



## **Jeffrey Sachs on Seymour Hersh, Nord Stream Bombing, Ukraine & the Cold War with China**

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**Zain Raza (ZR):** Thank you guys for tuning in today and welcome back to another episode of The Source. I'm your host, Zain Raza and today, I'll be talking to Jeffrey Sachs about the war in Ukraine, as well as the Cold War with China. Jeffrey serves as a director for the Center of Sustainable Development at Columbia University, where he holds the position of university professor, the institution's highest academic rank. He's also a world renowned economist, bestselling author, innovative educator and a global leader in sustainable development. Jeffrey is recognized worldwide in advising governments on economic reforms and as well as his work for international agencies on deep poverty reduction as well as disease control. Jeffrey and I already had a fundamental discussion about the war in Ukraine. So in case you missed it, be sure to check the link in the description, as in this segment, we will be focusing on the latest developments. Jeffrey, welcome back to the show.

**Jeffrey Sachs (JS):** Good to be back with you. Thank you so much.

**ZR:** Let's start with the Nord Stream pipeline, which was bombed last year by an unknown state actor. World renowned investigative journalist Seymour Hersh published an article last month detailing how the US bombed the Nord Stream pipeline. In German mainstream media he was largely dismissed as a conspiracy theorist or someone who can be taken seriously since the past decade or for using anonymous sources, while in the US, he was barely mentioned. Right after that, we interviewed him exclusively on our channel.

**Seymour Hersh:** What I've done is simply explain the obvious. It just was a story that was begging to be told. In late September of 2022, eight bombs were supposed to go off, six went off under the water near Bornholm Island in the Baltic Sea, in a rather shallow area. And they destroyed three of the four major pipelines, the Nord Stream 1 and 2. And so the meeting was

convened to do the study of the problem. What are we going to do? Russia is going to go to war. This is three months before the war. It was the CIA, the National Security Agency, State Department, and the Treasury Department, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had a representation and this is a secret group. They were meeting in a very secret office. And I'm writing this obviously from the inside. Do you want us to give you recommendations about what to do about stopping Russia that are reversible, more sanctions, economic pressure, we'd already been doing that. Or irreversible?! Irreversible, being kinetic: bomb, bomb, bang, bang. Well, it was clear very early...

**ZR:** And for those who missed it, be sure to check the link in the description. What do you make out of Seymour Hersh? Is he credible and can his account be trusted?

**Jeffrey Sachs (JS):** Of course he's credible. The account is correct. It has not been actually shown to be wrong in any meaningful way. The United States did this. The German government should explain to the German people what's going on, period. This is not even a mystery. The United States announced it would do it. The United States celebrated when it happened. Victoria Nuland, who is the point person of the US neoconservatives, said that the administration is delighted that Nord Stream 2 was a hunk of metal at the bottom of the sea. There are only two or three countries that could have done this. I don't think Germany did this. I doubt it. But if the German government did it, they should tell us. I don't think that Sweden or Denmark did it in their exclusive economic waters. The United States did it, warned it, celebrated it and anyone who understands US politics at all knows that for many years this was an absolute cause of the right wing to stop this pipeline. Now, the failure of the German government and the media to discuss this goes to absolutely foundational issues of democracy. Because right now the public is not informed about almost anything that is of fundamental significance for our survival. The real issues of the war in Ukraine, the real state of the war, the US blowing up the pipeline, the mainstream media think that it's perfectly appropriate not even to cover these stories. And by the way, is this a conspiracy theory? Yes, it's a conspiracy. A conspiracy means that several groups work together to carry out an illegal action. This is a conspiracy of US policy leaders, probably together with the German government, which probably knew about this in advance or parts of it. I'd be very surprised if the German government doesn't know about it in detail now. So, yes, this is a conspiracy. And calling it a conspiracy theory only makes clear, no individual could have blown up the Nord Stream pipeline. This was a group. This was a very hard thing to do. It's 70 meters below sea level. It was delayed detonation. If anybody knows about Nord Stream, it's encased in a massive amount of concrete. This was a big operation. So a conspiracy? Absolutely. Yes.

**ZR:** At the end of February, you held a speech at the United Nations Security Council and stressed the need for an independent investigation into who bombed the Nord Stream pipeline. How have major countries such as the United States, Germany, the UK, Russia and

China responded to this call? And what do you think the international council will be if it ever turns out, via whistleblowing and independent investigation, that it was the US?

