

NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

NUCLEAR DANGERS: A Virtual Series

The Ukraine War, One Year Later

March 2, 2023

Transcript

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Daniel Ellsberg, Noam Chomsky, and Richard Falk

INH: Good morning and good afternoon and good evening to our distinguished participants, and to all of you who are with us today. My name is Ivana Nikolić Hughes, I am the President of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, actually, the new president as of August, and I'm truly and deeply honored and humbled to welcome you all to our event today. We have with us today two of the giants of the 20th and 21st centuries. It's one thing to be a giant in one century it's quite another to be a giant in two centuries. They are Professor Noam Chomsky and Mr. Daniel Ellsberg, two of the bravest and most thoughtful and wise thinkers and intellectuals, who truly need no introduction. That said, we will put their biographies, short versions of their biographies, in the chat for anyone who's interested in some of the details. Also with us tonight are two Nuclear Age Peace Foundation Board Members and intellectual giants: our Senior Vice President Professor Richard Falk, and Ms. Cynthia Lazaroff. And I just want to say about Cynthia and Richard how deeply and how much I have enjoyed working with both of them at the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation in the last year and just how much their support has meant to me.

So, what we are going to tonight (I'm in London so I apologize to everyone in a different time zone if you hear me saying tonight), what we're hoping to do is really to inject some reason into the discussion of the Ukraine War; to talk about where this conflict has been since 2014 and in the last year, and where it is going. Specifically, we will address and discuss the nuclear threat. We are going to talk about the role that escalation in conventional Warfare is playing, we will discuss peace as a dirty word and we will talk about the role of the media, and what we as people and nuclear abolitionists can do at this moment. I'm going to, at this point, without further ado, hand off to Cynthia Lazaroff, who will be moderating this discussion. I really just want to thank everybody for being with us today and to thank our participants for sharing their wisdom and knowledge with all of us. So thank you and Cynthia, the floor is all yours.

CL: Thank you, Ivana, I am so honored to be back here with you all today, at what's really a truly perilous moment. It's a rare privilege to be in conversation with you again now, Dan, Noam, and Richard; and I just want to take a moment to acknowledge each and all of you. Thank you for all you've done to sound the alarm on nuclear dangers for more than half a century through extraordinary courage, dedication, and leadership over these many years. Thank you for never giving up on championing the quest for peace and nuclear disarmament and for joining us today for this urgent conversation on nuclear dangers the Ukraine war one year later. To get us started, here is our first question:

Looking back, one year after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, where do we stand today

vs. a year ago? What are the human, financial and environmental costs of this war to date, for the peoples of Ukraine, Russia, NATO member states and the world? How worried are you about Russia's suspension of New START and how do you assess the risk of escalation to a nuclear exchange today compared to a year ago? Do you think we are sleepwalking into a nuclear catastrophe? What do you think the prospects are for a ceasefire and negotiated settlement, what is it going to take for this war to come to an end, and what can people do to help make this happen?

So I'd like to begin by inviting you Dan, to comment on this, I know it's a broad sweeping set of questions, but would really like an assessment on where you see we are today.

DE: I'd be happy to start with Noam if that's okay with him.

CL: Noam, would you like to go first?

NC: Okay, so let me start with whether we're sleep-walking into disaster.

At the height of the British Empire, the essence of British imperialism was captured with a little ditty by Hilaire Belloc, who said, "Whatever happens, we have got the Maxim gun and they have not." That's imperialism. After the Second World War, the African essayist Chinweizu modified that, he said, "Whatever happens, we have got the atom bomb, and they have not." Well, now both sides have the atom bomb. Outside of the United States and Europe, the Ukraine War has been regularly described as a proxy war between Russia and the United States over Ukrainian bodies. It's getting harder and harder to pretend that that's not what's happening. By now, Washington has openly admitted that U.S forces are directly controlling the firing of the precision weapons, the main weapon of defense for Ukraine against the invasion. Now tanks are being sent and soon it will be jet planes. It's hard to see how we can stop moving up the escalation ladder.

Now, where do we stand? Neither side will back down, both Russia and the United States have taken a position which says, "Too much is at stake, can't back down." Neither Russia nor the United States can be defeated. They can move up to more destructive weapons, up to the final ones. Well, there's a consequence, if you think it through, either there will be a diplomatic solution or there will be species suicide. It's pretty much where we now stand. To take a look around the world, almost the entire world is calling for a diplomatic solution: stop the horrors now before they get worse. We just saw a dramatic example of that at the Munich Strategic Conference a couple of weeks ago. The United States is demanding that the rest of the world join us in our position that the war, and it's the official U.S position that, the war just must continue in order to severely weaken Russia.

Diplomat after diplomat stood up, including our close allies and Latin America saying we don't want this. We don't want species suicide, we want a settlement before it gets worse. In the west, Western Europe, the elite elements are going along with the United States. For the general population, far less clear. There are opinion polls that show strong support for a negotiated settlement, there was just a huge demonstration in Berlin: 50,000 people or so protesting, calling for the same thing. Well, that's where we stand on diplomatic solution to species suicide.

Turn to the other side of the world, China, top (U.S.) Air Force General Mike Minihan just announced that in two years we'll be at war with China. How are we reacting? Just keeping to official formulations. The United States is committed to encircling China with sentinel States armed with Advanced Precision weapons aimed at China. You know it recently sent B-52s to permanent installations in Darwin, Australia, not that far from China; also to Guam recently. Marines are now moving towards exercises in Island hopping, Iwo Jima, sort of things as if that would ever be involved in a serious war. Taiwan, of course, is the major flash point. The U.S is taking quite provocative actions. The Biden Administration has declared economic war on China to prevent its development. It's trying to compel Europe, Japan, South Korea to join in. Meanwhile, China's moving ahead with its enormous loan investment development programs: the Belt and Road initiative throughout Eurasia, reaching into Africa, Middle East, even into Latin America. Much to the U.S's distress, guns aren't going to stop it. Well, what happens next? We don't have to be just spectators. We'd better not be.

A couple of comments on the rest of the question. I don't have to review the costs, they're pretty obvious. Not just for Ukraine, which is where the suffering is greatest. Starvation, and much of the world dealing with grain and fertilizer export curtailment. There is the threat of escalation, reversal of the limited efforts, much through limited efforts to deal with the climate crisis, now reversed long term. Maybe the most dangerous impact. There are gains. Take a look at the executive offices of fossil fuel pump producers, military industries, the banks that finance them, total euphoria. Unprecedented profits new opportunities for enormous profit by destroying life on Earth. From the U.S military point of view, for a small percentage, very small percentage of the Colossal military budget the U.S is able to degrade the Russian military substantially. Sub-ordinate geopolitical dimension. We'll go through the whole history. But since for 80 years the US has been trying to prevent Europe from moving towards its natural trading partners, commercial partners in the east, Putin at least for the time being, has driven Europe into the U.S pocket. Enormous victory for the U.S. So yes, there

are gainers. The rest of the world is losing.

What about the suppression of new START? But we should recall that in this Century, the arms control regime has been laboriously developed for 60 years. It's been dismantled in the century by the Republican administrations, Bush the second dismantled the ABM Treaty, it's quite serious, also a serious threat to Russia. Trump eliminated the Reagan-Gorbachev non-NPT short-range missiles; treaties to show that the United States with, the INF treaty, to show the U.S was serious, he immediately launched a missile test that violated the treaty; eliminated the Open Skies treaty that goes back to Eisenhower. All that's left is the New Start treaty, which was rescued by days literally. Trump was going to dismantle it. Biden came in just in time to save it.

