
IV. Interview

Interview: *Graham Fuller*

We Have a Choice, Folks

The following is an edited transcript of the Feb. 18, 2025 Executive Intelligence Review interview with Graham Fuller. Mr. Fuller, an Islamic scholar, is a former U.S. diplomat and CIA official, and served as vice chairman of the National Intelligence Council. The interview was conducted by EIR's Mike Billington. Subheads have been added.

Mike Billington: Greetings. This is Mike Billington, with the Executive Intelligence Review and the Schiller Institute. I have the pleasure of interviewing, today, Mr. Graham Fuller, former longtime CIA official, including being the vice chairman of the National Intelligence Council at the CIA, responsible for long-term strategic forecasting. He's also very much an expert on Arab issues, which we will mention during our discussion here.

Graham Fuller: I just might mention Mike, I've also, from early days in my life, been very focused on Russia. I majored in Russian history and literature and language at Harvard. So I'm, yes, a lot of Arab world stuff, but a lot in Türkiye, and in Hong Kong, China for many years. It's been a bit of a trip around the world.

Billington: Okay. So you're a good person to have on, because the whole world is changing very, very rapidly. I watched the interview that you did with Nima Alkhorshid in Brazil, along with Ray McGovern and Larry Wilkerson. In that interview, you said that the Arabs have been rather reserved in their support for the Palestinians, partially because the radical position taken by the Palestinians would tend to upset the kings and the emirs in the Arab world. But you also then said that the genocide of this last year has broken through some of that hesitancy and that the Arabs are coming together to support the Palestinians. Do you want to explain that process?



Schiller Institute

Graham Fuller

Fuller: Well, Mike, the ruling circles in the Arab world—and they're all kings and emirs for the most part—have feared the revolutionary character of the Palestinian nationalist movement, which is essentially a national liberation movement and a movement seeking to free themselves and be more independent and under democratic rule. Furthermore, it's a public movement. It's a nationalist, emotional movement that Arab rulers fear, because they don't want people in the streets demonstrating on any issue, because it suggests people power in the streets, that one day could be the root of turning against the ruling circles themselves. So, any kind of public agitation of that sort is not welcome. The Palestinians are the preeminent symbol of revolutionary change in the Middle East, as are the Iranians, who are the other very feared state. It's not that Arabs hate Persians, necessarily, but because the Iranians had a genuine revolution, a street revolution that we don't see much of in the world anymore. They're usually coups in the Arab world. But the Iranians, the Persians, had a real revolution. And that scares the hell out of dictators and various authoritarians across the region. They may feel sorry for the Palestinians, but they don't want mass agitation.

Potentials for Arab Unity

Billington: What did you mean when you said they're starting to come together now, the Arab world?

Fuller: The outrage that we're all perceiving, in this genocide, this laying waste to the Gaza Strip, with Israel moving again, as they want to do, into Lebanon, into parts of Syria, annexing the Golan Heights—the real borders of Israel are known only to God, because it's all in the Bible; it all depends on how you interpret it. There are those Israelis and interpreters of the Holy Scripture that see signs that Israel, Greater Israel, has a place in parts of Saudi Arabia, going back to ancient days. Of course, Jordan is functionally, in many ways, a Palestinian state. It's got a slight majority, a Palestinian majority in Jordan. Parts of Egypt have figured very prominently in Jewish history going way back. Nobody knows where Israel will stop when it's in its expansionist mood, which is where it is now, and where its right wing certainly locates itself.

Billington: You have endorsed the [La-Rouche Oasis Plan](#) which Lyndon La-Rouche first devised back in the 1970s for a massive water and power development program for Palestine, but going beyond Palestine into the broader region. You've suggested in particular, that such a plan should extend through Iraq and Iran and on into Afghanistan and Central Asia. What do you think about the Oasis Plan, and, in particular, what do you think would be the impact on the international discussion about the Mideast crisis if it were introduced as part of a peace plan for the region?