**JS:** Well, the Western countries don't want to talk about facts investigation at all. The Russian government asked for an investigation, an independent UN Security Council led investigation, not a Russian investigation. The Chinese government supported Russia in this. And the United States said this is a distraction. From what? I'm not sure, because it's a pretty central issue to blow up a major piece of infrastructure in international waters. It's not a distraction. It's a major issue of threat to the peace, which is the job of the UN Security Council. So. The Western governments right now believe that the public does not need to know and in fact should not know basic facts right now, even as we head towards World War Three. This is not acceptable. Maybe I'm wrong; investigate it! But the United States says, No, no, don't investigate it. That's a distraction. Well, I think it's a distraction most likely from US culpability. But to not investigate, what kind of attitude is that? And it is, again, I have to emphasize, fundamentally a threat to our democratic institutions. The German government doesn't speak to the German people about this. The Bundestag can't get information. The Swedish government went down to the crime scene and then announced that they would keep their investigation secret from Germany and Denmark. Oh, that's a little strange. Or from the UN Security Council. If people think that secrecy is safety right now, they really misunderstand what's happening. We are at the greatest risk of nuclear war in modern history. We are 90 seconds to midnight, according to the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists. We've not had a crisis like this since the Cuban Missile Crisis. And our governments don't talk to the people like grown ups. It's propaganda and spin morning till night.

**ZR:** Let us now look into recent developments surrounding Ukraine. The last time I interviewed you the debate on battle tanks was still ongoing. Now it has become a reality and training of Ukrainian soldiers on how to properly operate these battle tanks is taking place on German soil as we speak. It is expected that these tanks will go into operation sometime this month. The debate is now moving slowly to fighter jets and the UK and Netherlands have, for example, voiced their support for sending them. And in the UK's case they are already training Ukraine pilots. During German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's visit last week to the White House the US also announced another round of military assistance to Ukraine worth up to \$40 million. So far the US has sent \$30 billion worth of military aid to Ukraine. Do you think more weapons, especially fighter jets and military aid, could change the tide of war in favor of Ukraine?

**JS:** Look, there's a bottom line, which is that Russia has 1600 nuclear warheads. And if Russia were threatened with defeat, for example, losing Crimea, it would likely use them. So the idea of the goals of the war, the tide of war, what we're trying to do, it makes no sense at all. I don't want Zelensky to get us all killed. When Zelensky says they retake every bit of Ukraine as he defines it, including Crimea, no, thank you. None of this makes sense. None of this is an honest assessment about the sources of this war, the provocations on both sides, the

way to stop this war. None of it. All of this bluster - not just bluster, that's the wrong word - all of this military escalation cannot lead to success, period. It can't. Because even if it led to success on the battlefield, it will lead to global destruction. And there's a very good chance it won't lead to success on the battlefield, though I'm not the right person to interview on that. I listen to bloggers and daily commentators on all sides. Maybe Russia is going to make significant advances in the next weeks. That's what many people say. I don't know. So I can't really judge. But what I can tell you is what we are doing makes no fundamental sense at all. To have a war that threatens nuclear annihilation so that NATO's can expand is beyond reckless. To not have negotiations right now after more than a year, to know, although the mainstream media in Germany and the United States don't cover it, that the negotiations came close to success last March until the United States stopped them, is incredible. Did anybody investigate that carefully in the mainstream media? Not at all. Naftali Bennett committed what we call, quote unquote, a gaffe, meaning a politician that accidentally speaks the truth. He said in his interview that they were close to an agreement. He was acting as a mediator in March 2022 and the United States blocked it. And then he said that he thought it was a mistake, but that maybe it was important for the US to stand up to China. Mind you, this is also another trope in Washington right now. I don't know if people in Berlin hear it, but this is not even a war about Ukraine. Who cares about Ukraine? Mitt Romney says this is to show China. And he says it's great this war, no US bloodshed. This is what's really going on. And so I don't know what these weapons are going to do, except we can be sure that they will kill people. And if they are successful, quote unquote, on the ground, they will bring us closer to nuclear war. And people should understand the US motivations. The US's motivation is to be number one in the world. And that's the beginning and the end of it. And if that means war with Russia, that's war with Russia. If that means war with China, that's war with China. That's what Germany has signed on to unconditionally without asking a question.

**ZR:** You mentioned China. In negotiations on the anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine China proposed a 12 point peace plan to end the war in Ukraine. The German media were quick to denounce this plan by stating that it supports Russia's position and interests and does not respect Ukraine's territorial integrity. How do you view this peace plan? Can China be trusted, especially since the West considers China not to be a neutral actor and suspects it of supporting Russia's war with weapons?