Going back to the truism of the current situation: either we face species suicide or we reach a diplomatic settlement. Are there possibilities? Well, the media don't even discuss it. The U.S is calling for continuing the war, so there's no immediate discussion of the prospects for peace. There is some evidence, mostly from Ukrainian sources, last March, under Turkish auspices there were Russia-Ukraine negotiations. Then British Prime Minister Boris Johnson flew to Kiev, informed the Ukrainians that the U.S and Britain didn't want it. He was followed by Lloyd Austin, the U.S Secretary of Defense, who presumably gave his usual reiteration of the official policy that the war must continue to weaken Russia. Negotiations collapsed. We don't know exactly why. According to Turkish sources, the United States was not interested. Meanwhile, positions have hardened, they look irreconcilable. It's not unusual: diplomacy can try small steps. There are proposals. In *Le Monde diplomatique*, a couple of French analysts just gave a detailed series of proposals. Can it work? There's only one way to find out and that's to try. You don't try, you can't find out and there is an alternative: species suicide.

CL: Thank you so much Noam, for sharing your wisdom. Dan, would you like to share?

DE: Let me take off where Noam was just speaking and go to your immediate question, where do we stand right today? In the end of your question was, what do you think the prospects are for ceasefire. Well, we stand right now, it would say by every standard, in a stalemate at war. But with each side preparing offensives, which unfortunately they believe, they hope and they believe will improve their bargaining position at this stage of the war. I doubt that either side thinks that this next offensive will win the war on their terms, but I think they do hope, probably wrongly, that it will improve the positions the locations they are holding and somehow strengthen their hand for negotiations. Each side, if no one pointed out, is now claiming and seems quite committed to conditions, even for negotiations, that are totally incompatible and I would say will never be

achieved. For example, Zelensky has changed since a year ago when he did seem open and indeed Russia seemed open to this in Istanbul, and I think the mediator there was the Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, who reported that they thought they were close to an agreement, essentially to return to the pre-February 24th, return to pre-February 23rd, 2022, with Russian troops (as I read the reports) actually retreating from where they were and are at this time back to where they were just before their invasion started. And with NATO, with Ukraine being confirmed that it would not be in NATO. Putin had asked for signed assurance, but some kind of assurance, that could have been given 20 years ago at any time. But given that Russia would, Crimea would be at least an autonomous state, as it has been for the last eight years, now annexed by Russia but in some ways that would be finessed that Crimea would be under Russian control essentially.

Apparently, there was an agreement, which according to the report, Boris Johnson of Britain flew to assure that if Zelensky made any such concessions or compromises--any agreement like that would not be agreed to by the Allies, like U.S and the U.K in particular. And the U.S confirmed that. It was pointed out very shortly after that, it was the Secretary of Defense, Lloyd Austin, who said, our aim was to continue the war to weaken Russia. Now, Zelensky, has now hanged a lot, allegedly after the various massacres that they discovered atrocities and certainly with the huge losses on both sides. Those are said to be a hundred thousand casualties killed so far on both sides, on each side, and sure to be many many more in the upcoming Invasion. Well, that has hardened positions understandably on both sides, and whether we can get back to pre-February 2022 is very much in question. But when Zelensky says, before negotiating as a condition of negotiating, every Russian troop must be out of Crimea. Well, that's forever. That's not going to happen I believe. And if it came close to happening, I'll come back to that later, especially if the U.S joined the war directly, it would then not be within the realm of impossibility to really threaten the Russian position even in Crimea and in the Donbas; and in that situation with the U.S directly, with its pilots and combat troops and missiles, directly in the war, more than it is now, I believe that Putin would very likely carry out his threat to initiate tactical nuclear war--at least with, obviously, a very great danger; even a probability, a high priority of escalating to and all-out war. Which, would threaten all of humanity with nuclear winter, probably 90 to 98 percent of people would starve within a year, of that all-out order. Mostly are the effects of smoke in the stratosphere from burning cities that would surround the globe, block sunlight, 70 percent of it, and kill all harvests. So, I would say every person in the world has a stake in preventing that from happening, and that means persuading the U.S to continue what Biden is saying so far at least, not to send F16s and American fighters of various kinds,

into the war to threaten Putin to carry out to trigger him, possibly, to carry out these threats, which I think should be recognized by everyone in the world as monstrous, insane, immoral.

Why isn't that being said by almost anybody? I don't think anybody in the West. Well because NATO has been based on those threats for 70 years, this image still making them and refusing throughout, especially led by the US, to adopt a no-first-use policy (which would cut against the doctrine of NATO), which has been based on first-use threats forever, but could be changed. It's not you wouldn't have to change the treaty, a membership in it, you just change a threat policy and readiness policy. It has been insane, and immoral at least, since the mid-60s, when both sides, when Russia had the same color as U.S. And really going back to the mid-50s, at the very beginnings of NATO, 1949. By the mid-50s, Russia had the ability to annihilate West Europe, not the US across the ocean, but in West Europe, they had more than enough throughout and ever since, to annihilate West Europe, our allies, with short-range and medium-range planes and missiles; which they of course still have nuclear warheads, and that's in addition to the fact that we now know, for the last 30 years thanks to Carl Sagan, Alan Robock, Brian Toon, and a number of Russian scientists, Trenchikov and others, that our own attacks would cause a nuclear winter, which I've just described: of the smoke being lofted from the burning cities which we still target, in the sense that we absolutely still target military targets so-called command and control posts, underground, for ground bursts, nearby missile fields, reigns of airfields in almost every city, all the military industries. As always, we would target them, and even without the smoke, our plans in 1961 foresaw killing 600 million people, a hundred Holocaust, with our own attack, not counting the 100 million or so or more that would be killed by the Russians in Europe in retaliation. A few years later they got the capability to do the same thing in the U.S.

I think it's fair to say that a readiness to carry out that plan, the weapons for it, the deployment, the training, the doctrine to which they swear, the exercises, are insane and immoral. But they've kept the two sides worried enough about that instability, "omnicidal potential," but indeed we haven't seen U.S and Russian troops (Soviet Russian troops) ever firing at each other. Overtly, there have in fact been a number of pilots on each side killed in covert actions, this would be insider knowledge. But in terms of actually shooting down a Russian or an American by one or the other by the adversary, Major Anderson when I was in the Pentagon in the Cuban Missile Crisis on October 26th I believe it was 27th or 26th, was shot down by a Soviet commander who was violating his orders from Khrushchev and Moscow. He on his own joined Castro's anti-aircraft in shooting down an American U2, which Khrushchev was very very worried about. That's

the single one that's ever been killed directly in all these years going back to 1919 when we sent troops over to Eastern Siberia to try to put down the Bolsheviks. Ever since, not.

In that time surprisingly to a lot of us, including me, each side has been willing to lose a war or see it stalemated without using nuclear weapons. I would not have thought that possible in a nuclear age. But we were stalemated in Korea, we lost in Vietnam, the ending in Afghanistan, all without using nuclear weapons. The Russians were stalemated and then lost in Afghanistan without using nuclear weapons against them, which could have been used, just like, comments, that you know they're not feasible. Actually, Neutron bombs of the kind, my former RAND (Corporations) colleague Sam Cohen, invented, he liked to be called "the father of the neutron bomb," they would have been quite effective in various parts close to friendly troops, in some of these areas. And I noticed there's just been a big tank battle today in Ukraine, the Russians are said to have lost by extremely awful tactics. The neutron bomb, which worldwide protests stopped in 1978 when President Carter had promised it to Europe, he drew back in the face of demonstrations. I was arrested, not that was later, that was in 1983, against the Pershing in Germany, but large demonstrations all over the world against the neutron bomb. Reagan brought it back. The Russians have it, the French have it, or we have it. It may be in the storehouse now, regardless a little obsolete, but it's perfect for tanks. That's what Cohen designed it for. It kills the crews of the tanks through, without widespread radiation which would threaten friendly sources in their vicinity. Well, that would be a possibility. What we're facing now is a real prospect of Russians and Americans shooting each other. And neither side, has faced the possibility: of the prospect of being defeated or stalemated by its peer adversary. To be defeated by the Afghans or the Vietnamese, you can say, "Well, we just cut losses it wasn't worth it, it wasn't that important." And it's very perfectly obvious that those people could not defeat you, they could just stalemate you to a point that people hadn't expected and they could inflict cost on you, but they couldn't really defeat you. But you had superpower adversary, if you back down in front of that, forces being lost on both sides, your status as an Empire, leaders of the Empire, are directly challenged within their domestic politics and their influence in the world; and we haven't seen that test, and I hope we don't.