Fuller: I think you're correct that it needs to be introduced as part of a broader peace plan. One of the reasons that, however fine an idea it has been, the fact is that the local rivalries, and particularly rivalries projected by the United States in a Cold War mode, have made regional cooperation all but impossible. I mean, Syria, for example, would need to figure quite seriously, or Iraq for that matter, the Tigris and Euphrates. All of these states would need to figure very seriously in



The Oasis Plan.

any kind of regional water plan. But that's been impossible when the United States has been at war with Iraq for a long time. In the past, Iraq was seen as the enemy. We can't deal with Iran because they're the enemy. Syria was seen as hostile to the U.S., so we couldn't deal with Syria. In other words, the wherewithal of bringing these particular states together has not been there up to now. I think it's only as you begin to see a motion, a movement toward broader regional cooperation, that the water aspect, the engineering aspects, the power aspects, the social aspects, the political aspects really begin to come into play. The first very positive move in that direction, as you're well aware, was that the so-called intractable hostility between Persians and Arabs, was essentially solved, or mollified, by Chinese

intervention, a couple of years back, when they brought about a rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran. That was a remarkable event that many regional specialists would have said could never happen. So, you can see the power of where serious political, geopolitical thinking opens the door to where the more practical aspects of broader regional water, agricultural, hydrological projects can find a place. So, I think maybe the day is getting closer when this project could be seen as feasible and manageable.

Israel's Problem with Iran

Billington: You brought up Iran. You suggested in that same interview I watched, that U.S. President Donald Trump, despite having been very critical of Iran, and having ended the nuclear deal with Iran during his first term, but nonetheless, you say that if you compare this to his reaching out to North Korea's Kim Jong Un during his first term, that Trump may be willing to make such a reconciliation with Iran. What makes you think that would be possible? And what do you think would be the result?

Fuller: Part of this involves Trump-watching, which I think there's no recognized expert of what Trump-watching involves today. The whole world is watching with fascination. I mean, some people accuse Trump of having no principles, that it's all me, me, me. That's not altogether all bad, if Trump can see that.

If Trump finds gratification in having his name in lights, blazing lights, as the person who managed to bring North Korea and the rest of the world, or Iran and the rest of the world, into a more comfortable position, I think that's great. Having him driven by ego to do those things would be superb. I was very impressed, as I think many people were, by what Trump tried to accomplish three times with Kim Jong Un, probably the most intractable problem and leader in the world. I think he might— Well, he's indicated a possible interest in taking on Iran. I think you and I and many people listening to this are well aware of the problems surrounding this, not least of all, Israel. Israel treasures its hostility to Iran. It's one of the reasons why Israel feels that it's got to maintain a huge power, including nuclear power, and block any other power's move toward nuclear, or even traditional military power on the part of Iran. So, I think Trump is well aware that he would need to take that on. But hopefully, his desire for adulation and for playing the role of a statesman could maybe overcome some elements of Zionist and Israeli



White House/Molly Riley

President Donald Trump

pressure, against any kind of rapprochement with Iran. But it's key—Iran is key to the future of any kind of regional cooperation. And the Chinese, as I said, have opened the door by making a rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Tehran possible.

Billington: Right. The problem, of course, is that Trump just invited Israeli Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu to Washington. He treated him with glory. He came up with this idea of taking over Gaza and clearing out all the Palestinians, an idea which is clearly impossible and a bit nuts. What do you think can get Trump to generally break from this extreme right-wing Israeli leadership? Even the open genocide of the last year, which you said has begun to bring the Arab countries together, appears not to have fazed Trump and his open glorification of this government in Israel.

Fuller: Israel is a very tough nut to crack, if you will, in the sense of trying to limit its extraordinary power over American foreign policy in all areas. Some have described the American Congress as “Israeli occupied territory.” Whatever we think about that, I think it was interesting that when Netanyahu came to Washington very recently, it was clear that he was taken off guard by Trump's suggestion that the U.S. would take over Gaza and had its own plan for the development of a beautiful new “Riviera” in the area. Netanyahu looked like he was quite surprised by that. And in fact, Trump was really saying, “No, Israel, Gaza would no longer be yours. It wouldn't be yours to develop. It would be ours

to develop.” I’m sure that this kind of encounter with Trump on the part of Bibi suggests that Trump is not to be taken for granted, that he can come up with some bold, even crazy or startling or original concepts that Israel cannot bank on with any certainty.

