing over all the pressure from Israel lobbyists and saying, "Hey, I support my country, not Israel." He said this on August 8th, 2025, about a month before his death, on the Megyn Kelly Show. He called Lindsey Graham pathologically insane for wanting to attack Iran. Probably not. But now Charlie Kirk is dead, and thanks to his untimely death, TPUSA has fallen back in line with the Israeli agenda. Erica Kirk, the new CEO and replacement for Charlie Kirk, claimed in a cringeworthy town hall with self-described Zionist fanatic Bari Weiss — on CBS, which had just been purchased by Israel-first billionaire David Ellison — that she and Charlie always supported Israel because they went there and saw the Bible come alive in technicolor.

And how could you not like a state like Israel that did not reflect Charlie Kirk's views? She was asked, what would Charlie Kirk think about the war in Iran? And she said, well, we don't know what he would think, and, you know, I wish he were here. And his former confederates at TPUSA even put out a video four days after Trump launched Operation Epic Fury — an old video of Charlie Kirk, the old Charlie Kirk — saying that Iran was a horrible country, which didn't reflect his evolution. So they're deliberately burying Charlie Kirk's evolving views, his real legacy, his kind of emerging anti-war persona.

And we have to really wonder, what would have happened if Donald Trump tried to launch this war with Charlie Kirk leading the major MAGA youth organization and get-out-the-vote organization? He

would have been a much bigger obstacle than Tucker Carlson, Megyn Kelly, and comic Dave Smith combined. And so it was very convenient to have him out of the way. And again, I'm not saying that that explains who killed him, but it explains what has happened to MAGA since September 10th, 2025, when Charlie Kirk was assassinated.

### **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Well, what explains Netanyahu's denial that Mossad killed him within hours of the murder?

### **#Max**

Two denials. That was unusual.

### **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Correct. Correct. Well, Max, we've covered a lot, and I deeply appreciate it. Events seem to be happening very, very quickly these days. So thank you for your time. Thank you for all your great writing on The Grayzone. And we'll look forward to seeing you again soon, my friend. Oh, and a happy Father's Day to you.

### **#Max**

Thank you so much, and thanks as always for bringing me in.

### **#Judge Andrew Napolitano**

Sure. All the best. Thank you. Coming up tomorrow, Friday, at three in the afternoon, Professor John Mearsheimer. At four in the afternoon, the end of the day, the end of the week, the Intelligence Community Roundtable with Larry Johnson and Ray McGovern. Justin Politano for Judging Freedom.