So that means that there has to be public pressure coming back to how could this be avoided to say, as such, to initiate nuclear war now mainly threatened by Russia imminently in the Ukraine if they face to protect Crimea and the Donbas. To protect them from losing that position which they've had for eight years and where they, as Noam said, where virtually every Russian regard Crimea as Russian, and the most controversial on the Donbas, but to some degree, Putin has called it Russia. Is there going to an

agreement where Putin gets his current objectives for negotiation? Of being recognized that he has annexed all of the Donbas? When he has not occupied much of Donbas, much of Donetsk, as a condition of negotiations? I don't think so, they're not moving toward negotiations now. Just as when in World War II, Japanese, they had lost, Truman knew they were going to lose in 1943, but it went on for two more years. In our civil war, 1863, it was clear after Gettysburg that the South was going to lose. Two more bloody years. Nobody wants to be in the position of being responsible for having lost part of its own territory as it regards it, whether others do or not. So, the killing can go on. When these offensives have ended in their first instance in this spring, and I would guess both failed or whatever, it would again be, I think more of an opportunity for the world to say continuing this has too much prospect of bringing the US and NATO directly into this war. So far Putin has refrained from hitting NATO territory in Poland and elsewhere. We've kept the Ukrainians down so far from hitting Russia more than somewhat, a few attacks – dangerous, but not all out. But if the U.S came in, the rest of the world has a right to say you don't have a right, and Russia neither, to subject us to this risk. And I would like to see individual members of NATO in Europe recognize now that for the first time they are looking at the barrel down the barrel of nuclear first-use-threats that are not being issued by their allies and their Alliance, by the U.S, the "good guns," and they're looking at Putin's threats and recognizing what they should have seen all along: that they should not be part of an alliance. Or put it this way, they should not be part of an alliance that insists on first-use threats. Put it another way, they should condemn and reject first use threats. In Sweden and Finland for sure, before they get in, they shouldn't be joining an alliance that relies on first-use threats, which NATO does. Well, we're not going to stop them from getting in, but how about a public movement that says: for the first time, individual countries in NATO, the Netherlands, Germany, where most of the public has wanted U.S weapons out of Germany, the parliament has voted for decades to do that. Not at this moment, thanks to this attack. Putin has been the best salesman for F-35 that Lockheed has ever seen, hundreds are now being replace, every one of those F-35s is nuclear capable in Europe. It's a first use-only weapon, it can only be used first because it's soft on an airfield that is well located by the Russians. It would be destroyed even by a Russian non-nuclear attack, let alone a nuclear attack. So they're accepting weapons in Belgium, Netherlands, Italy, that are for first use only. Does the public understand that? I would guess not. And do they know what the consequences of that would be? Those weapons should be all out, each one could say we're not part of this, but they don't. They don't know that that's the nature of those weapons, they think of them as defensive, retaliating to a Russian nuclear attack. They can't survive a Russian nuclear attack any more than our ICBMs can in the U.S, so they're nothing but a hair trigger who are doing the same machine. So I'm saying that can be, we'll come back to this probably, we'll just

say that can be a demand right now. It can have a lot of attraction right now, but especially when negotiations are in the air, when we're back to a stalemate in a few months, even in the minds of these people that we must ceasefire, compromise, make compromises on both sides short of the demands they're making now, short of the demands we're pushing now, because as Noam says, the Alternatives threatens everybody in the world.

CL: Thank you, Dan. Thank you, Dan, for those very sobering comments. And now, I'd like to go to you, Richard, to share your wisdom and comments on what Noam and Dan have told us.

RF: It's difficult to follow Noam and Dan. They've both given us a brilliant insight into what really amounts to an apocalyptic tipping point in human history, where the alternatives, as both Dan and Noam expressed it very clearly, are some kind of diplomatic accommodation which seems highly implausible and unlikely at this point and more toward a collective or species suicide.

That kind of historical reality, given the quality of leadership in both the U.S and Russia, adds to the moment where a sense of emergency should be present throughout the world. Dan has called upon other countries that would be victimized to take a more active role, and the governments, even those that hold grave reservations about what the Ukraine War portends, have been very reluctant to put forward in any kind of meaningful way. A set of demands from the Global South or a sense that the participants are not just those fighting in Ukraine or supporting one side or the other. It's the whole of the human species. One element that hasn't been mentioned either by these two presentations or the media or generally, is an understanding that hot war, or the Third World War, was prevented during the Cold War by having clear fault lines as to geopolitical boundaries. In other words, Yalta and Potsdam preceded the peace with Germany, the post-war relationships of Europe and the Soviet Union. And they established demarcation lines that were respected by both of these antagonistic superpowers. Had the West reacted to the Soviet intervention in Hungary in 56, or in Eastern Germany and Poland, which it wanted to do--I mean it was appalled by those kinds of violent repressions of popular protests; but wiser views prevailed and there was a total respect on both sides for these demarcation lines. Those don't exist in the post-Cold War world; and the very ambiguity of what would be an unacceptable provocation adds to the danger that is currently faced by the failure to bring this prolonged war in Ukraine to an end. And ambiguity with respect to the geopolitical consequences of the war, is, in my view, part of what makes it so difficult to find a

negotiated, diplomatic way of ending it. The probable ending, whenever it comes - assuming Armageddon is avoided - will be what could have been achieved in the days following the Russian attack, and maybe more easily achieved. I think it's important to know that the proxy war that Noam referred to is not just about the control of Ukraine. It's about the geopolitical balance between the U.S, Russia, and China. Both in my view, both Russia and China, are challenging the notion that only the U.S has a right to use force outside its territorial boundaries. And they're trying to establish traditional zones or spheres of influence and a multi-polar world. So that context of a proxy war with geopolitical strategic stakes is extremely important to the outside actors in a way. For instance, Syrian war was about what who would control Syria, but not about these wider geopolitical relations and that makes this unnecessarily dangerous in ways, for instance, that even the Cuban Missile Crisis was not dangerous. Because there were, deploying nuclear weapons in Cuba was crossing a geopolitical fault-line. The traditional U.S sphere of influence and the present context which the U.S has extended the kind of Monroe Doctrine thinking to the entire world, is a unique situation. There's never been a country that has tried to be a non-territorial global state with military bases spread around the world and controlling space, and the ocean, and not allowing rivals to leave their territorial spaces, you know that combination of things. And I think that the only other thing that I would say is that it's an opportunity because of this dangerous tipping point that we're at, to raise more fundamental questions about the fragility of world peace in the nuclear age, and to re-evaluate the non-participation, for instance, in the U.N negotiated treaty for the prevention of nuclear weaponry that the NATO countries and Russia have both rejected. It's also a time when the rest of the world should be demanding implementation of article 6 of the NPT, calling for nuclear disarmament and even for general and complete disarmament. That's a treaty obligation that has been long ratified and treated as a framework used by the nuclear powers, particularly the U.S, to prevent others from acquiring nuclear weapons. But it's been ignored, and in effect, rejected by the nuclear weapon states themselves. So the most dangerous states in the world are free to act as if they're non-accountable for obligations that they are willing to go to war to prevent others from violating. Presumably, Iran would be attacked if it acquires nuclear weapons, and the attack would be validated by the non-proliferation regime. So we're living in the world of double standards when it comes to nuclear weapons policies and let's hope that publics are awakened by this time of urgency and severe danger.