Secondly, if you think about the power of the Israeli lobby, it might be interesting to consider whether Trump, being in his second term, that the Israel lobby is no longer able to exercise the same power as it did in the first term, simply because he can’t run for office again and maybe doesn’t have to depend on that kind of politics, when people like Miriam Adelson had donated \$100 million to Trump for running again and winning this time around. Trump can really in many ways pocket it and say, “Okay, but what have you done for me lately?” He’s not running for office again as a lame duck, then he may be a little less dependent upon Zionist money to win the next election, including Miriam Adelson’s willingness to buy Trump. Maybe it’s harder to buy Trump these days. I’m just throwing out some thoughts here, as to what might possibly weaken the Zionist death grip on American foreign policy in the Middle East.

By the way, I don’t want to let this idea get lost. But it’s not just in the Middle East. I would suggest that the Ukraine issue is quite fundamentally tied in with this. The neocons, who are, of course, to a man and a woman totally supportive of Israel, are also very hostile to Russia, deeply and ideologically. If Trump is able to bring about—as it looks now possible—to bring about some kind of settlement of the Ukrainian issue, this removes a major ideological issue from the hands of the neocons in Washington. I do not think they would welcome that kind of improvement of relations between Moscow and Washington. So you can see, if there is a settlement of the Ukrainian issue, I think it would have a direct impact on the power of the neocons in Washington, which would have an obvious effect in Gaza and the broader issue of Israel and the Middle East. It’s just a thought.

Billington: As you know, the Russian and American core leaderships had a meeting today in Riyadh, in Saudi Arabia. Do you want to comment on what you saw in that meeting?

Fuller: I’m not privy to what really took place there, except the vibe seemed to be very good. The meeting went on reportedly for four hours, which is remarkable for any kind of initial diplomatic meeting of that sort involving really quite difficult issues. So there’s that, and the fact that both sides expressed deep satisfaction with the progress made so far. So, I’m just very encour-



State Department/Freddie Everett

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio meets with Saudi and Russian foreign ministers in Saudi Arabia. Rubio, at left, is flanked by U.S. Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff on his right and U.S. National Security Advisor Mike Waltz on his left. Saudi Arabia’s Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan al-Saud has the Saudi National Security Advisor Mosaad bin Mohammad al-Aiban on his left. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, at far right, has next to him the Russian President’s foreign policy advisor, Yuri Ushakov. They met in the Diriyah Palace, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Feb. 18.

aged at that taking place; I don’t think anybody in any of the readouts following the meeting talked about the impact on the Middle East, but it’s certain that they’re bound to have talked about it, because Russia is quite involved in the Middle East, and Washington is deeply involved in the Middle East. The issue of Russia’s role in all of that is bound to have been part of the discussion between the American and Russian parties.

So yes, there may be important trickle-down effects from a willingness to talk. It’s pretty shocking, Mike, that President Joe Biden over three years was more willing to go to war and kill, you know, tens of thousands of Ukrainians rather than talk once to

Russian President Vladimir Putin about the conflict, on how peace could be arrived at. That's because all they wanted to do—They didn't care about Ukraine itself. The goal was to weaken Russia, bring Russia down, humble Russia. That's why Biden wasn't even willing to talk to them. Well, we have a very different world now when we see these senior representatives of both states willing to talk to each other on a broad range of issues, which should have taken place starting three years ago, but for the reasons we talked about, did not take place.

Challenges for New Intelligence Leadership

Billington: Right. So, we also have this extraordinary development of Tulsi Gabbard becoming the Director of National Intelligence, somebody who has been very forthright and open, attacking the crimes of the FBI and the so-called Deep State. She will be the person briefing Donald Trump every day as the Director of National Intelligence. As a former leader of the intelligence agencies, as you were, how do you expect this to function?

