

# TRANSCRIPT

A VICTORY COALITION BRIEFING

## What's 'Wrong' with the Iranian Regime is Sharia-Supremacism

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Media File: Webinar\_Sharia\_Iran.mp4

BEGIN TRANSCRIPT:

[00:00:00] **Frank Gaffney:** Welcome to a very special briefing by the Victory Coalition concerning some remarkable and quite portentous developments in the Middle East. This is a subject to which we have frequently turned as a project of our Institute for the American Future, with some of the best minds in the country contributing to our analyses and commentaries on what is essentially, I believe, an unalterable truth.

[00:00:46] There is no substitute for victory. Much as we experiment with alternatives, including in the present past with respect to Iran, at the end of the day, the [00:01:00] defeat of our enemies and the success of our mission and those executing it is the only means we can have confidence in avoiding so-called endless wars.

[00:01:21] We're going to be talking specifically about remarks that President Trump has made in the past forty-eight or so hours as we speak, notably during his time at the NATO Summit in The Hague. They bear upon Iran and also on another festering sore, and that would be Syria.

And specifically, we are keying off of something that the president said, a kind of epiphany, it seems, born of some predictable [00:02:00] and very negative products of this memorandum of understanding that members of his team negotiated, but seemingly largely were dictated by a pickup team of, well, I call them Sharia supremacist nations. That would be Qatar and Turkey and Pakistan.

The president remarked, as we'll be discussing with our colleagues, that in addition to some very negative insights into the nature of the new Iranian leadership, which until recently he was describing as rational and a regime change, people that we could do business with, that's not his present view, at least as of [00:03:00] yesterday, and neither is it an accurate view.

More to the point, the president summarized his general upset with what has been taking place since this memorandum was announced, namely his observation that, quote, "There's something wrong with these people," unquote. You know, they being the leadership of Iran. There is indeed, and we're going to discuss what that is and its implications for all of us, as well as the, I think, equally true insight that there's also something wrong with the new leadership of Syria.

And in fact, it's the same thing. Again, [00:04:00] I think it's best described as Sharia supremacism.

We're going to begin our briefing with one of the people who has contributed mightily to the work of the Victory Coalition and many other of our joint projects. His name is Dr. David Wurmser. He has had senior positions in the State Department, the National Security Council, and in the office of the Vice President of the United States.

[00:04:29] He's also served as a naval officer, rising through the ranks to that of a lieutenant commander in the Navy's intelligence service. He is these days the director of the Mideast Program of the Center for Security Policy, and I believe one of, if not the most astute analyst and observer and commentator on the Middle East in America today.

Dr. [00:05:00] Wurmser, it is a pleasure to have you with us once again, sir. The floor is yours.

[00:05:04] **David Wurmser:** Thank you. It's a pleasure and honor. Yeah, look, what we're dealing with really is, let's start with Iran, the memorandum of understanding, and I think this sort of shows that we're not fully capturing what we're dealing with.

The memorandum of understanding was essentially a decision to kick the can down the road for the moment, to reopen, because we were facing a real crisis with the economies and oil supply and so forth, that we decided, "Okay, we're going to have to get the oil flowing. We understand that there's a price to pay for it, which is to lift the blockade on Iran. And then we've got to go for the long run, and we'll kick the can down the road on the big issues, but we'll circle back because at the end of the day, the regime is a failure."

[00:05:50] It is economically failing in its country. All the problems economically that led to the unrest, and the assumption was the unrest was [00:06:00] economic in its real essence, were only exacerbated by the war, and that the continued remaining restrictions on Iran would, over time, time worked on our side.

So the leverage over Iran will increase. So the idea was to take away the key vulnerability we had, kick the can down the road, and then at some point in the future, the Iranian regime would be in enough trouble that they would essentially have to give

in. And if that didn't happen, and this was the pattern all the way through, we'd hit them again, and sooner or later they will cry uncle.

[00:06:40] And I think what this shows is really the lack of an ideological understanding. The president is a very tough negotiator. He understands negotiations in his sleep better than I ever will through a hundred years of study, by having experienced it and successfully conducted many negotiations [00:07:00] in his career.

[00:07:02] But he has dealt with tough people. He's dealt with brutal people. He probably didn't even know it, but he dealt with mafia people. But these are people with whom there is still a civilizational common language. He is dealing, with the Iranian leadership, with an ideological essence.

And the very structures of influence, control, incentivization, and punishment are often not relevant to that structure, or even inverted. I'll give a good example: you choke the country, you choke the leadership. The leadership faces a military threat that is beyond comprehension for them. In other words, you hold all the cards in our understanding of the world, and you start leaning on the leadership to make life [00:08:00] bad, and it looks pretty dark if you look at the world through that prism.