CL: Thank you all for shedding light on the gravity of the moment we're in, the gravity of what's at stake, that all of our lives are at stake. Noam, for the stark reminder echoed by Dan and Richard that our choice is either a diplomatic solution or species suicide. Dan,

for reminding us of the omnipresent risk of escalation to nuclear use in this war and that this omniscidal nuclear policy has been with us essentially since the dawn of the nuclear age. And that continuing this war has too much of a possibility of bringing NATO and the U.S into the war and thus really risking nuclear war. Also, Richard, your comments about reaching an apocalyptic tipping point in human history, I think, are really important for us. All to be with and that all of this indicates the need for the moral and existential imperative of a ceasefire and a compromise to get us to a negotiated settlement: to avoid Armageddon and even more important ultimately, is the implementation of article 6. And more so, even the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. So thank you for all of those incredibly wise comments and I'd like now to go to our next question.

We've covered some of this in the first question, but I'd like to hear your thoughts about the following: over the course of the war we've witnessed a growing escalation in the lethal weapons the U.S and NATO are supplying to Ukraine, such as more advanced Abrams and Leopard 2 tanks, with calls for fighter jets, more advanced weaponry and giving Ukraine everything it needs to "win the war and weaken Russia." Do you think victory for Ukraine or Russia is possible? Do you see any conditions under which Vladimir Putin would be willing to accept defeat? And with the estimated hundreds of thousands dead, the millions displaced, the massive destruction of Ukrainian cities, in the increasing risk of nuclear escalation, do you think there can be any winners in this war? And finally how does escalating the conventional war impact the prospects for peace?

DE: I'll take a crack at it, just to follow up on the comments. I agree I think Dick Falk has made a very good point in distinguishing between some earlier crisis, specifically Syria. Now remember, Hillary Clinton, as I forget whether she was Secretary of State at the time or a campaigner for president, was calling for a no-fly zone in Syria against Russian airplanes essentially, which would have meant Russians and U.S actually firing at each other, as I said for the first time actually since 1919. And I think it was very right of her, others too, to pull back from that and criticize to say, that would be very too dangerous. But, I agree with Dick in saying it did not really attend the end of the world or a massive escalation, because I believe even in that case both sides would have been wary enough and felt their interests limited enough, I don't think they would have let it escalate to the point of actually using nuclear weapons. This would have been dangerous, but not the way it is now. Russia had a base in Syria, just as they had a base, in Sebastopol and Crimea. But I think we could agree they think very differently about those two bases because the Sebastopol has been in the Black Sea Fleet for a couple hundred years basically, they do regard it as part of Russia, they didn't work on Syria as part of Russia.

The other comparison, is so they would fight for in a way that I think they would not have gone to the same level in Syria. In Cuba, I disagree a little. If it feels that this is much more serious in Cuba, because I think with Cuba, we haven't looked back at Cuba in the light of this one as I think would be very useful. Of course, we regarded Cuba as in our sphere of influence, as we regarded the entire Western Hemisphere: that is the definition of the Monroe Doctrine. Which means that no country in Latin America, least of it all, Cuba, 60 miles, what is it, from Florida, is entitled to join a hostile adversarial alliance or to invite foreigners in for bases and to install weapons. And that's against the Monroe Doctrine, meaning we have increasingly said we don't recognize their sovereignty to do that and we that was clearly in the case of Cuba. That's what's at issue here, having been noticed. It's understandable that Putin is taking the position he does because it's understandable that not only Europe was east Europe, but Ukraine in particular is within a Russian sphere of influence. And when we say, "Oh, we're against sphere of influence, we're for sovereignty, independence, self-determination, each one has the same rights under the..." - that's ridiculous, since no one said we definitely regard the Caribbean and really all of Latin America and other places a lot of other places as subject to our determination as to who they can ally with. And that of course is what Putin has been saying about Ukraine, but it's not just Putin. Going back to Gorbachev, Yeltsin, if any of them, Putin, George Kennan, our senior Diplomat, and others like Jack Matlock, Ambassador to Russia, William Burns, now head of the CIA, then earlier Ambassador to Russia: have all said Ukraine is the reddest of red lines when it comes to expanding NATO. It's all provocative, it's all humiliating and insulting to exclude Russia from a common European home as Gorbachev called for. Ukraine is in a separate category. He's defining a sphere of influence. Going back to Cuba, which I was involved in as a cold warrior, nothing in the Pentagon, actually no one has said that the invasion we were planning covertly first carried out covert support in the Bay of Pigs. But then, against what I expected and many other Americans expected, prolonged president-attempted invasion, which we were practicing and rehearsing throughout 1962. My old division, Second Division of Marines was taking on in Lejeune huge exercises, later other Marines on this against an enemy code named "Ortsac," which Khrushchev did not fail to notice was Castro spelled backwards. He said, "Yes that's a game we used to play as kids." We made no secret of the fact we were going to invade. We were ready to invade, especially if there was a provocation which we were prepared to simulate in operation Northwoods I'll refer people to look it up on Wikipedia. The most aggressive shameful bloody piece of paper I've ever seen in any government, to provoke an attack, a reaction by Russia that would give us the excuse to invade Cuba. Now, that was totally illegal, obviously. If anything was illegal aggression, that was as illegal as the Invasion of Iraq which was total aggression, or the Soviets going into Afghanistan, which we wanted them to do in 1979

and Carter wanted to give a version to them, the Soviets, of our Vietnam.

I might say, I think there were many people who were not unhappy to see Putin invade Ukraine, aggression, even though he regarded it as a sphere of influence on and even as part of Russia. By the way, he's not only killing Neo-Nazis in Ukraine, or primarily. It just somewhat undermines his claim that the Ukrainians are Russians, brothers in the way, that they're being slaughtered there now. But it's what we would have done in Cuba if we'd gone ahead, either before the missiles were there or after. Now what people again don't recognize: Khrushchev had every right, as he answered Castro's request for Soviet forces and missiles. And actually it was Khrushchev, who in particular, pressed the missiles on him. Very right to do that, with Castro's consent definitely, if they were a sovereign independent nation. Which secretly, we were very reluctant to admit. But actually you know, strictly speaking if they were a sovereign independent nation they had a right to have Russian missile bases there. Just as we had missile bases in Turkey, just as close to Russia as missiles in Cuba to us. They were both legal and Khrushchev didn't, didn't threaten to destroy the bases in Turkey, more or less on his border, just as he hasn't threatened to destroy the ABM sites in Poland and in Romania, which could quickly be converted to missile sites, Tomahawk. Wasn't about as I say, the notion of red lines is not totally disappeared. Both sides are observing. If Putin were not, did not pose an implicit, necessarily, nuclear threat, we would be in Ukraine right now, in a big way. We do a hundred thousand troops there tomorrow, we have all our planes. We wouldn't just have F16s, it wouldn't be F35s because they're always in the shop, they they're very unreliable, they can't fly near thunderstorms, for example. But other planes, (we) have F16s, F22s would be there, if, if it weren't the fact that President Biden has to observe the risk of escalation in a world without nuclear weapons. It is the case we would be in there. And likewise, if it weren't for our first use in NATO, Putin would certainly be bombing Polish spaces right now, of supply, as his administration has said these are legitimate ties. And so forth if the whole invasion is legitimate.