Fuller: A couple of points, Mike. First of all, there's the serious question, an eternal question, that existed when I was running the long-term estimates for the CIA. Who reads these things? Does the President read them? Which president reads them? Supposedly former President Barack Obama had a deep interest in reading this kind of intelligence analysis and reporting. But I think Biden was less inclined to do so. Trump apparently doesn't really like reading at all. Former President George W. Bush, apparently, according to the people who were sent to brief him, had limited interest in what the intelligence community had to say. George W. Bush knew what he wanted to know, or believe. He knew what he knew, and so that was that. So, I hope that Tulsi Gabbard might well have this president's ear, because he played such a role in bringing her into her present position, but we just don't know how much Trump is going to read into it, if he gets intelligence that is not what he wants to hear. Other presidents have this problem. They don't want to get the bad news from the intelligence communities, from their reporting. Secondly, I don't know how much influence Tulsi Gabbard person-



White House/Molly Riley

Tulsi Gabbard at her White House swearing-in ceremony.

ally—it's part of the same issue—but, how much influence she'll really have over Trump in this regard.

And she's coming up against some other major big players. That's all along been an issue. The Pentagon has its own intelligence organization, and it has its own agenda. It has its own views of Russia. If you come in with a report that "peace is breaking out all over"—I'm not saying that that's going to happen—but in the event that you have very positive vibes coming out of American and Russian encounters, the Pentagon might feel that on some issues, their own ox is being gored, and may echo the voice of the huge mass of the American military-industrial complex. That's who feeds off hostility between Russia and the United States, or for that matter, Iran and the United States, or China and the United States. That's grist for their mill. So, they will be wanting to push back against voices that are maybe encouraging rapprochement and finding opportunities for closer cooperation between the United States and Russia.

So yes, I'm very delighted that Tulsi Gabbard is there. I think she's a very intelligent woman, strong, strong morals and strong principled views on what's going on in the world that hopefully will have a positive impact on the situation.

Billington: You might know that we published a pamphlet called "[The Liars Bureau](#)," whose purpose was to encourage the members of the U.S. Senate to confirm Tulsi Gabbard, as well as Kash Patel as the FBI

chief, by pointing out that the people we know well from the intelligence community over the last decade or more have tended to be massive liars. We pointed out the work of Dick Cheney, James Clapper, Mike Pompeo and others who promoted these illegal wars in Iraq and Syria and Libya and so forth, who manufactured the whole “Russia, Russia, Russia” Russiagate hoax to drive Trump out of office, and more. How do you explain the sorry state of the U.S. intelligence agencies that we’re now facing that we have to clear up?

Fuller: I was relieved, Mike, to see that I was not included among the members of the Liars Club, despite my many years in CIA, both as an operations officer overseas and in terms of long-range forecasting. I think the real question again comes down to what kind of access and influence that the chief of intelligence will have over the President and his followers. Also, we have to remember that it’s not just a question of what the President believes, but the congressional opinions and views matter very heavily in this as well. We know that Congress is heavily bought and paid for. I mean, we all know the famous remark by Mark Twain that “America has the finest Congress that money can buy.” It’s hard to know how much congressmen who are bought-and-paid-for by the military-industrial complex or the Israeli lobby, how much they will be influenced by what a supposedly objective intelligence community is saying, and how much money will speak to them. That’s, I think, one of the really key considerations.

And secondly, I would have to say, over time—and I’ve had, you know, over 30 years or so, had a lot to do with the intelligence community—my sense is that it has become increasingly politicized over time, since when I first went in. Most of us junior CIA officers, most of us felt somehow that if we could just get the word back to Washington as to “what the real situation was,” that politicians would move and act appropriately in adjusting their policies. The real coming of age for young CIA officers is when you begin to find out that maybe what you thought was a great report from a great agent source in the Middle East or Russia or China or wherever else, maybe will reach the table of some important person, but will he or she really read it? Or more to the point, will they believe it? Or do they want to believe it? Or will they act on it? Those are all great unknowns. So these issues, I think, have become more politicized. The appointments to top positions in the CIA have become more politicized over time. And that, I think, has greatly weakened and damaged

the reputation of the CIA. And frankly, I’ve been quite shocked at many of the statements of the CIA in recent years, especially in Ukraine, where seemingly not only the *New York Times* assured us every day that Russia was losing the war in Ukraine, that Ukraine had virtually won the war. But apparently, CIA reports were telling the President the same thing. And Biden wanted to believe and wanted to hear it. So there we are.

Untying Geopolitical Knots

Billington: Much of your career was focused on the Arab world. There’s now great discord in the Arab world over how to deal with the crisis in Palestine. How are they responding to Trump’s call for the U.S. to come in and take it over and build Gaza?