For the Iranian leadership, there's really no salvation, no hope, and no cavalry over the horizon until you realize the Iranian leadership looks at a completely different paradigm. It looks at Muhammad and what he faced in Medina with the Meccan aristocracy breathing down his neck and threatening him. He turned and decided he would go to war, and the leaders of the Medina aristocracy, who were his allies, said, "Are you nuts? I mean, these guys are strong. They're going to bury you. Right now, you can sort of just muddle through, so muddle through. Don't pick a fight with these guys."

[00:08:37] Muhammad took it as a test of faith. The worse it is, the more it is a test of faith, and the more he will fail if he gives in and compromises because Allah is testing him, and compromise is not what [00:09:00] Allah's asking. Allah's asking for unquestioned faith. And you see this theme throughout the Islamic revolution over and over and over again.

So we think the worse it gets, we're heading toward a moment where the realistic, they will eventually cry uncle, when in reality it confirms the ideology. It confirms this being the ultimate apocalyptic test, and therefore they retrench. They get harder, less likely to compromise, which is the inverse of anything you would ever encounter in a business negotiation anywhere in the world otherwise.

[00:09:29] So we're dealing with a very strong ideological structure that has its internal mechanisms of digesting defeat, that is intent on universal victory and has a long history of fourteen hundred years of essentially moving ahead.

[00:10:00] Just look at the twentieth century. The twentieth century was a period of preeminent Christian European power. There was no structure in the world that could even hold a candle to European Christian nations in terms of power, and yet it was a century in which Christianity in the Middle East, under Western control, moved from the majority in the Levant, Fertile Crescent, and Asia Minor to a minority, to now being an endangered, almost extinct species.

So they look at that and they know that there's some other force at work than sheer power and sheer domination by the West. There are forces of faith in their mind, and it's reaffirmed by the lack of will of the West in confronting it.

[00:10:32] Now, that ideological framework for understanding how Iran sees the world leads you, first of all, to the memorandum of understanding, is they understand there's not going to be a final deal. This kicking the can down the [00:11:00] road, there's never going to be a deal over the nuclear or anything like that.

So they are uploading this kick-the-can-down-the-road memorandum of understanding. They're front-loading all the strategic defeats they want inflicted on the West within the framework of that agreement, and they're using the fact that they're holding hostage the oil flow to demand of us and get from us major strategic retreats.

That's Hezbollah in Lebanon, essentially shutting the Israelis down and destroying who's not their proxy, and not even a tentacle of the Iranian regime. It is an integral, internal part of the Iranian regime in Hezbollah. Shutting down the Israeli destruction of Hezbollah. Two, shutting down the retreat on Hormuz and essentially asserting sovereignty over Hormuz by Iran, et cetera, et cetera.

[00:11:54] All these various strategic defeats that they're trying to inflict on us. You go across [00:12:00] and you say, "Okay, well, look, at least, at least they've been battered. We'll get it right. After the election, we'll get it right. We'll circle back, and if we don't get it, the Israelis will certainly get it because they now have decided it's us or them."

So they are in a twilight struggle to the death with the Iranian regime, and they probably have the means, and they certainly have the will to essentially bring that to conclusion, separate from us if necessary.

So I think ultimately that regime we can defeat or the Israelis will defeat, but we now are unfortunately turning our back on the second, and in my view even more dangerous, strategic threat emerging, which is from Turkey and from Erdogan and Turkey, and from Ahmed al-Sharaa, or more commonly known as Jolani, al-Julani, in Syria.

[00:12:59] And [00:13:00] what it is is that this threat is very similar. I mean, it's anchored to the same essential foundations. And by the way, after having spent many years in the West, that is the West having spent many years discovering the Sunni-

Shiite divide, we also have to temper our understanding of that, that the Sunni-Shiite divide is an organizing principle for conflict among Arabs, one of several, but it's a significant one, an important one, and necessary to understand.

But it is not the only one. Number one, and number two, it is not necessarily always the number-one way of organizing. Identity in the Middle East is far more fluid than we think.

[00:13:29] The Shiite Hezbollah revolution in Lebanon emerged from the bowels of the PLO, Arab nationalist Sunni movement, [00:14:00] and it was integrally linked and emerged integrally from it.

The founder, the sort of operational creator of the Hezbollah forces and the IRGC forces in the late '60s and throughout the '70s in Lebanon was the PLO. And Imad Mughniyeh is a good embodiment of that, who came from being the head of Force 17 for Yasser Arafat and became essentially one of the core operational organizers of both Hezbollah, Al-Quds Force, and the IRGC.