What I'm saying is, going back to Cuba, we were on the verge of Russians and U.S troops fighting each other. I was in the Pentagon on a Saturday October 27, 26 which was two days, no, 27, that was Saturday; two days to, 48 hours away from invasion of Cuba being totally ready, partly readied by Maneuvers earlier in the crisis. But we're now taking advantage of those exercises to invade, with the excuse of the missile Center. And for his part, by the way I'm not having here, my old Battalion, Third Battalion second Marines, was scheduled to go into Guantanamo; and Khrushchev told an American representative on the day after the president's speech, the 23rd, Guantanamo will be the first to go, he said, if it goes in. And that's what Castro was claiming on the Friday night just before

that, they were putting cruise missiles for the first time, deploying them close to Guantanamo, enough to destroy Guantanamo right away. So you come in this conflict end (inaudible) and influence which in the minds of these people do exist, whatever the UN charter says; and they have often been reserved as Dick said, very rightly, Hungary Poland Czechoslovakia Germany; sure, they had a right to be rising up, we would have liked for good or bad to help those, and it would have been a good deal of justification for it. But those who said to do that were risking too much and we didn't do it. Notice that Hillary Clinton in this war, in this last year, is again saying a no-fly zone, which means U.S planes shooting not just at Russian planes, but at Russian air defenses on the ground, Russian troops on the ground, an U.S Russian war extremely unwise and she's not the only one of course. So I think in Cuba, one last aspect here that is a very very ominous that most people don't know. U2 were shut down Friday, Saturday morning. On Friday night, during the night, Castro was composing a letter in the Soviet Embassy in Cuba when he composed and recomposed was a very delicate subject, he finally said an invasion is almost certain within 24 or 48 hours. And he knew, he knew that, which we didn't, that the Russians had over a hundred tactical nuclear weapons in Cuba, which we didn't know. We knew they had some Dual Purpose, we didn't know they had nuclear warheads, which they did, including nuclear warheads for the missiles. So it's an invasion coming, Castro said, the war will be nuclear; he did not say to Khrushchev which he was writing to: it's off you know it'll be nuclear, it will, if they invade, guerrilla warfare. That's what we've been practicing, you know for, since we got in and the whole Army is organized for: that should not be a nuclear war. He didn't say that. He could have said don't use, or order your people not to use those weapons. Instead, he said it will be nuclear, that means it will go global, eventually--a very good prediction if it started as. And he said, in that case, if it was specifically what he said: do not do what Stalin did against the German invasion of Barbarossa in the Second World War and let them get the drop. If the invasion starts, you should go first on this. And then he said he had it and said on other occasions. Cuba will be annihilated, but socialism will prevail. As he said later, he was under the delusion that the Russians had at least 200 missiles at that time, we had 40 ICBMs they had about 10. So he said if I'd known that I wouldn't have made that suggestion. But he said in terms of just using that, but you know the world didn't know it, and Khrushchev didn't tell him, had not told him: no this is impossible. Khrushchev's reaction to that letter was, I'm a lied to a Madman. And ultimately, he took out the tactical weapons, which we didn't know about, and which he intended to leave, but hadn't warned us about. Dr Strange, he was going to be a surprise if we invaded. What I'm saying is extremely reckless and unwise behavior among heads of state all around, with Castro being the youngest, but the one whose territory was directly threatened, like Zelensky right now. And the one ready to see better did and read, I never

quite understood that because in invasion they had planned for guerrilla warfare, as in Vietnam. But no, with a total acceptance, we'll be annihilated but world socialism, will survive. Crazy, actually. But they were all crazy, they were all taking crazy risks. In our allies were cheering us on. Same situation now right now so I'm taking enough time here, maybe we'll come back to that, but I'll say no nation in the world, no other nation has made the protest here. There are some who are fading. There's something, you know, not criticizing either side. Actually, the stakes are very much bigger than that right now for the people in the world. There should be a lot of condemnation and intervention. And saying, we went into Iraq, there should have been sanctions against us, all over the world; and prosecutions, fat chance, right? So, nobody did that. In this case, were separated now in two sides. But everybody has stake in other nations at least can separate themselves, even NATO allies from from a situation. In Germany, in Italy, and France have clearly shown a desire to see negotiations here. But how far have they acted on it? And will they do so? Because they say that is basically the only hope. Neither of these leaders, Zelensky, uh Biden, or Putin, not only have shown no likelihood, they really are very unlikely to take the initiative in suggesting a loss for their current aims and their country, so it has to be other people in the world who say: we are all Hostage to your decisions and you have no right to put us in that position.

CL: Thank you, thank you Dan. Noam.

NC: Well, we should recognize that, going back to the question, will Vladimir Putin be willing to accept defeat? We should recognize that the United States is taking a ghastly gamble. That's a gamble with the fate of Ukraine and the fate of the world. The gamble is to assume that if Putin is facing defeat, he will quietly pack his bags slink away to a bitter fate. He might. Or he might do something else: he might use the conventional weapons, which everyone knows he has, to carry out an attack on Ukraine comparable to something like the U.S style war. When the U.S goes to war in Iraq or other countries, we go straight for the jugular: destroy everything that makes the society viable: energy, transportation, communication, anything that makes the society work. No foreign leader took a trip to Baghdad while the U.S and Britain were smashing it to pieces. That's conventional weapons. U.S and British military analysts had been quite surprised that Russia didn't turn to this at once in the U.S/British style, or style of Israel in Gaza, for example. Now they're starting and it's bitterly condemned, rightly, and it could extend to make Kiev unlivable, Western Ukraine, all short of nuclear weapons, and then it might go on. So the ghastly gamble is well maybe he won't do it maybe he'll just slink away quietly in defeat. I don't know what the words are to describe this.

There's a further question which is not asked: Will the U.S be willing to accept defeat? Not too likely. Too much is at stake, as both Dan and Dick pointed out. What's at stake is global power, something new. So we have the same conclusion as before, species suicide, if there's no diplomatic settlement. Well, as I said before, the world is split. U.S and British, the US and British and European Elites are calling for escalation, notice, "elites." Polls show majority support for negotiations. There are as I mentioned negotiate demonstrations and protests in Europe. As far as the rest of the world, calls for diplomacy to end the horrors before it becomes worth. India, Indonesia, Brazil, Africa. Kamala Harris in Munich instructed the world that, no country is safe if one state is able, with impunity, to violate territorial boundaries and attack another. I mean maybe that played in the United States, but in the rest of the world, they could barely contain their ridicule: you're telling us that 90% of the world is refusing the sanctions? The world does not want species suicide. Are there winners? Yes. The United States so far is a winner. U.S corporations, the geopolitical victory of having Europe driven into Washington's pocket. Another victor, China. The world is moving towards a multipolar order, something the U.S has sought to block for literally 80 years since the last days of World War II. Can't go into the details, but from then on, a major part of U.S policy is, then, to prevent a multipolar order in which Europe will move towards its natural Partners in the East. May recall that back in the 1940s, George Kennan, who was in charge of U.S negotiations, called for, his words, "walling off Western Germany from the Eastern Zone to prevent the spread of labor right, labor-based ideas" that might infect the west and lead Europe to move towards the kind of independence that the US has always tried to stop. Well, right now, the world is moving towards a multipolar order. New forms of interchange are being developed, non-dollar-based transactions and others as the U.S is more and more isolated in the world. As I mentioned, China's expanding its huge programs through Eurasia, Africa, and Latin America. Well, U.S is trying to prevent it, the methods that I mentioned, the prospects are militarily encircling of B-52s in Darwin and Guam. Huge Naval exercises in the Pacific. the RIMPAC exercises, Taiwan, for 50 years. Not a small period in international affairs. For 50 years, peace has been maintained in the Taiwan region by decisions in the 1970s, U.S--China decisions to accept the one China policy. Namely, Taiwan is part of China, but with a tacit agreement not to disturb the situation by any forceful or provocative means. Nobody is saintly in this story, but the weight of provocation recently is overwhelmingly the United States, includes things like the Reckless visit of Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan followed probably by Kevin McCarthy. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has passed a Taiwan Policy Act, which calls for granting Taiwan the same status as non-native allies, no diplomatic restrictions, normal diplomacy, increased military provision of military spending, interrupt moving towards operability of weapons. So eerily similar to the moves that

were taken in recent years expanding with Biden, with regard to Ukraine. Economically, act to try to prevent technological development in China. Again, highly provocative so far, not much reaction, but we don't know. General Minihan, oversees the Air Forces, the transport and refueling of aircraft, says that war is possible in 2025. That's reminiscent of what Dan described in his Doomsday Machine, among top American planners. Well, fortunately, we escaped that. No security will escape it this time.