Fuller: Well, I think, first of all, the Arab world has been angry for some long time about the treatment of Palestinians and the expansion of Israeli power and influence in the region, and the assassination of leaders, one after another after another, regional leaders, both Arab and Iranian. As I said earlier, the Israeli destruction, horrifying destruction, turning Gaza into something that looks like Berlin after World War Two; the tragic scenes of the human losses, of men, women, and children in Gaza, has horrified the Arab world as it has horrified so much else of the world.

Secondly, I think now that much of Arab leadership, they may not love the Palestinians and may be afraid of political agitation on the part of Palestinians, but they can’t push back against that anymore. They’ve got to ride with it and support it. So, I would say they are far more willing to speak out now.

Thirdly, I think there’s a sense among Arabs, and especially Arab leaders, to be really angry at the idea that Washington—and I’ll use a vulgarism here, because it’s really accurate—that Washington is putting all its shit on top of the Arab leaders. You know, “We fucked up here, but you guys are going to have to take care of it. You’re going to have to take the Palestinians. You’re going to have to pay for it. We don’t want to have to get involved in that.” That really enrages the Arab world and the Arab leadership, the Muslim world and the regional leadership that sees America and Israel as fundamentally the source, the cause behind this, this tragic genocide in Gaza, which has been preceded by decades and decades of Israeli dominance, geopolitical dominance and military dominance over all Arab states.

So, I think we’ve seen—as Marx said, who used the

term “quantitative into qualitative change”—the anger, I think, now has begun to turn into something quite different. I would not want to predict where it’s going to go, but I fear it’s going to result in far more violence. I happen to think that war between Israel and Iran now is more likely than ever before: one, because Bibi Netanyahu knows that his ability to stay in power depends on the perpetuation of war. And it’s part of the Israeli myth that Iran is our greatest enemy and that if we don’t crush it and destroy its nuclear capabilities, then we’re forever at risk. This is the mantra of Israel today, and a mantra that they’ve tried to impose on Washington’s thinking.



CC/Wafa

What's left of Gaza after Israel's extermination campaign.

So, I’m very, very nervous about the possibility of a war in which Bibi himself is working to try to draw the U.S. into such a war, to back it both militarily and diplomatically, across the board. I don’t think any Arab state really wants to go to war with Israel. I think they would know that their armies are not up to it, that they would suffer considerably, but they’ve got to show that they’ve got some *cojones*, let’s say, to demonstrate to their people that they’re not going to take infinite insults and injuries and disrespect from Israeli policies.

I don’t see this going in any good direction, unless there’s a dramatic change in Palestine, in Gaza. For all Trump’s efforts, I don’t really see that happening now, and especially with the power of the Israeli lobby that still seems to be singing from the same hymn book. So, I’m quite positive about Ukraine, but I’m not very positive about Palestine and Gaza, except for the fact that maybe an American-Russian rapprochement could begin to deliver some kind of regional settlement. But, Bibi will be dragged kicking and screaming every inch of the way against it. So that does not bode well.

Billington: Have you had the opportunity to see what the Egyptian plan is, which I don’t think has been made public yet; but are you aware of what they’re preparing, their plan for the reconstruction of Gaza?

Fuller: No. For one thing, Egypt is dirt poor at this point, barely surviving on many international handouts. I would expect that Egypt would make nominal efforts

to contribute to some kind of Palestinian reconstruction, but it will really be nominal. They can’t afford it, but they can’t afford not to do anything. Trump, indeed, will tell the Arabs that they have got to come together and contribute to a rebuilding of Gaza. So, I wouldn’t expect a lot Arab states, except the rich Gulf States that can afford it.

Türkiye’s Role

Billington: Right. You are well known as an expert on Türkiye, in particular. I believe you’re also familiar with the Turkish language and that you’ve written a great deal about Türkiye and so forth. They are playing an increasingly important role in the region. What do you think about their role, and how is it changing, and where is it heading?