[00:14:38] So you see how this split is not... So we're now looking at the new emerging threat, which is the Shia, I mean the Sunni supremacist jihadist threat that is given a shot of adrenaline, first of all by Turkey and the ambitions of Erdogan, who unfortunately for him was somewhat [00:15:00] driving on fumes.

His economy and everything was struggling. But the fall of Assad, while an absolute essential act, also opened the door for him to assert via his proxies, namely the HTS and ISIS terrorists, the Islamist terrorists that emerged from al-Zarqawi in Iraq, and Al-Qaeda, and the Islamic Caliphate in Iraq, and so forth, that he used those, rode those, to essentially take over Syria, which evoked a new mystical idea, which is not only just taking over Syria, but it puts Sunni Islamism at the epicenter of the creation of Sunni Islam [00:15:46] in Damascus.

Damascus was the capital of the first Sunni caliphate, the Umayyad Caliphate, which followed only a few decades, or really a decade, after Muhammad himself. [00:16:00] It was the creation of Sunni Islam. It was anchored to Damascus. It is the Mecca politically of Sunni Islam. Mecca is the spiritual center, but Damascus is the political center.

So wedding Arab Islamist thinkers and power to the seat of the Umayyad Caliphate invited neo-Umayyad imperial mysticism. And that is now what you're seeing rising in Erdogan and his ally, Julani, which threatens the entire minority structures in the region.

[00:16:37] They're all organizing because they see this as a game changer. The thousand years of groveling and being dhimmis and minorities is over. They see this as the final battle where they will become extinct, because that is what Julani and the rest

are, is to win, and to resume what the Umayyads did, which is the universal conquest of Islam.

They're also invigorated by what's happening in Europe [00:17:00] and the takeover of Europe by primarily Sunni Islamists, and now in the United States. So this is a civilizational, volcanic threat that is emerging anchored to Damascus, and we are asleep, or even worse.

We're looking at the Shiite issue, we're looking at the Russian issue, we're looking at the weakness of Europe and the attempt to devolve American power to allies so that we don't have to be as engaged, and we see Turkey as a NATO country that we can invest with some of our power and certainly give strategic position to.

[00:17:37] But what we're purchasing, this is not the Cold War, this is not NATO. This is a nation that ultimately is the epicenter of the growing Sunni threat to the West, and we're essentially empowering it now.

[00:17:51] **Frank Gaffney:** David, thank you. Well, you put a lot on the table that we will hopefully suss out here in subsequent comments [00:18:00] as well as a little bit of Q&A at the end.

[00:18:02] We're going to turn next to a prerecorded contribution to this program. It's in the form of an interview that I conducted with Daniel Greenfield of the David Horowitz Freedom Center, where he is a Shillman fellow and the author, among other works, of *Domestic Enemies: The Founding Fathers' Fight Against the Left*.

He is a contributing editor, I believe, certainly a contributor to *FrontPage Magazine*, and an investigative journalist, and another of our very revered Middle East hands. We're delighted to have him with us through this interview that he conducted with me earlier in the week on our program *Securing America*, on the *Real America's Voice Network*.

[00:18:54] Let's go to the video with Daniel Greenfield now.

[00:18:57] **Daniel Greenfield:** Well, there's a bit of a paradox with President Trump.

[00:19:00] On the one hand, he has always been very clear-sighted when it comes to Islam. He was really the only candidate to tell certain hard truths, especially in his original campaign.

On the other hand, he's also a guy who was coming out of the real estate world, out of a world where it seems like you can always make a deal with somebody, you can work something out. And he really has trouble understanding this Islamic mindset, the idea that these people genuinely are not going to make a deal.

They will, however, engage in these humiliation rituals, which is what negotiating with Iran really is. It's a humiliation ritual in which they now count coup, in which they extract

as much as possible while giving up absolutely nothing, and they show that you are weak and they are strong. And this is a bit inconceivable in the business world, because in the business world, you look to maximize gains for your side, but you also give the other guy something.

[00:19:49] This is completely alien to Islam, which is all about maximalism. So I think he really did not understand this until he began experiencing it for himself. He was told by people in the [00:20:00] administration, frankly, who should not be there, that it was possible to make a deal, that the new Iranian leadership was moderate, that they were reasonable, and that, you know, you give them something, they give us something. It's a win-win situation, and he's discovering, once again, it's only a win-lose situation.

Now, unlike Barack Obama, who was ideologically committed to it, who believed that the Iranians were the good guys, who told his negotiating team that we had to be sensitive to Iranian trauma about the Shah era, he was going to be committed to it no matter what the Iranians did. They could kidnap American sailors, hold them hostage, mock the administration to the world, and of course, they would double down on it.