**JS:** No matter what is said, Baerbock and her colleagues will denounce any talk of peace. Victoria Nuland and her colleagues will denounce any talk of peace. The British, by the way, are the most irresponsible. They have nothing to add. But they love war because they still think they're the British Empire, I'm sorry to say. So they're the most violent of all and they have nothing to add to this story. So this is denunciation because the neocons are afraid that somebody will talk about peace. China didn't say anything about territorial settlements. It said to negotiate. What China said was to respect the security interests of all sides. Horror. Horror. You know what it means? It means that China knows that NATO enlargement is a threat to Russia - as it is, by the way - in part because the United States is expanding NATO to Asia.

China sees it in its own neighborhood. Why does NATO, a North Atlantic Treaty Organization, invite East Asian leaders now? Why does Jens Stoltenberg, the secretary general of NATO, say NATO must shift to China? Well, when China talks about the legitimate security interests of both sides, that's actually right. It's in all of our security interests, by the way, that NATO stops enlarging because it's bringing us to the brink of the Third World War.

**ZR:** The positions that are usually made against diplomacy, most only by German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock or German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, and I'm quoting Olaf Scholz here: "Wanting peace does not mean submitting to a bigger neighbor. If Ukraine stops defending itself, it will not mean peace, but the end of Ukraine." How would you respond to this argument?

**JS:** Negotiating isn't submitting yourself. Negotiating is negotiating. Shame on confusing negotiating with submission. Who's talking about submission? We're talking about negotiating. We're talking about negotiating issues like NATO enlargement. Is that submission? No, that's common sense. You keep the two sides away and Chancellor Scholz should go brush off the German archives about all the German promises made to Mikhail Gorbachev in 1990 about NATO not moving one inch eastward. Well, Chancellor Scholz is responsible for those commitments, too. Let's have negotiations. Let's have a discussion. I'm not talking about submission. The idea that negotiations are the same as submission is truly one of the most confused misrepresentations of our time. President John F Kennedy said it exactly right in his inaugural address in 1961, January 20th. Let us never negotiate out of fear, but let us never fear to negotiate. Why is Chancellor Scholz fearful of negotiating? I don't understand. You go and you discuss, but you discuss, like grown ups. You don't just send tanks, or aircraft or threats of escalation, you sit down and negotiate. Now, Chancellor Scholz has said he would continue to talk to Putin. Why doesn't he tell his colleague Joe Biden, You talk to Putin, too?! We've been at this for more than a year and Biden hasn't picked up the phone one time. There hasn't been one meeting between the two. When the opportunity was broached by the Indonesians, the United States rejected it; around the G20 last year. The US is fearful of negotiating. Because maybe some truths would come out in the negotiating. Maybe some of the provocations would come out in the negotiating. Maybe the US role in the overthrow of the Ukrainian government in 2014 would come out. Maybe the failures of Germany to enforce the Minsk II agreement that it was responsible for as guarantor would come out. Maybe there would be some truce that would be discussed at the negotiating table. But they are afraid to negotiate and to equate peace with submission or negotiation with submission is a blatant falsehood.

**ZR:** Another point that is voiced very strongly in the media here by leading figures in the European Union, such as Ursula von der Leyen, regularly said Russia is violating international order, law and that diplomacy that takes to consider territorial concessions will only incentivize as well as send false signals to authoritative states that they can invade any

country whenever they want without any repercussions. Therefore, they usually state no decision can be made without Ukraine's consent. How do you respond to this argument?

**JS:** Well, Ukraine should understand that to save itself, it should not be the cannon fodder for the US to try to show China how big and strong the US is. The Ukrainians, first and foremost, should read Mitt Romney's op ed piece; how wonderful this war is at a small cost and without any US blood. We get to show how big and strong we are. The Ukrainians are the losers in this. Ursula von der Leyen isn't defending Ukraine in this. She's defending the United States in this. The US is using Ukraine. It's not defending Ukraine. It's using Ukraine. It gets to weaken Russia without any loss of US blood. Read Mitt Romney, Senator Romney very clear. He's explaining to the American people what a great deal this is. We get this war, it doesn't cost us very much, no US blood. So let's defend Ukraine. Let's stop defending US neoconservatism. Let's stop defending US hegemony. Let's defend Ukraine and let's defend peace.