CL: Thank you to both of you, Dan for reminding us that we're facing, again, the U.S and Russia troops shooting at each other for the first time since 1919 in the harrowing implications for escalation; the double standard of the U.S that we can have a sphere of influence, but Russia and China and no one else can have that sphere of influence, who we don't agree with; reminding us of the dangers of miscalculation in the fog of war, with Cuba, which is a really important example when the U.S was making plans for an invasion, not knowing about the technical nuclear weapons on the ground which would have been used. So, the question is, what don't we know in this war? Noam, your words: U.S is taking a ghastly gamble that Putin will accept defeat, but what if he doesn't? Reminding us of those Stakes. And asking the question, will the U.S be willing to accept defeat? A really important question with too much at stake in the global quest for the Quest for Global power. And the U.S trying to prevent a multi-polar world order that's already arrived, as you've indicated, in so many places in the world. Dan, finally, reminding us that everyone has a stake in the negotiations, that we're all being held hostage to this war as long as it goes on. And that we have to call for diplomacy to end the war before it ends us. So, let's thank you. Let's move on to the next question, and maybe we can have shorter answers to this, to the next couple questions, because we want to, we're a little over on time. So, the next question, is how and why has peace become a dirty word. In Ukraine, if you advocate peace, you're a traitor. In Russia, you will get fined or arrested, perhaps serve a long prison sentence. And here in the U.S, if you support peace, you are called out for appeasing Putin and not supporting Ukraine. Why is there such a disconnect? Why can't people understand that we can condemn Putin's actions and Russian aggression and at the same time call for a ceasefire, dialogue, and diplomacy to end the war and the risk of escalation to a nuclear confrontation? What can we do to reframe the narrative and reclaim peace-building as a noble existential endeavor that is inextricably linked to reducing the threat of nuclear war. So, who would like to start on that one?

DE: Okay, I'll jump in here. I think your question was, on peace becoming a dirty word. It reminds me when I came back from Vietnam in 1967 for two years, or with hepatitis I left, and I had been in 38 of the 43 provinces in Vietnam. And as a former Marine

company commander in peacetime, I walked with troops and I saw the war close. So I came back with the word this war is stalemated, and it is an escalating stalemate on both sides. It's getting bloodier and bloodier. But actually, the lines were pretty much where they were during the French War. All of the Communists and Liberation Front movement, Independence Movement, being pretty much where it was all the time, it wasn't making a difference. President Johnson had put out a directive from the White House, that the word stalemate was not to be used or hinted at. I couldn't use that word. So that was my, that was my provision, which I went around saying: stalemate, stalemate. This is before the Tet offensive, and which again, revealed a stalemate, which might have well escalated at that point.

So right now, as I said, both sides are in the hope that they can move things forward. And still. But that's always the case on both sides. By the way, Lê Duẩn, the leader, in North Vietnam believed that the Tet offensive would win the war. Wrong. He believed that the '72 offensive would win the war. Wrong. He was ready to do it again had not Congress cut off the money for U.S ground operation, I'm sorry, not just ground operations, which already ceased for the U.S. Air operations, air operations in August of 1973. I believe the '75 offensive by North Vietnam would not have been held, that's what they say. It might have been a year later. It would have been several years later. I believe it was Nixon's intent to keep U.S air power in support of the ARVN, the American puppet forces that we were entirely financing, paying, equipping training, and everything. U.S air power could in fact have held on, people will contradict this for drawing my friend John Paul Vann, who knew as much as anybody over there. And I agree with him. A little bit of air power could keep that stalemate and keep the US in control in Saigon, not dessert Thieu, who had elected Nixon, another case, but that's what he said to his friends: I elected Nixon, with reason, another story. Nixon, I think was determined to keep Thieu in power and I think would have done so with American air power had Congress allowed him to do so. And how long could that have gone on, if our air power continued, with B-52s as necessary? Afghanistan answered that, I think. When we got down American casualties down very early in the war, of the first couple of years, we went on for another 18 years, 20 years. Biden wasn't forced out of Afghanistan by a popular movement, or by the Taliban. He thought it had been a mistake since he was vice president, he was determined to get out. He wanted his, my Air Force friends used to say, he wanted, in the worst way, to get out of Afghanistan, and that's how he did it. And it was the worst way.

But no American president, I think that I foresee, each one is going to be the loser in this. And, what is that, I think leave vowing Russians in control in Crimea is not losing the war. But he will recall that, and that's enough. The same is true for Zelensky. Now, each of

them, however you see them, as pro-war forces, wrangling them in their own country. People want Putin out, the monster, the demon, the unparalleled aggressor. Everyone having amnesia about Iraq; or the Cuban Missile Crisis, where we had absolutely no legitimate reason to invade Cuba, with or without missiles. Okay, Putin, whether it is to his right or his left, the Communist Party in Russia has been pressing Putin to invade Ukraine for a year before he did so. And it's pro-war forces that are criticizing him and opposing him right now. And as I think Cynthia had said, anti-war forces are silent because they're getting imprisoned. They came out in the thousands, to their credit. But like Navalny in his isolation, and the others, they're silent. The noisy ones are pro-war. So don't pray for Putin to be put out right away.

Zelensky was ready to compromise a year ago in April. Now, representing most of the Ukrainian people and certainly his right wing and the U.S, who are now supplying him, no. Put Putin out, who will come in? Somebody worse, unless the U.S changes its mind. And Biden, curiously in this case, the people to his right are anti-war, seemed to be his party, the Democrats, that are pro-war. For whatever reason, the Republicans are the ones questioning the money for the war and the need to get out of it, and so forth. But again, not entirely for reassuring reasons: they want to free us from occupation for a war with China. And which is not absent in the Democratic party either. But as we saw, as you said from, the visit by Nancy Pelosi, and even progressions to Taiwan to this area, that all Chinese regard Taiwan as part of China, just as Russians regard Crimea as part of Russia; so you're heading into that situation where you can be assured of a very strong reaction. And the difference there is that whereas we have enormous conventional superiority now, in Europe, now that the Warsaw Pact, except for Russia and Ukraine, has joined NATO, so the balance there has totally changed. And that's why it's Putin who is now making the nuclear threats that we used to make to defend West Berlin; and have anachronistically persisted, because it's in the interest of the U.S, indefinitely, to be posed as the protector of Europe.

As a protector, we get a lot of advantages economic and in other ways out of that, so we're not, we're not giving up a threat very quickly. Will Biden respond to a world's demand, in this country remember, for no first use? Well, I've just said, I don't think Putin will. I don't think Biden will either, even though he promised in his campaign to be for no first use, and he said as vice president years ago. I foresee no situation which is to the benefit of the U.S to initiate nuclear war. But he's not saying it in the last few years as president, and I have to predict he will not, because he would be accused of inviting China to invade Taiwan. Now, our threats there, our first use threats are the same as we've used in Europe all these years. They are no more urgent there than anywhere else.

We should not be trying to do anything for the independence and sovereignty, that's already a red flag, but we should not be doing anything for the defense of Taiwan by the threat of blowing the world up, there or anywhere else. So, all I can see, the world has divided up now to people who think that Putin is the only aggressor here, and others who say no it's the US who has been provoking them, they're the bad guys. Actually, no leadership, in anywhere you look here, is worthy of the trust of the humans of the world. And it's time for them to face that disillusioning fact and realize that they all have to be kept in check in our interests.

CL: Thank you, Dan. Noam, please.