That is not who President Trump is, and that's why it's an important distinction to understand. President Trump does deal with reality. The left absolutely does not.

[00:20:46] **Frank Gaffney:** I want to come back to something you said that I think is very important, especially going forward. This humiliation routine. If the president [00:21:00] does reverse course again, and despite all the things that he's just said, resumes the ceasefire or continues the parleying, the negotiations for some permanent arrangement, what do you think, Daniel, are the chances that he will be subjected to an even more intense humiliation routine in the run-up to the midterm elections, sir?

[00:21:29] **Daniel Greenfield:** Absolutely. It's inevitable. You predicted this. I predicted this. Anybody with any knowledge of history who has seen how negotiations with Iran have gone before predicted this.

Biden tried to get us back into the Iran deal as much as he could. He was willing to give up even more. The Iranians just humiliated him because this is an honor-shame culture. It's important to understand that. Islam is very much about honor-shame, and it's really not even about any of the concepts that we understand within the Western context.

[00:21:57] Rather, you either have [00:22:00] honor or you have shame, and the Iranians have been shamed by us. We took them out. We took out their leaders. We demonstrated just how weak their pretensions were. And at that point, of course, they resorted to the one thing that Islamic terrorists do. They took a crucial waterway, a crucial navigation point hostage, and they're now going to extract as much from that as possible.

Iran doesn't have anything else going for them. Their pretensions to be a powerful military force, a regional power, have completely fallen apart. The one thing they can do is this, and that means they're going to keep on doing this over and over again.

[00:22:33] We negotiate with Islamic terrorists, and we expect them to give up on terrorism. In exchange, we offer them things, and of course, that just means we get more and more terrorism because it's their single asset.

You know, there's the old proverb, "If you pay Danegeld, you never get rid of the Dane," which was about the Vikings. If you continue to reward certain kinds of behavior, you're just going to get more of that behavior.

[00:22:55] **Frank Gaffney:** But that's especially true if the culture you speak of [00:23:00] is imbued with, of course, Sharia, and under Sharia, the survival of the regime is victory and the basis upon which the rest of the war progresses. Indeed, they are emboldened by their mere survival, even having lost a navy, having lost an air force and the rest of it, isn't it?

[00:23:27] **Daniel Greenfield:** Yeah. The important thing to understand about Islam, vis-à-vis Christianity and Judaism, is it's not really an internal religion. You demonstrate the validity of Christianity and Judaism through actual religious practice, through faith. You demonstrate the validity of Islam by fighting and killing non-Muslims and conquering them. That is all that really there is.

You know, it's not, "I'm going to undergo this great spiritual journey." Rather, the great spiritual journey is jihad. So to demonstrate the validity of Islam, you have to kill and conquer [00:24:00] non-Muslims.

For Iran, which claims to be an Islamic regime, the custody of the clergy, then really what they have to do above all else is demonstrate that they can hold off and maintain an Islamic regime under Islamic law, and that they can fight off and defeat non-Muslims, which is why Iran has always been expansionist.

There's this leftist mythos, which we put the Shah in power, and we treated the Iranians very, very badly. Let's say all this was true. It's not true, but let's say it was even true. Why has Iran continued from that very moment its expansionism? Why did it then begin pushing into Iraq, into Lebanon, into Israel? Why did it continue stirring up conflicts in Yemen, in Sudan, and across the region?

Because the whole point of Islam is expansionism, which means there is never going to be any kind of peace, not with us, obviously, but not with anybody else either.

[00:24:49] **Frank Gaffney:** Daniel Greenfield, thank you for allowing us to make double duty out of that important interview and the insights it contained.

[00:24:58] We're going to turn finally [00:25:00] to a man whose expertise lies not so much with the arcane matters of the Middle East, though he's got a lot of informed views on that subject, not least because of his time living in a Muslim nation, not in the Middle East, but Indonesia.

But also a man of very considerable accomplishment and a lot of hard experience in politics, which as we have heard from our previous presenters, is a factor in what is going on here in terms of American policy towards the Iranians, most obviously, but also I think it's fair to say, to the Qataris, the Turks, the Pakistanis, and not least, this chap al-Sharaa in Syria.

[00:25:57] We're going to explore [00:26:00] with George Rasley the various developments that brought us to this question of what is wrong with the leaders of Iran, and indeed, is it wrong similarly with al-Sharaa and others, notably of course, those associated with one or the other of these states, the Turks, Hezbollah, Hamas in Gaza, and so on.

George, thank you very much for finding time for this. The floor is over to you, sir.