**ZR:** Germany has shifted its position on many issues recently and sided with the United States. We saw a U-turn with Ukraine, for example, where Germany was initially skeptical about Ukraine's membership into NATO before the war started. Now there's a split also between how to approach China while the US is starting to impose bans on Chinese trade. Germany is being hesitant as China is one of its biggest trading partners. Goods worth around €298 billion were traded between Germany and China in 2022 alone. In your assessment, should Germany also draw a red line in case China decides to support Russia militarily?

**JS:** Germany should understand what's going on right now. What's going on right now is that the US political class thinks that the real issue in the world is US hegemony or dominance. That's what Germany's buying into right now. We could perfectly get along with China. Perfectly, if we stop the militarism, if we respect the one China policy, if we have normal trade, rather than trying to bust China's economy, the US has been engaging in unilateral, hostile actions to break China's economy for years now. Does anybody watch this in Germany? Does anybody understand what's really going on? I don't know. Maybe not. Maybe the media are just completely sucking their thumbs and are absolutely brain dead. I don't know what's going on in German media, but the German people should understand what this is about. Is Germany's role to defend US hegemony? That's the bottom line. I don't think so. I think Germany's role is to defend Germany's security, European security and that comes through peace. That comes through coexistence. Are we going to wish China away like the media and the hard liners want to wish Russia away? We are just going to close our eyes, wish three times and China won't be there anymore. You know, people need to understand what this is about. And what this is about is the US leaders, these neocons, can't get it through their head that the US can't run the world anymore. But Germany can't figure that out; enough to keep its economy going, enough to say, don't blow up our pipeline, enough to say we have a major trading partner with China. I don't know, maybe the media don't explain anything, but

if people would look, they'd understand what this is about and what's really in Germany's interest and what isn't in Germany's interest.

**ZR:** Russian President Vladimir Putin in his annual State of the Nation address, announced the suspension of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, also known as START, that aimed to cap the number of strategic nuclear warheads that the United States and Russia could deploy. Why do you think Russia is endangering the security of the globe by doing away one of the most important treaties signed in human history?

**JS:** They said that they don't want inspections right now because they are at war with the United States. They said that they would abide by the treaty, but that they don't want inspections under the treaty. So this was a very specific thing involved with the war. But there's a more general point on nuclear arms, and that is the United States broke the diplomacy towards nuclear arms control by unilaterally abandoning the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2002, which is one of the provocations that put us on this path to war. And on other treaties as well, the Intermediate Nuclear Force Agreement. So this is terribly dangerous. And war is terribly dangerous between the US and Russia because they're the two largest nuclear weapons countries. More than 1600 deployed nuclear weapons on each side. And that's why the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists has said that we are 90 seconds to midnight, not just because they felt like it, but because they're analyzing and trying to communicate with the public. Did the German mainstream media cover that story? I doubt it. But this is what's going on. And when we look at the background to this, we can see that the obstacle to peace and coexistence is the drive for US hegemony. And by the way, this is, if you follow it, it's all in the open. People should read, as distasteful as it is Robert Kagan's book *The Jungle Grows Back*. Because Kagan believes that all progress in the world is due to the US leadership. Well, it's worse than a cartoon. But Kagan happens to be the husband of Victoria Nuland, who's the point person for all of this. This is the neocon text. People should read it to understand what's going on. Is this really Germany's vocation to support this simple minded, extraordinarily dangerous point of view?

**ZR:** Let us now switch to the latest developments surrounding China. Many analysts say that we are already in a Cold war with China. We had the recent balloon incident over the US, which the US shot down and claimed on a surveillance device when the Chinese claim it was a meteorological one. The US, on the other hand, is expanding its presence in the South China Sea by establishing four military bases in the Philippines. Both countries also hold regular military exercises amid rising tensions with China. US and Japan officials have also stated that they will expand military cooperation, including improving Japan's missile strike capabilities, as well as improving the US's marine capability in Okinawa. In your view, is the US protecting democracy and freedom in the region and enforcing international order, or is there another gender play here that we do not hear in the political and media discourse?