Fuller: You’re quite right, Mike, that Türkiye’s role has been increasing in the Middle East, in the entire region. I would argue, at least 30 years now, since President Erdoğan has been in power, Türkiye has said, “We’re not the old loyal NATO American ally, as you thought we were for a long time. We are the inheritor of the great Ottoman Empire, which spread out across huge areas, geographic areas of the world.” And so the Turks say: “We are not just a Mediterranean power. We’re a Middle Eastern power. We are a Muslim power. We are a Caucasian power. We are a Central Asian power. We are a Red Sea power. We’re a North African power.” Türkiye is really playing at a very high level.

Now, that would have been astonishing to think of some 30 years ago. I think the West, and Washington in particular, is quite uncomfortable with that, because it means that Türkiye now has become an independent actor. That must be taken into consideration independently of Washington's own desires and plans. It's not NATO. Türkiye as a NATO player is really almost irrelevant today. There's some talk in NATO that Türkiye has become so contrary to NATO's own wishes, that maybe they should throw Türkiye out. But I have commented that I think that NATO needs Türkiye more than Türkiye needs NATO.

I don't think Türkiye is going to be expelled from NATO unless something truly egregious happens, like a Turkish attack on Israel. I would not put that, by the way, entirely out of the picture, because Türkiye came near to some sort of naval blows some years ago in the first conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, when Türkiye sent a flotilla of arms and food and other produce to the Palestinians across the high seas in what was called the MV Mavi Marmara, the Blue Marmara operation, and the Israelis essentially shot it out of the water, refusing to allow them to deliver any of these goods to the Palestinians.

I think there's going to be increasing tension as Türkiye wants to up its ante, play a more and more important role. It's quite striking that the two powers in the region that are really speaking out very strongly on the Palestinian Gaza issue are not even Arab states; they are Türkiye and Iran. Neither of them are Arab. But they have more powerful arguments, more vehement arguments against, and are speaking out more boldly against Israel than any of the Arab leaders, except for poor Yemen, which is really a dirt poor country. They are wonderful, generous, hospitable people, gutsy people. They are shooting. They're playing way above, they're punching way above their weight, by blocking Red Sea shipments that are destined for Israel.

But in any case, all I'm pointing out is, this is an extraordinary anomaly, that it's not the Arab leaders, it's the Persian and Turkish leaders that are moving this, driving this. And I think it is bringing many of these Arab leaders to shame in what they are not doing. So, again, I have a very uncomfortable feeling that Arabs are going to feel they have to do something of a bolder nature than simply speaking out, mildly, as it has been. I think the speech has now gotten bolder. I wouldn't be surprised if there's some kind of bolder military or semi-military or quasi-military action, on the part of

some Arab states, Egypt, perhaps even Saudi Arabia, who are the only two states with real military power among the Arabs. Otherwise, no Arab states in the region have that kind of military power, and none of it, certainly not Egyptian power, is up to taking on the Israelis at this point.

Billington: All right, Graham. Well, thank you very much. Is there any sort of closing statement you'd like to make, or a message to our readership around the world?

Fuller: Yes, I might want to say, Mike—and I know that you and the Schiller Institute are very much on board with this message: I think we are in deeply consequential times. I have never seen such a dramatic geopolitical shift in my life, in my adult professional life, other than the collapse of the Berlin Wall, which changed the world in remarkable ways, and then the collapse of the Soviet Union, which changed it further, both of which led to the emergence of the United States as the sole hegemon, global hegemon in the world. And the U.S. took that role accordingly aboard, and has been acting like the world's sole global superpower that can do anything it wants, anywhere it wants, and expect other powers and countries to act accordingly, according to American wishes. Those days are really on the way out. I'm hardly the only one saying that, but I think Washington as a government is in denial. I think the United States is in denial, believing that it's still the world's sole superpower, the indispensable player and the most powerful nation in the world. All of these things are growing increasingly unreal and increasingly dangerous to believe, to actually believe it, to act on that basis.