[00:26:41] **George Rasley:** Well, thank you for having me, Frank, and I think that it's important for all of your viewers to recognize that this war is being conducted on a variety of levels, not the least of which is the political level and the economic level.

[00:26:58] And so [00:27:00] it's my view, and I've got a column up on ConservativeHQ.com this morning, in which I suggest that this MOU was never a path to a lasting peace, that for the Iranians it was merely a hudna, which is a strategic pause, if you will, in the fighting. And that is straight out of the Quran and the Hadith, which we have to recognize are military manuals more than ethical guidelines.

[00:27:33] And from our perspective, the primary motivation on the president's part, as far as I can tell, was to get past the midterm elections, and to lower the price of gasoline and oil, and to present this [00:28:00] MOU as a path to some kind of peace, which I suspect that the president may have actually thought was real.

Because from his business background, a negotiation is intended to accomplish something that both sides want. The problem, as others have noted, is that what the Iranians want is the worldwide reign of Islam, preferably with them in the lead of that. What we want is basically merely to be left alone and enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and those are two completely incompatible goals.

[00:28:51] And the Iranians understand us much better than we understand them. They are playing this, as again has been noted, [00:29:00] through these humiliation rituals, and the whole idea is, this is political warfare, economic warfare intended to throw the midterm elections to Democrats and pro-Islamist politicians here in America, put them in

charge of Congress, which would then tie up the president for the last two years of his administration and set the stage for a more favorable to Iran and for Islamists generally regime in the United States after the 2028 election.

[00:29:43] And so these guys in Iran are very smart about how our politics work. We have exhibited very, very little insight into how their politics work. We have to understand, and I hope our leaders eventually get this, that we [00:30:00] can kill the Iranian leadership down to the point where sergeants are running the army and clerks are running the government, and as long as they're all Shia Twelvers, nothing's going to change.

And the whole reason for the existence of the Islamic Republic is to advance the cause of Islam, to make war on the two Satans, the United States and Israel. And to do that, they're perfectly happy to get along with their Sunni neighbors and to use them to expand the Islamist regimes in the Middle East.

[00:30:27] And as has been pointed out, they're winning from that perspective. The Judeo-Christian Middle East is all but extinct. It's happening with the participation and active assistance of our alleged ally, Turkey, [00:31:00] and its prime minister, Erdogan, who sees himself as the potential caliph of the newly established Umayyad Empire.

So this all fits together. What the Iranians are doing is all based on their understanding of Islam, its role in the world, and our politics.

I hope that the president's team is finally getting the picture that these negotiations are fruitless, and the only real way to achieve a lasting peace is regime change and the replacement of the Twelver, Ayatollah-led regime with something that's Western-oriented, that's secular, and that doesn't share this apocalyptic view of gaining a nuclear weapon, [00:32:00] bringing back the Twelfth Imam and bringing in the worldwide reign of Islam.

[00:32:08] **Frank Gaffney:** George, you are of course the managing editor of ConservativeHQ, a very sizable platform, Richard Viguerie's newsletter, with something like a quarter million subscribers. Your piece that appeared there, that you mentioned, is "The Iran Deal Was Never Going to Work Because the Islamic Republic Didn't Want It to Work."

You have also in your bag of various experiences, time serving in senior positions on Capitol Hill and in the office of the Vice President, as well as on some 300 political campaigns, which is one of the reasons why we very much welcome your contributions to that particular part of this portfolio.

[00:32:56] Let me pick up on something you just alluded to that [00:33:00] I'd like to get both of your thoughts on, and that is the kind of advice the president is getting. Mention

was made of some of his advisors don't seem to get what is wrong with Sharia supremacism.

We're clearly aware that he is getting advice from some of the neighbors in the region. Some of the advisors are people who have worked extensively with those neighbors. I'm thinking specifically of Tom Barrack, the ambassador to Turkey, among other places. I think he's got a portfolio with Syria and Lebanon and even Iraq as well.

Steve Witkoff, one of the negotiators on the Iran deal. And we don't often talk about Massad Boulos, who also has a portfolio for the president with respect to the Mideast and to the State Department in Nigeria and [00:34:00] Africa more generally, I believe.

David Wurmser, would you introduce us to these folks and how it could possibly be that people playing such pivotal roles seemingly are either not terribly conversant about some of the fundamentals of their portfolio, or worse yet, are perhaps altogether too closely aligned with some of the folks. Clientitis, I think, is the term that is often used for it in the State Department.

[00:34:31] **David Wurmser:** Boulos is a Lebanese American businessman of Christian Lebanese descent. One would think that he would therefore be very attuned to the sovereignty of Lebanon and the threat that's imposed.