NC: Well, let's go back to the question, how and why has peace become a dirty word, raises another question? When wasn't peace a dirty word? Think about it. There's the phrase, peacenik, because it means that people who talk about peace are oddballs, if not downright subversive. Notice that there's no phrase, warnik, that's just being normal. Goes back as far as you like, take World War One, far enough back so that we ought to be able to think about it rationally. It's now recognized that the whole war was totally insane, there were peace options, they were dismissed with contempt: let's escalate, let's exterminate the beasts, this was every country. In every country, the intellectual classes, overwhelmingly, were passionately dedicated to the war. There were a few opponents, Bertrand Russell in England, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht in Germany, Eugene Debs in the United States, where were they? In jail. Was peace a dirty word? Woodrow Wilson was so furious at Debs that even when an amnesty came later, he wouldn't amnesty him. Wilson's repression was the worst in U.S history. Go on to later wars, take Vietnam. Vietnam, McGeorge Bundy, National Security adviser for Kennedy and Johnson, formerly Harvard Dean, Dan knows him well, knew him well, what did he do after the Tet Offensive? By the time a huge peace movement was developing, Bundy wrote an article in Foreign Affairs saying: there are legitimate opponents of the war, people who say our tactics are wrong, we would have done something else; and then there are what he called wild men in the wings, that's all of us, the wild men in the wings, who actually say, look you're doing something wrong, you should get out. Well, when has peace not been a dirty word? I'd like someone to tell me. What can we do about it? Well, we know what Dan has been doing valiantly for over half a century, what Dick has been doing without cease, others. **Just work harder!**

CL: Thank you so much. I will remember the word warnik. I've never heard that before; and reminding us that when peace hasn't been a dirty word, but that we can follow the example of the three of you. And that's what we have to do we just have to work harder

that's really food for the soul. I am going to combine the last two questions, just in the interest of time. But I think this one is really important for us to look and spend some time on because of where we are with this war, as far as the media. So, if you could just please talk about the role of the media in this war. In particular, the sophisticated war propaganda flooding the airwaves and social media. And really, this suppression of debate and dissent. Do you think the media is complicit in this war and what is the impact on democracy? That's sort of the first part of the question and I'm just going to take a little bit of the last question that we had and combine them; and just ask you: how do we hold our government and our elected officials accountable for their lack of commitment to peace and nuclear disarmament? If we could end on a maybe a call to action, a ray of hope, what can ordinary people do and what message do you have for anyone working on nuclear abolition and peace; and how to get us closer to a world free of nuclear weapons?

DE: Noam is the expert on the media. Go ahead, Noam.

NC: So what's the role of the media? What the media always do. You cheer for the home team, regurgitate to party line, or borrowing a phrase attributed to Churchill: "war war, no jaw-jaw." Virtually nothing about what we're talking about now, and that's nothing new. In fact, it continues long after the war. It's been 50 years now since the U.S reached an agreement to withdraw from Vietnam. In 50 years I would urge you might see if you didn't find one sentence, I'm not asking for a lot, one sentence, in the mainstream that goes beyond saying the war was a mistake. How about a crime? Has anybody said that? Take Iraq. 20 years, same: mistake; we tried a mercy mission to save the Iraqis from a dictator, you don't mention the fact that we supported him throughout his old worst crimes; but it failed. So, it was a mistake. There are some other questions that are worth thinking about. I think. Let's go back to 1975. War ended. Everyone had to write a comment about it, of course. You look at the commentary in the press, I wrote about it at the Times. It fell into two categories. Kind of hawk said, if we'd fought harder we could have won, stabbed in the back by the peacemakers, and so on; the dove said, had a different view, and go to the way extreme. Take Anthony Lewis in the New York Times, and one of the strongest opponent critics of the war in the mainstream, said, the war began with blundering efforts to do good, you don't need to have evidence for that. We were doing it so it was do good, blundering because it didn't work. We couldn't bring democracy to South Vietnam at a cost acceptable to us. Well. That's the dovish view. There was an interesting experiment at the time. The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations was doing extensive studies of popular opinion. One of them, of course, was a question: what you thought about the war? 70 percent of the public said the war was not

a mistake, it was fundamentally wrong and immoral.

That question continued to be asked for about 15 years always the same answer. Finally, the director of the study, a good social scientist, asked, what do people mean? He gave the answer too costly for us. Well maybe. Maybe they thought it was fundamentally wrong and immoral. Worth some thought. What's the message? What's it going to take to civilize the civilian leadership? What it's always taken. Popular mobilization can work. 60s, anti-war movement was much too late. Should have begun in the early 60s, 61, 62, when John F Kennedy radically escalated the war. Took a long time. It finally happened. By the time it really gained force in 67-68, the Peasant Society of South Vietnam, which was always the main target, had been decimated. Bernard Fall, the leading specialist on the war, highly regarded, Bernard Fall, he said, at that time, that he didn't know whether Vietnam as historical and cultural entity could even survive the most vicious attack ever launched against an area that size. He was no dove, incidentally; but he followed it. Well, had an effect. Dan's pointed out what may have been the major effect, the major mobilization, quoting Dan here, the major mobilizations in 69, very likely prevented Nixon from moving on to nuclear weapons. Too late, but had an effect in many other cases. Take the INF treaty again, the Reagan Gorbachev 1987 treaty, didn't come out of nowhere. There were huge popular mobilizations in the early 80. Dan mentioned that he was arrested in one of them, enormous in the United States and Europe. That's the background. Well, if there's another way besides popular mobilization, it's been kept a dark secret.

DE: Can I take off from Noam's comments? He implicitly was getting a little personal here without, you know in, without mentioning, as he well knows, George Bundy's comments, my former Dean at Harvard, dean of Faculty actually, the youngest in history. Very smart guy. When he talked about the wild men in the wings, he was talking about Noam Chomsky and Dick Falk and Howard Zinn, very specifically. The shoe pinched there, that's why, if I may say, Noam. I think that quote has remained vivid in your memory. But, I'll just mention that you're the hero of the wild men in that case, and I wasn't, yet. That it wasn't until I read the Pentagon Papers, you said that was after Tet in 68. It wasn't until I read the early Pentagon Papers which I put to last, because I thought they were the less relevant about the war between '45 and '54, which like almost all Americans, are regarded as a French war. And by reading the top-secret Pentagon papers, I was convinced of what the anti-war movement had been saying for a while, without being believed. Like, Bernard Fall. Like, namely, the Vietnamese understood that it was a French American War, which by '49 and '50, the U.S was paying 80 percent of the costs of the war. Not unlike what's happening right now, though, in different

circumstances. Okay. I saw that, that we had been responsible for unjustifiable homicide since '45 and '46. And although, as Dick knows, international law does not recognize that as murder, it comes under crime against peace and crimes against humanity. I thought (of it) as murder, unjustified homicide, and we were responsible for all the deaths on both sides.

And that combined with the secret knowledge, which to this day isn't really realized by most Americans, that Nixon was determined to break through the stalemate at that time, and essentially to win the war. Not with U.S. troops, or with threats of nuclear weapons. That's what led me to give copy the Pentagon Papers with, without any great hopes, that are, even small, for a little hope, that it might be possible to avoid that and that it might shorten the war. A year earlier, I get personal, it's in my book, that no one has really noticed, my first leaks of top-secret information were in March of 1968, right after Tet, there was a wild man in the wings, not outside the wings. Or how to put it, I gave information to Neil Sheehan of the New York Times knowing that (General) Westmoreland was calling for nuclear weapons in, to take advantage of, what he regarded, as successors of killing North Vietnamese after Tet. He wanted, as he said, he thought it would send a good signal, to send and this is again, this escalate to de-escalate idea, it would send a good signal to the Chinese, to use nuclear weapons in defense of Khe Sahn, where my former fellow Marines were now besieged, just as the French had been besieged in Dien Bien Phu in 54. When LBJ was opposed to it; when Eisenhower and Dulles were offering a few, three nuclear weapons for Dien Bien Phu. I remember being on a drill field, that we didn't do that. Because the British objected, LBJ objected, Richard Russell objected to using nuclear weapons at that time. Nixon was for it, chairman of the Joint Chiefs was for it, at that time Radford.

I was on a drill field in Quantico, at that point, when our drill sergeant said, are your weapons clean, one morning about six in the morning. We're loading them. Well, rhetorical question. I mean that was our job to keep our weapons clean. He said your weapons better be cleaned because Dien Bien Phu just fell. And actually, little known fact, as usual, there was at least a battalion of Marines offshore Indo-China at that time, in case we intervened on the ground, as Vice President Nixon was calling for, that one I didn't know that at that point. It was months later that Marines were ready to go into Guatemala and they weren't needed because the CIA alone managed to overthrow the elected officials of Guatemala.

