



Mask-Off: Pelosi Accuses Anti-Israel Protesters of Kremlin Ties

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Glenn Greenwald (GG): All right, Nancy Pelosi made an appearance on CNN on Sunday, yesterday with Dana Bash. And just three days earlier, Nancy Pelosi was at a fundraising event in California that was disrupted by pro-Palestinian protesters demanding from her an answer as to why she supports the war in Gaza. Which she does, Nancy Pelosi is one of the most steadfast and most loyal supporters of Israel. She has been her whole career, and Nancy Pelosi obviously does not like it when her swanky fundraising events are disrupted by dirty protesters who are criticising her. And as a result, she went on CNN and had a lot to say about people in the United States who are exercising their constitutional rights to protest not just the war in Israel, but the role that the United States is playing in enabling that war. And here's what she had to say about these people.

Nancy Pelosi (NP): They're in front of my house all the time. So I have a feeling for what feelings they have. But we have to think about what we're doing, and what we have to do is try to stop.

GG: Okay, I just want to say that it's hard to imagine any sentiment more insincere than what she started out by saying. Look at the anger in her face when she says, these people are in front of my house all the time. And then she went on to so insincerely claim that that's why she has empathy for their views, because she hears it all the time. Nancy Pelosi wants those people dead. Anyone who protests Nancy Pelosi, you can see the rage and the just notion of being offended that anybody would protest her in this way, especially people in her own party. But that's what's been happening. So you can see when she sets up the foundation for what she's about to say. What's really going on in her head, in her brain, is that she's filled with rage at these people.

NP: ...house all the time. So I have a feeling for what feelings they have. But we have to think about what we're doing. And what we have to do is try to stop the suffering and gossip. This is women and children and people who don't have a place to go, so let's address that. But for them to call for a ceasefire is Mr. Putin's message. Mr. Putin's message. Make no mistake, this is directly connected to what he would like to see. Same thing with Ukraine.

GG: Nancy Pelosi sees the war in the Middle East that has created a deeply polarised reaction around the world – there are millions of people in every country on this planet who are looking at what the Israelis are doing in Gaza and reacting with all kinds of outrage and anger and indignation. Now, obviously, there are a lot of people in many of these countries that support what Israel is doing as well, but it is a debate that is taking place throughout the world. And Nancy Pelosi sees this Middle East conflict and can only see it through the prism of what Vladimir Putin wants. This is a pathology that the Democratic Party has cultivated, not just among its followers, but also among its leaders. It is a really deranged conspiracy theory to believe that these protesters, who are every day marching against American leaders who are supporting and funding Israel's war in Gaza, are somehow doing the bidding of Vladimir Putin. And that somehow they're serving Putin's interests by asking for a cease fire, because that's what Putin would want. And she thinks that that's the right prism for understanding these protesters is that they must have some allegiance to Vladimir Putin, because their view happens to align with what she claims is his view about the Middle East War. That kind of leap, the logical stretching that requires is just demented. But it has become completely normalised in Democratic Party discourse. This is what they've been saying for eight years about basically everything. Anybody who criticises Democrats automatically is either a Russian agent or unwittingly doing the bidding of Putin. And you can see how insane that is when it's stripped out of any context that's actually directly related to Putin. I mean, even people, obviously, who oppose U.S. funding of the war in Ukraine got accused of this all the time, as though nobody could question why the US government should be involved in this war unless they were doing the bidding of Vladimir Putin. At least there was an actual proximity of that war to the Russians. To decide you're going to look at the Middle East conflict, to this prism of what Vladimir Putin wants, just because this is what you've talked yourself into for eight years shows how extreme this framework has become. It's really quite demented. But she didn't just stop there. She had a lot more to say about these protesters.

NP: ... Putin's message. I think some of these protesters are spontaneous and organic and sincere. Some, I think, are connected to Russia. And I say that having looked at this for a long time now...

Dana Bash from CNN: You think some of these protests are Russian plans?

NP: These are plans. I think some financing should be investigated. And I want to ask the FBI to investigate that.

GG: I mean, that is an extraordinary statement just to kind of throw one at the end, I want the FBI to go and investigate these people who are protesting American leaders for their support for a war in Israel that has provoked indignation throughout the world. Just the mere belief that she has the right to call on the FBI to investigate people exercising their constitutional rights to protest the government's war policy, based on some completely concocted connection she's invented between these people that she hates because they're protesting her and the Kremlin, is as authoritarian of a claim as can be imagined. The fact that though it is invented out of whole cloth, is something that even the New York Times that generally reports very favourably on Nancy Pelosi, obviously itself that was quite indefensible. They