[00:34:45] But like so many of the Lebanese diaspora, they either are detached from what's happening there, not as deeply informed as they should be, or they've sort of made their peace and figured out how to organize their lives around it.

But in [00:35:00] this specific case, the role that Boulos is playing, let's start first with Tom Barrack, our ambassador to Turkey, who's also our coordinator for policy on Syria and Lebanon. So he's really a super ambassador that has direct access to the White House, is really the architect of our policy toward Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Turkey, which then has also implications to the Balkans, the Aegean, and so forth.

But the more important one for the purposes of Boulos is Africa. [00:35:37] We're not paying attention to this Sunni... You know, I described the Sunni threat emerging and anchored to Erdogan and the neo-Umayyad threat in Syria, and that's significant enough. But of course, they come up against Israeli power at some point, and that's a very dangerous circumstance, but they will come up against Israeli power.

Where they're coming up [00:36:00] against no power right now is in Africa, and that becomes very dangerous because we're organizing now our policies toward Africa to essentially facilitate Turkish domination of North Africa. We're not paying attention to how many bases and installations Turkey is setting up. They have more bases and installations in North Africa than any other country in the world.

[00:36:19] And they're taking up first the littoral, the coastline areas, and then the Sahel, which is the Saharan region underneath. And then beneath that, and this gets very importantly to the Chinese, is the Great Lakes Belt, which is where all the raw materials and rare-earth minerals are and so forth.

And therein lies the real strategic problem. Turkey, we look at it as a NATO country helping us with Russia, which is first of all not entirely true, because they're basically playing both sides. But more importantly, they are working with China to [00:37:00] subordinate Africa to Chinese strategic ambitions.

And their position in Northern Africa is first of all part of this Islamist caliphate resurrection, this neo-Ottomanism. So it helps them in an imperial sense, but it also helps the Chinese in a strategic sense.

So we see how in Libya they have undermined and now subordinated the big bulwark, Egypt and Haftar, its ally in Libya, which was really a bulwark to Islamism in North Africa. They've now subordinated that, essentially navigated into making them cower, essentially groveling in front of the government in Libya, which only five years ago was retreating into the capital and barely could hold on.

So you're seeing this vast sweep of Turkish power in North [00:38:00] Africa, and this of course not only is where you're also getting the font of Islamism in Europe. Yes, much came from Syrian refugees and others, but the font right now is from North Africa. And they're dominating the refugee flows, and there's an ideological essence to it.

And then geostrategically, it's also serving the interests of China. So this is very strongly the role that Boulos, unfortunately not fully comprehending this strategic great game going on, he's just trying to solve problems. Just like Tom Barrack thinks he's just solving problems, and Steve Witkoff thinks they're solving problems.

And that's a very admirable trait for most negotiators. But in the Middle East, negotiations are weaponized instruments of warfare to defeat your enemy. They're not an attempt to arrive at a win-win [00:39:00] solution and condominium and mutual gain. It is an attempt to trick your enemy or to manipulate your enemy into defeat. And that is what we're seeing.

[00:39:10] **Frank Gaffney:** Picking up on something that David just talked about, and that is Turkey's role in spreading Sharia supremacism, not only under the banner of its own caliphate, but also into places like Western Europe, where not only has Turkish migration been going on for decades, but also large numbers of others from North Africa and Syria and elsewhere have been pouring into Europe, fundamentally transforming it as well.

[00:39:42] **George Rasley:** I think that one of the great shortcomings of Team Trump in this regard is that these are all secular guys. That's not really a term of art. And particularly the president has a hard [00:40:00] time understanding these religious Sharia supremacist motivations of the actors on the other side.

And so it doesn't come up on the radar screen, well, maybe it is now, that there is a motivation beyond making money, concluding a deal, as David just said, solving problems.

[00:40:26] The problem that our opponents want to solve is how to conquer the world on behalf of Islam. That's not the problem that we're trying to solve. And to the extent that—

[00:40:41] **Frank Gaffney:** Well, we are the problem in the sense that we're the impediment to—

[00:40:43] **George Rasley:** Yeah, exactly. And so we're not trying to solve the problem of defeating that—because we're not seeing, at the leadership level, that religious motivation, as far as I can tell.

[00:41:00] **Frank Gaffney:** You said something very important at the end of your remarks, George, about basically the only enduring outcome here if you're seeking real peace is regime change in places like Iran.

And at least until yesterday, the president seemed very much of the view that he had achieved regime change in Iran by virtue of getting down to the third tier. I think your point about sergeants and clerks, if they're still Twelvers, you've still got a problem, no matter how low you've gone down in their pecking order.