I'm heartened, frankly, that the emergence of other powers in the world that do not necessarily have to be enemies, can perhaps balance us in constant desire to be the sole superpower in the world that can call the shots all over the world. We are not able to do that. We have numbers of states, like the BRICS nations, the grouping of Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, now joined by Saudi Arabia and Iran and many other candidate states that want to join this. This is a formidable new movement that I see as a latent, or nascent, if you will, a nascent new UN organization. The UN has fundamentally, ever since its formation, has been a gathering of formerly colonial powers that did run the world for the last hundred years, perhaps, and thereby were able to take the dominant position in the UN. Those days, I think, are disappearing. We have new voices, who have new interests, who do not

want to be pushed around by Washington or Western Europeans economically or militarily or socially or politically or in any other terms. We see now, I think, the recent move by Trump and by U.S. Defense Secretary Peter Hegseth to tell the Europeans that essentially the game in Ukraine is over. What he is saying, basically, is the NATO game is over. And above all else, I think it is maybe starting to call for a rethinking of the source of global conflict in general.

Why do we have to have conflict? Is conflict inevitable among states? I'm going to make a criticism of John Mearsheimer here. I think John Mearsheimer is a wonderful observer and theoretician on global issues. His reading of Ukraine and his reading of Gaza are some of the best in the world. But John Mearsheimer also has this theory: the theoretical view of international relations that I cannot buy, and that I don't even think is consistent with his own geopolitical views. He really understands Ukraine and Gaza, but not because of his own geopolitical ideas. I think he feels that if you've got two major powers, that they have to conflict.

I just find this a very mechanical—and rather crude, frankly—view of the world. States, over the history of the world—Germany and France were at each other's throats. France and England were at each other's throats for hundreds of years. Russia and China were at each other's throats. Russia and Germany and the U.S. were at each other's throats. But the world changes. Time changes. Situations change. Other countries have agency. There's no reason why the United States has to be at war, or find Russia to be our chief opponent or that we have to find China as our chief opponent.

Overthrowing Our Axioms

This is a choice. We have choice, folks. We have decided that we want Russia to be our enemy, and our government feeds off that. Mike, you and I have talked about this. The military-industrial complex loves the war, the Pentagon loves it. But there is no reason why there has to be that kind of conflict. And essentially, Hegseth, I think, was beginning to hint at that fact, that, "Look, we can sit down. We don't necessarily have to go to war." But when the United States spends most of its time in its foreign policy blocking people that it fears are enemies—of course, you're creating enemies. You're telling people, "You are our enemy. You are a peer competitor." That's a threat to these countries, to tell them that kind of thing. What do you think? If I tell you, Mike, that, you know, you're a nice guy, but you're my enemy, you draw certain conclusions, you

act accordingly. I think we need to rethink this, as to why we automatically have to be at war with other powerful countries in the world. And that goes for Russia. It goes even more for China.

I'm heartened that somebody like Trump, or others—Jeffrey Sachs at Columbia often raises similar kinds of questions. These are eternal questions. Why do we have to go to war? The U.S. foreign policy essentially over the last decade has been nothing but "block Russia, block China." This is a world suffering from all kinds of problems, of health and food and regional local conflicts, et cetera, et cetera—that the United States should be spending most of its money and treasure and time and energy on identifying enemies to which we have to build the biggest military budget in the world, more than all the other countries of the world put together, more or less— This is not a very constructive or imaginative American foreign policy.

So, I don't want to go on about this further. I think the point is clear, but I'm heartened that, for whatever Trump's strange or disturbing views on many American domestic issues, we're three weeks into this guy's policies. We have a long way to go, but I am heartened to see that some questions that nobody has bothered to ask for years are now being raised by this administration. You can call the questions crazy or maybe long overdue. They're both. But it's time to have a real shift of paradigm. And I see glimmerings of that now. And I'm heartened by that.

Billington: Right. Not only stop blocking them, but join them. I mean, why don't we join the BRICS and start doing what we thought we should have been doing all along, which is helping to build countries around the world industrially, turning them into modern industrial nations. This is exactly what the LaRouche movement has always been committed to, which is that we have to really think in terms of using the history of America as a nation-building power instead of a nation-destroying power. So, thanks very much, Graham. We'll definitely get this report out everywhere through the Schiller Institute and *EIR*.

Fuller: Good. Well thank you, Mike. I really have immense respect for the Schiller Institute, for you, and for your asking these questions, promoting these issues tirelessly at a time when they hadn't really been front and center of at least the last administration's thinking. I think you may be getting some traction now, which is long overdue and welcome.