



Trump Opens Up Talks with Putin to Finally End Bloody Ukraine War

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Glenn Greenwald (GG): The war in Ukraine began, for all intents and purposes, in February of 2022, which is more than three full years now. And I remember very well when it started, and you could see the flood of propaganda that always emerges in the wake of a war that the United States wants to convince its population to pay for or be involved in, that we were going to end up being involved in this war, and from the beginning, the question I always had, I had a lot of questions, but the primary question I had was: In which conceivable way does involvement in this war benefit the United States? It was a war that was a border dispute between two countries that have a very long complex history, a shared complex history between one another. They had actually been in a low-grade conflict since 2014, ever since the United States, led by Victoria Nuland, went to Kiev and incited a coup that overthrew the democratically elected president of Ukraine a year before his constitutional term was about to end. And Russia in retaliation, then annexed Crimea, what had been a part of Ukraine but had been for centuries part of Russia, which is filled with people who are Russian-speaking, who are ethnic Russians, who identify as Russian, would far more want to be a part of Russia than Ukraine, and there has been an attempt ever since for that eight years to try and preserve the ability of the Russian-speaking and ethnic Russians in eastern Ukraine and the Donbas and elsewhere to preserve their right to speak Russian, to preserve their culture, to be free of repression of the kind that was emanating from Kiev. And there were all sorts of things that the United States knew that it could do, that it could provoke Russia to invade Ukraine. There were memos floating all around Washington for years saying, these are the things that are the red lines for Moscow, not just for Putin but for everybody in Moscow, including his opponents, and these are the things that if we do, we will force them to essentially invade eastern Ukraine. And the United States then proceeded to do all of them, seemingly wanting Russia to invade Ukraine. In February 2022, they did that, and the United States immediately announced under the Biden administration that we were going to fund this war, we were going to give Ukraine all the weapons and the money they needed in order to win. NATO capitals did the same, and the way in which victory was defined was almost guaranteed to

ensure that this war would go on forever or that it would end, and the United States and NATO would lose humiliatingly. The definition of victory was expelling every last Russian troop from every inch of Ukrainian soil, including what Ukraine looked like prior to 2014, namely part of Crimea being part of Ukraine, and that was never going to happen. There was zero chance that the Russians, with the United States and NATO all throughout Ukraine exerting influence, manipulating elections, having installed a leader after a coup, was going to allow NATO to take back Crimea, a geostrategically crucial piece of property, piece of territory, given its access to the Black Sea and its long history as part of Russia. They would have used nuclear weapons before they permitted NATO to take back Crimea, or even drive them out of eastern Ukraine, given the stakes that they have in that part of Ukraine. And despite NATO doing everything, spending hundreds of billions of dollars, sending all kinds of advanced weapons, doing things it promised over and over it wouldn't do, and then did, like sending tanks and fighter jets, the Russians evaded sanctions, they fortified their military, they spent huge amounts of money on the war, they, in many ways, fortified their economy and their country became stronger and stronger, and they were able to defeat the entire West by continuing their expansion into Russia [Ukraine], moving westward, holding on to Crimea. The Ukrainian front line is collapsing, and the United States spent hundreds of billions of dollars, causing the loss of life of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians, including many increasingly who did not want to go and fight, and yet were forced to physically, and it ended up being an absolute bloodbath, a complete waste of the kind that was very predictable.

And yet the position of the Democratic Party in the election under Kamala Harris, or Joe Biden and Kamala Harris was: We're going to continue this war. We don't care. We're going to let Ukraine be destroyed. We're going to keep killing huge numbers of people. And Donald Trump repeatedly vowed that he would end this war, and Americans voted for him on that basis, and now he, with not even a month in office, is starting to take serious steps in order to try and end this war as promised. One of the steps that he took was that he picked up the phone and called the president of Russia, Vladimir Putin, the first time American and Russian leaders have spoken in years. It's mind-boggling. During the Cold War, when they would have proxy wars, all over the world, the American and Soviet leaders would speak all the time because of fear that if they didn't, it would create a climate of misperception and conflict that could easily escalate to major war, including nuclear war, as almost happened during the Cuban Missile Crisis, which happened through miscommunication, misperception. And yet ever since Russiagate, Washington decided that they wouldn't speak to the Russians, that even speaking to the Russians is a crime. Michael Flynn almost went to prison because when he was the incoming National Security Advisor in 2016, he did what he should have done, which is pick up the phone and called his counterparts in the foreign ministry of Russia and said: Hey, we want to create a good relationship with you as we start our administration. And the FBI decided that that was a crime and created a perjury trap for him by forcing him to come and answer questions about that call, and when there were discrepancies between what they knew he said because they were eavesdropping on it and what he in fact said, he said because it's what he remembered, they tried to prosecute him. So they created a climate where it was almost criminal for the two sides to speak to one another, which is madness.