But could you speak to this idea, George? Because there is a very fixed view on the part of a lot of mostly younger people in this country that President Trump promised to avoid endless wars, not to get into any, not to put American [00:42:00] troops in harm's way.

To the extent that what you've just described is a formula for the continuation of an endless war, certainly that's gone on since 1979 when the regime in Iran came to power, arguably going back to Muhammad's time, fourteen hundred years. And how would you speak, as a guy with political chops, to Americans young and old about how what is actually needed here is decisive victory and not some false substitute for it?

[00:42:38] **George Rasley:** Absolutely. And the whole point of avoiding endless wars assumes that the last forty-seven years of our warfare with Iran will not continue for another forty-seven years—if we don't [00:43:00] change who's leading Iran and defeat their ideology. And so the way we have endless wars is not winning when we're in a war. To that extent, it is fair to say that there's been a war going on between Islam and

the West for the last fourteen hundred years or so, and it will continue because that's their whole raison d'être.

[00:43:25] **George Rasley:** And we're in the way of them accomplishing their divine goal, which is the creation of the Ummah or the worldwide reign of Islam.

It's essential that Americans understand that we are in an endless war if we don't defeat the Iranian regime, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and replace it with a secular, Western-oriented government. And that's the [00:44:00] only way to stop the endless war.

[00:44:03] **Frank Gaffney:** And it would have such a transformative effect on the region if that were to be accomplished.

David, I invite you to comment on that as well. But also, if you would, you and I had a conversation on our show that will air tomorrow on Real America's Voice, Securing America, about the distinct prospects, based on what President Trump was saying yesterday to this Al-Qaeda leader now doing business as the president of Syria, you spoke about him earlier, al-Julani, al-Sharaa, whatever you call him, that the kind of stability that the president lauded he's achieving in Syria is coming at the expense of genocide of minority populations, the Druze, the Christians, the Alawites, the Yazidis, the Kurds.

[00:44:58] Speak, if you would, about [00:45:00] that and what it would mean for populations like those in neighboring Lebanon if, as the president, I guess, is being told by Tom Barrack, were actually to achieve al-Julani's insertion with the Turks, presumably in Lebanon, to help defeat Hezbollah.

[00:45:25] **David Wurmser:** Muslim Brotherhood ideology that informs Ahmed al-Sharaa and Erdogan and Turkey is essentially a homogenizing ideology. It's a totalitarian ideology that is organized around the idea of erasing any fissures and organizing around a complete unity, but unity being not different pieces living autonomously and operating in unison and harmoniously. It is the—

[00:45:57] **Frank Gaffney:** No diversity in this program.

[00:45:58] **David Wurmser:** Right. No diversity. It is homogenization. And as a result, when you see the real tensions in Syria, the real nature of it was exposed a year ago in Suwayda, which is the Druze province of about half a million to three-quarters of a million Druze in southwestern Syria. And there, what you had, we didn't pay attention too much to it, but there was an October 7th that happened there, namely—

[00:46:28] **David Wurmser:** An invasion by Sunni Islamist forces under government encouragement that essentially slaughtered thousands, thousands of Druze, captured a thousand, took them hostage or more, many of whom turned into sex slaves and have just disappeared from the face of the earth as sex slaves. In other words, it's as bad as

what happened on October 7th, and this happened to the Druze. And it was an attempt by the regime to essentially eradicate [00:47:00] any autonomy, any non-homogeneity of the Druze.

And of course, the ideology of the regime is Islamist. So you hear it in the chants they say when they indoctrinate new soldiers and so forth about killing the Alawites and the Druze and the Christians, et cetera.

So what you're dealing with, and the minorities in the Levant really feel this, is this is it. They are facing somebody who is no longer willing to tolerate their dhimmitude status, their second-rate citizen, or really third- or fourth-rate citizen status. They are now facing an erasure, a complete erasure.

And this is just something we're not appreciating, this ideological essence of the threat we're facing. And you have now a slow-motion [00:48:00] October 7th with the Alawites. This is no longer theoretical. This is no longer derived from listening to what they're saying. This is now evident by what they're doing.

[00:48:12] **Frank Gaffney:** And when you say they're doing, David, you mean the government of Syria under the man the president met with yesterday.

[00:48:19] **David Wurmser:** Government of Syria. They are the ones who are indoctrinating the soldiers with these chants that are the foundation for action. They are the ones who are sending tribes and security forces dressed as tribes to massacre Druze and massacre and take slavery, Alawites.