had to do a report, even though Nancy Pelosi is not the House Speaker, because it's a pretty amazing event to hear an American politician, still a member of Congress with a lot of influence, make a claim of the sort and to call for the FBI to investigate political protesters. So here's the New York Times reporting it, quote, *Pelosi Wants F.B.I. to Investigate Pro-Palestinian Protesters*. Quote, "The former House speaker suggested, without offering evidence, that some protesters calling for a ceasefire in Gaza had financial ties to Russia and Vladimir Putin". Now, normally this phrase here, "suggested without evidence", or "without offering evidence" is reserved for statements made by Donald Trump. They will often say Donald Trump today claimed with no evidence, that X, Y and Z. I don't think I've ever seen the New York Times use that phrasing for Nancy Pelosi or the pronouncements of leading Democrats, but this was such an extreme case that even they felt compelled to do so. Now, here is Nancy Pelosi today, who returned to this topic but had a much different claim to make. She was confronting the pro-Palestinian protesters who were outside of her house, the ones that she mentioned on CNN and this time, for some reason, she decided to accuse them of being controlled and financed by China and not by Russia. Watch her screaming at them as her security guard or aide guides her into her armoured vehicle.

NP: Go back to China where your headquarters is... [shouting/inaudible]

GG: I mean, these are basically like old white leftists in San Francisco who are doing this. And yesterday she went on CNN and accused them of being controlled by the Kremlin. And then today she just decided to accuse them of being controlled by Beijing. She said, go back to China, where your headquarters is. I guess she just is going to accuse them of being controlled by a foreign country, or questioning their loyalties and their patriotism, no matter what. And it is just kind of which country she decides to accuse them of being loyal to changes day by day. Now, just to underscore how central this belief is in Democratic Party politics, that everyone is connected to Russians, everyone is controlled by Russians, The New York Times reporter Ken Vogel noted today that Adam Schiff sent out a fundraising letter and as Vogel put it, the fundraising letter says, quote, "He proved that Trump's campaign colluded with Russia". Now, and by the way, this email begins by saying, "I've been called 'shifty Schiff', 'pencil neck', a 'scam socialist', and a whole lot worse". And then he was referring to how the Republican Senate candidate, Steve Garvey, had called Adam Schiff a liar for saying that he had smoking gun evidence that the Russians and Trump colluded to interfere in the 2016 election. And he then goes on to say that actually, during his time as chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, he was able to prove exactly that connection. Even though the special counsel that he references here, Robert Mueller closed his investigation after 18 months without ever charging anyone with that core conspiracy; criminal collusion or conspiracy with the Russian government to interfere in the 2016 election. They charged people for alleged crimes during the investigation. They convicted Trump's campaign manager, Paul Manafort on various unrelated tax issues and financial issues involving his lobbying efforts. But on the core question of whether the Trump campaign criminally colluded with the Russians, not only did Adam Schiff charge zero Americans with that crime, but he also explicitly stated in his report when he submitted his report at the close of the investigation, we could not find evidence that established this conspiracy. That was the

framing, the words that he used. And yet, in Democratic Party politics, in the mind of Adam Schiff, the Trump Russia collusion conspiracy theory wasn't debunked, it was actually something that was proven. To the point where Adam Schiff can boast about how he was the one who actually proved it.

Now, again, this is what Democrats have been doing for years. You wind them up and they accuse people, whoever they're trying to defeat, whoever they're trying to undermine of being financing controlled by the Russians. Here's the Washington Post from February 2020. This was the day after Bernie Sanders had won first Iowa then New Hampshire, and then had a massive victory in Nevada, where he looked like he was on the way to the nomination. And the Washington Post published this report, quote, *Bernie Sanders briefed by U.S. Officials that Russia is trying to help his presidential campaign*'. Here from the Washington Post, in July of 2020. So right as the Black Lives Matter protests were unfolding in the United States. They reported the following, quote, *Russia's disinformation campaigns are targeting African Americans*. "Russia is making its involvement by outsourcing its disinformation operations to West Africa. During this summer's historic Black Lives Matter protests across the United States, social media platforms have been rife with disinformation". And then they go on to blame Russia for help sowing the seeds of racial divide in the United States. And so Nancy Pelosi sees protesters, she's enraged by them because they're targeting her events and protesting outside of her house and the only thing she can say, because this is how Democrats reflexively respond to anyone opposed to them, is, I want the FBI to investigate them. Because somehow they're doing the bidding of the Kremlin and even potentially being financed by them, even though she decided to switch that to China.

So, again, it's tempting to dismiss this as just kind of the rantings of a woman who's ageing. She's above 80 years old. She's obviously extremely angry at these protesters for being at her house. But the reality is, that this is not aberrational in Democratic Party politics. Weaponizing the FBI, accusing people with no evidence of being linked to the Kremlin for exercising their constitutional rights to protest in the United States; this has been Democratic Party discourse for eight years, and it just is so embedded in Nancy Pelosi that just the slightest bit of anger or emotion causes her to make that accusation, even though it's so preposterous on its face. And the belief that the FBI can be summoned to go after people who are protesting her because of her support for a war that huge numbers of Americans oppose, it's just a very mask off moment in terms of how authoritarian so many of these people are in Washington who spend way too much time in power and start to believe that it's some kind of an entitlement that they have, as opposed to anything resembling, quote unquote, what they call it "public service."

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