Trump wants to end this war, so he picked up the phone and called Vladimir Putin today, and here was his account of that conversation he posted earlier today on Truth Social. Quote, "I just had a lengthy and highly productive phone call with President Vladimir Putin of Russia. We discussed Ukraine, the Middle East, energy, artificial intelligence, the power of the dollar, and various other subjects. We both reflected on the great history of our nations and the fact that we fought so successfully together in World War II, remembering that Russia lost tens of millions of people and we likewise lost so many. We each talked about the strengths of our respective nations and the great benefit that we will someday have in working together, but first, as we both agreed, we want to stop the millions of deaths taking place in the war with Russia and Ukraine. President Putin even used my very strong campaign motto of, quote, 'common sense'".

Oh, this is a phrase that Donald Trump invented, "common sense", and he was very flattered because Vladimir Putin copied this incredibly innovative phrase, "common sense" that Trump used and Putin used it as well. He went on, quote, "We both believe very strongly in it. We agreed to work together very closely, including visiting each other's nations. We have also agreed to have our respective teams start negotiating immediately and we will begin by calling President Zelensky of Ukraine to inform him of the conversation, something which I will be doing right now. I have asked Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Director of CIA John Ratcliffe, National Security Advisor Michael Waltz, and Ambassador and Special Envoy Steve Witkoff to lead the negotiations, which I feel strongly, will be successful. Millions of people have died in a war that would not have happened if I were president, but it did happen, so it must end. No more lives should be lost. I want to thank President Putin for his time and effort with respect to this call and for the release yesterday of Marc Fogel, a wonderful man that I personally greeted at the White House last night. I believe this effort will lead to a successful conclusion, hopefully soon".

Obviously, I had my criticism of Donald Trump. I shared them last night for 45 minutes to an hour with respect to Gaza, and I've shared them with respect to other topics as well, including the attempt to target pro-Palestinian speech, but in this case, he deserves nothing but credit. In Washington, it has been a kind of mania, a psychosis, not to even try to end this war, not to pick up the phone and negotiate, wanting the war to go on, despite how senseless it is, despite how destructive it is, despite how deadly it is. This is what Joe Biden and whoever was acting in Joe Biden's name should have been doing for years had they had any intention of trying to end the war, but they don't, and Trump does.

He then did in fact call Zelensky, and he posted this report about what happened there. Quote, "I just spoke to President Vladimir Zelensky of Ukraine. The conversation went very well. He, like President Putin, wants to make peace. We discussed a variety of topics having to do with the war, but mostly the meeting that is being set up on Friday in Munich, where Vice President J.D. Vance and Secretary of State Marco Rubio will lead the delegation. I am hopeful that the results of that meeting will be positive. It is time to stop this ridiculous war, where there has been massive and totally unnecessary death and destruction. God bless the people of Russia and Ukraine".

I've talked about this before, and I'm going to say it again, because it is always so striking to me, I've seen a good number of presidents in my lifetime, American presidents, and every single one of them, with the exception of Trump in the first term, has involved the United States in new wars. So we talk about war all the time. We're always debating which war we're going to go fight, who we're going to go bomb, and Trump, more than any other major leader, not just president, but any major national figure, emphasises the most important part of wars, which is that they kill huge numbers of people. And when he talks about wanting to avoid war, he emphasises his desire to avoid that mass death. Now that doesn't mean he's a pacifist. If the war in Gaza restarts with his encouragement, there are a lot of people who will be ending up being killed in Gaza as a result of what Trump has been doing, so I'm not in any way suggesting that he's some sort of angelic figure when it comes to these conflicts, but the reality is that he does think about and speak about in a very visceral way, in a very unusual way, the fact that wars first and foremost end huge numbers of lives. And in both of those statements, he has emphasised the importance of ending them for that reason. And the only way to end them would be for the American president to pick up the phone and call the president of Russia and then call the president of Ukraine and say he wants these wars to end and begin the process of negotiating how they can be diplomatically resolved. Here is Trump speaking earlier today at the White House about some of this.

Donald Trump (DT): So we're getting security on our money. We're going to have it secured by – they have raw earth and they have oil and gas and they have a lot of other things. And we're asking for security in our money. They've agreed to it. Ukraine has agreed to it.

Press: Does that mean you are not sending anymore aid to Ukraine?

DT: No, we are, but we want it secured and the money is going to be secured.

Press: When will the US stop sending aid?

DT: Because if we didn't do that, then Putin would say he won. We're the thing that's holding it back. And frankly, we'll go as long as we have to go.

So obviously Trump's not going to say we're going to abandon Ukraine starting today, we're cutting them all off, because there has to be a negotiation process to end the war. And if Russia knew that the United States was no longer going to send any money to Ukraine, there'd be no negotiation. Putin would have no reason to negotiate. He would just roll over Ukraine because the United States would abandon them. Trump's not going to do that. But what he is saying is that in order for us to continue to send aid, not just for the war, but even afterwards, they're going to need all sorts of reconstruction and resources to rebuild, he's saying we're not going to just give Ukraine money for free. We want the rights to their minerals, which is part of Trump's worldview that the United States is not going to use its resources to continue to rebuild other countries, to construct and nation-build in other countries, that he's only going to spend the resources of the United States if he gets something in return.

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