They are the ones who are leaning on Christian populations in places like Maaloula and so forth to essentially make many flee. And they're the ones who are in the northeast of Syria eradicating the remnants of the Assyrian Chaldean churches, [00:49:00] and the Yazidis, which are sort of remnants of the ancient religions of that area, even before Christianity, and the Kurds, who are Muslim but they're not Arab—and they're certainly not Turkish.

[00:49:11] **Frank Gaffney:** To provide counsel to President Trump based on the critique that we've just served up, but also the strong hope I know we all share for his success in this part of the world and more generally. David, should we begin with you?

[00:49:29] **David Wurmser:** The first message to the president is there's a regime-change strategy out there, and it's what the Iranian regime has toward the American government. Namely, they want to destroy MAGA. They want to destroy the conservatives. They want to destroy any Reaganite, conservative, MAGA, whatever element of the coalition the president's put together. They want to destroy politically President Trump and eradicate an American government that believes in American power and American [00:50:00] purpose.

So they have a regime-change strategy, and they will, as I think George put brilliantly, navigate the course of events until November to orchestrate that defeat. And we have to be prepared for it.

But on the Sunni side, we have a strategy to defeat the United States, and unfortunately, we're resonating with it to encourage it and reinforce it rather than understand this is the emerging threat.

It's much like World War II. In the spring of '45, Churchill understood very well that the Soviet Union was now the rising, preeminent threat. The Nazis had to be defeated and had to be defeated to the last Nazi. There was no deal with the Nazis possible. But he already had his eye on the next threat, and he wanted to orchestrate the defeat [00:51:00] of the Nazis in a way that teed up the West to deal with the emerging Soviet threat.

We are in the same position right now, and we cannot take the route that Roosevelt took. We have to take the Churchill route.

[00:51:13] **Frank Gaffney:** Well said. George Rasley, concluding thoughts, advice for the president?

[00:51:18] **George Rasley:** I would say to the president, regime-change them before they regime-change you. This is a bigger threat to the West and to American constitutional liberty than Iran alone. And we have to recognize the worldwide civilizational nature of what we're fighting here, and to recognize that anything less than our victory leads to an endless war, a war that's already been going on for forty-seven years with Iran, fourteen hundred years with [00:52:00] Islam more generally.

And the only sure way to preserve our way of life is to defeat them now.

[00:52:10] **Frank Gaffney:** Thank you, George.

And let me just burnish that last point. I think it may sound hyperbolic that a distant country, especially having suffered at our hands and those of the Israelis such a devastating military setback, could possibly pose an existential threat to our government. And yet that is the stated purpose of the regime.

In fact, we will be doing very shortly another program, brought to us by BanSharia.com, another project of our Institute for the American Future, in which we are going to be exploring Sharia is [00:53:00] sedition as a theme. The application of Sharia, whether it's by foreign adversaries or domestic ones, has as its goal overthrowing the government of the United States. Would that necessarily have to be done through violent means? Hardly.

What we're witnessing, I think, in terms of the Sharia supremacists in this country, most of them Sunni, but some Shia, working together as they've been doing elsewhere, as David mentioned, for the purposes of taking down a common enemy, which would be us.

But for example, there is a theory that if, perhaps as a result of the kind of humiliation ritual that Daniel Greenfield introduced, Donald Trump is seriously [00:54:00] reduced in terms of his power by the loss of one or both of the houses of Congress. If it's both, and by sufficient numbers, there is a theory, as I started to say, that he could find himself, and perhaps actually JD Vance as well, impeached in the House of Representatives and perhaps their trial there in the Senate resulting in convictions.

In which case, you could find Hakeem Jeffries, the Speaker of the House under those circumstances, leading up to become the President of the United States. And that, ladies and gentlemen, would be a regime change, and almost certainly the beginning of the end of the United States as we've known it.

These are sober thoughts. We pray, of course, that it will not come to [00:55:00] pass, that our government will be undone, that our enemies will be emboldened and empowered, not just in Iran, but elsewhere, to believe that they will ultimately achieve the world domination that Sharia calls them to pursue.

There is still time. I personally believe that this period between the next election, now and the next election, is of surpassing importance to get clarity on all of these issues.

And I want to thank David Wurmser and Daniel Greenfield and George Rasley for taking time with us to shed light on some aspects of this very portentous moment, and to provide such good counsel as to what needs to be done to protect this country against all enemies, foreign and domestic, which is, after all, the oath of office that every single one of the people that we've been talking about, [00:56:00] on our side at least, the U.S. side, has solemnly taken as an oath of office.

Thank you for joining us. I hope you will help us get this important program widely disseminated through your circles of influence, and that you will join us again for the next briefing of our Victory Coalition. God bless you. God bless America.