**JS:** What the US is doing in East Asia is what the US did in Ukraine, and it's going to lead to the same kind of war. Now of course, to understand that you have to follow events. Clearly the media won't tell you, but the media didn't tell us about the overthrow of Yanukovich. The media didn't tell us of what Victoria Nuland was doing. It took a Russian intercept of her phone. And people should listen to it even till today, because who was engaged in the overthrow of Yanukovich? It was Victoria Nuland speaking on the phone not only with the US ambassador to Ukraine, Geoffrey Pyatt, but talking about her conversations with none other than Jake Sullivan and Joe Biden. So it was the three of them back in February 2014. Well, we took a decision in the United States. I don't say we, the American people, because the American people aren't allowed to know anything or ask anything about any of this. But the neocon leadership took a position in 2014 that China's continued economic rise was against US interests. You can even read these texts if you pay attention. For example, there were specific texts by Robert Blackwill, a former colleague of mine at Harvard, who wrote that it's no longer in America's interest China's rise; writing back in 2015. I was shocked when I read it. It was a deliberate statement. Okay, we now need to oppose China's growing prosperity. Well, how are you going to get peace out of that? So the United States started to introduce unilateral trade measures in violation of every agreement that we have, including the World Trade Organization, which the US has thrown away as if it's a piece of trash. And then under Biden, everything has become worse because the US now tries to break any Chinese enterprise that is in technology. The US has stopped the export or tries to stop the export of any high tech goods because it may have a military use. It may. And now the US, it's going to really protect American security. Apparently, we're going to close down Tiktok - a dire threat to the American people. And so this is what's going on. It's mind boggling. It is step by step the path toward war. And by the way, the American neocons are quite open about it. We need to expand. We need to be ready for war. We need to have the war in Ukraine to show China that we're tough. If we are tough in Ukraine, they'll think we're weak, you know? In other words, we're sending hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians to death, destroying Ukraine's cities instead of sitting at the negotiating table to work out some non-NATO enlargement and Russian withdrawal so that we can show how tough we are to China. My God. By the way, I've been through this for more than 50 years because when I was young, everything they're saying now about Ukraine and China, they said about Vietnam. It's the same. It's the same story: We have to be tough. We can't pull out of Vietnam. We have to, in the end, kill more than a million people. Why? Because of the domino effect. What would happen to America's prestige? Nonsense then, nonsense today. Unbelievably destructive. And really, I hope the German people can figure this out.

**ZR:** To my last question. Perhaps it is possible to end this interview on a positive note that gives people a vision for the future. For those that believe in a multipolar world, they believe in multilateralism and in a world where all countries treat each other with respect, what advice would you give to people that are watching this video and would like to realize this vision?



**JS:** First, we have the United Nations charter. We should tell the UN Security Council, which yes, includes Russia and includes China and includes the US and includes Britain and France, you go into the room, we locked the door just like the Vatican locks the door on the cardinals at the conclave and you come out when there is white smoke above the 38th floor; meaning that you figured out a way to peace. We have a UN. Let's use the UN. That's the purpose of the United Nations Security Council. Not soundbites, not pointing fingers, but getting down to the work of peace. That's the first thing. Second, we have a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It celebrates its 75th birthday today. Let's honor that. Let's understand, by the way, those rights include economic rights, that people have the right to health, that they have the right to education, that they have the right to social protection, that they have the right to food, that they have the right to a safe environment. Let's live like human beings and like grown ups. And let's understand, by the way, we don't need a hegemon. We don't need the United States, which is 4% of the world population, thinking and acting like it leads the world. No, thank you. We need cooperation. We need the European Union standing up for decency and for Europe, not for US hegemony. We need the United States to cooperate, not to pretend or imagine that it leads, that the world depends on the US leadership. It doesn't. It depends on US cooperation. We need to sit together with Russia and China and the African Union and the Latin American countries and talk about the real things of need to the people of this world. Meeting basic economic needs, having enough to have a healthy diet, having the kids in school, having people with access to health care. Well, I'm an economist that has studied this for 40 years. We could easily do all of this. We're rich enough if we would stop piling the trillions into destruction. We could easily meet everybody's human needs and economic and human dignity.

**ZR:** Jeffrey Sachs, well renowned economist and bestselling author, thank you so much for your time today.

**JS:** Great to be with you. Thank you.

**ZR:** And thank you guys for tuning in today. Don't forget to join our alternative channels on Rumble and Telegram. YouTube is not suggesting our videos like it used to new viewers a few years ago. So if you want our information to reach you, be sure to join our channels on Rumble and Telegram and be sure to donate. Please take into consideration that there's a whole team working behind the scenes from providing camera, light, audio and in the case of our German videos, translation, voice over, correction. So if you want us to give you news and analysis that is free, independent and nonprofit, be sure to donate a few euros or dollars via PayPal, Peatron or bank account. I am your host Zain Raza, see you guys next time.

**END**