I think this is very closely related to what Noam has been saying. At the end of the Soviet Union, put that at 92, 93, 91, Gorbachev forced out, Christmas Eve, what was that, 91,

was it 1990 again, anyway. Kennan, a Chief Diplomat and who is the architect of the Cold War, though he opposed the militarization he said of it, much later. He was saying then the expansion, he said actually in the late 90s 97, I think the expansion of NATO is the greatest mistake, one of the greatest mistakes, blunders of this century. Why? Because it would cause an invasion. Well, he didn't quite say that, but he said, it will actually subordinate any peacefulness in Russia, moderate forces, liberal forces, Democratic forces. It will encourage reactionary right-wing, militaristic, nationalistic forces. Now, of course, we went against their advice. But because I now believe that because there were many Americans who wanted exactly that and they got it. They were not unhappy to see it, even if they didn't want it directly in the 90s.

In the first decade or so of this century, they had come to realize that it's hard to run an empire without an enemy, like Russia. If Russia had joined NATO, as Gorbachev hinted, and Yeltsin, hinted and Putin hinted in his first year, he said: we should consider this; What would NATO have meant with Russia in it? Who's the enemy? Who are the weapons for, that we're selling to them? If Russia might sell its own weapons to some of your, in fact, they were already supplying most of the European weapons and most Ukrainian weapons. That would go on, if Russia came in, rather than our re-supplying all of them with American weapons of F-16s and F-22s and so forth. In other words, Gorbachev's vision of a peaceful Democratic European community, from Lisbon to Vladivostak, it's now, I would say, input out of balls for the foreseeable future and not to the displeasure of a lot of American officials and others who did not want that because it would mean that a European Community with Russia in it would have no need for American protection, protection racket. Europe would no longer be an American protectorate, even the European Union is not as good as NATO because we wanted people in.

We don't run the European Union, we're not even in it. NATO is our Cosa Nostra, what the mafia call, our thing. So, Ambassador Matlock under Reagan and later George H.W. Bush, Ambassador Burns later, each said: Ukraine is the reddest of red lines. No Ukraine, I'm sorry. No Russian of any stripe will accept that. It's a threat to their vital interests. What I'm saying is I don't think we've blundered into that situation, I think they recognize that as is the case now, we're back in charge of a resuscitated NATO. We are selling billions of weapons forever. Lockheed's stock, and Boeing's stock, and General Dynamics, and Raytheon, all their stock has gone up and it's not going down. That's long, because Congressman they've bought for decades and generations are not, have no reason to decline those donations anymore. The jobs. And so, we peaceniks, who do exist in America, have had a great defeat and probably for a long time. But I've always admired

General Stillwell who had been with Chinese National forces in Burma. And when the Japanese came in, their adversary said, we've won, we've had a victory. Months later, Stillwell came out of the Jungle, they didn't schedule press conference: I say we've had a hell of a licking. And he said, but we should find out what we did wrong. And I'm talking now about us, peaceniks, not the ones who did right from their point of view and they have gotten what they wanted: a cold war in which our military industrial complex, our leadership in Europe including economic, is now assured. But Stillwell said find out what we do wrong, and go back, and go back. So that's, that's what I hope people do now that this cold war atmosphere is here.

I think Putin in effect fell into a trap. With his notion of putting bases, in bringing Ukraine into big NATO which would mean NATO bases, Sevastopol becoming a NATO base. You know in 2014 we said, no, I don't think so. And then how about putting them in the Donbas, he preempted that. And of course, he thought it would be a cakewalk, like Crimea, the word we were assured that Iraq would be by our hawks, a cakewalk. And the military was saying, in the State Department, they were saying you're going to need enormous forces for occupying Iraq against their will. And our hawks, our bombs felt, and others said, no no no you don't need that, they were wrong. Who expected Putin to do this badly, and the Ukrainians would do so well with our weapons? So, even Jack Matlock, who I admire greatly as and along with William Burns, as experts on Russia, real experts and quite sympathetic to Russians perception of their own interests. But Matlock said on February 22nd, two days before the invasion, I have not and cannot imagine a Russian invasion of Ukraine. My friend Ray McGovern, another Russian expert, was saying the same. Goddard will return before Russians invade Ukraine. I mention that not to criticize another, I respect my friends; but those who say that what Putin did was inevitable, and justified, and legitimate by our provocations ignore the fact that they weren't foreseeing it. They couldn't imagine that he would do that because it is aggression. And Ukraine, whatever the Russians think, was being regarded by the rest of the world as an independent nation. So they didn't regard that.

There are lessons for us all to learn. Left, right, in the center. And that is to say, no leadership here, like any more than any leadership in the past, you know, is to be trusted in their judgments as to whether this war should continue or escalate on any side. None of them are paying attention to the concern of the risk of nuclear escalation. So it's up to us, and frankly, that's not somewhat of a thin reed, more than what Noam has often said. You know, it's not only that they lie to us, they all do. All of them. But it's so easy for us to be lied to. A human ability to hear suggestibility, willingness to believe their leaders, willingness to believe what is more comfortable and what doesn't challenge them to do

anything against authority, against power. Their ability to be fooled like that is pretty wide, and it's not just American. Think of the fact that there are ten, scores of millions of Americans, right now, who believe their political models that Trump is President right now. That deserves a lot of thought. There are millions, too, the majority of Russians, that Putin is defending Russian existence and sovereignty, and killing only Neo-Nazis in Ukraine. Sorry, you know, it's just too easy to convince people like that. But it is also possible for humans to be to change their minds and to be told the truth; and to say, to say the truth. Very hard to convince them otherwise. Very easy to convince them otherwise; but it is possible and that's up to us.

I'm going to leave this process soon, and I leave it in very good hands. Even to my cohorts, like Dick and Noam, who's been at this much longer than I was in our same age group. Cynthia, who has done her best to educate the world, having felt in Hawaii the experience of incoming missiles; or at least one "coming in right now," and people scurrying for manholes and sitting in bathtubs and doing things which I once told her: no that wouldn't have made any difference. I would have spent the time kissing my wife, and that's how I look forward to the rest of my time here. It is possible they should have drawn a lesson from the Hawaiian false alarm, but they didn't really. But it's not impossible to bring that back. So, I'm very grateful to be on this program with my close buddies and colleagues, comments here, all three of you, actually for a long time. It's a real honor and a pleasure for me, and I congratulate everybody who put this program together, and I hope it's widely seen.

CL: Thank you, Dan, for your beautiful words. We're so honored to be here with you too. It's just a real privilege, as I've said. And Richard, I wanted to call on you for closing words, if you have maybe a few potent closing words, thank you so much.

RF: It's hard to follow Dan's inspiring closing words, which I think meant a great deal to all of us that are connected with this program. And I feel that what we said here really composed a coherent message that amounts to a warning, that if things are not changed from below from civil society, from the activists, impulses of those who don't forfeit their moral conscience to state propaganda. That this is a moment to act, and to act not only for personal satisfaction, but on behalf of the future of humanity and the natural habitat, actually, that is also jeopardized by this behavior. Let me just say one other thing that wasn't mentioned that I think is important in the Ukraine context: which is that Ukraine attacked the Lenin airport, about 10 days ago with missiles. And at that airport are apparently Russian bombers with nuclear weapons. It's a sign of this willingness to escalate, in order, I'm sure Zelensky didn't act on his own that he had encouragement for

this kind of expansion of the war. That Noam has depicted so graphically for us, what is the US has nothing left but it's military superiority, it's full spectrum dominance and weaponry in order to compete primarily with the Chinese. And it's that explains, at least to me, why the U.S has been so prepared to take insane risks for the sake of maintaining this uni-polarity in the face of increasing non-military multi-polarity. It seeks still to control the world as, I think it was Dan who said, for the, for an undertaking that's gone on for the past 80 years. So there is much to learn and much to do and hopefully we can all be, carry the inspiration of this conversation into our work as scholars and activists.

CL: Thank you Richard.

DE: I have one, one thought as I look at this screen, which is marvelous. In fact, we should take a picture of it. But anyway. I just realized that I'm not really looking at Cynthia who, among us, has experienced the horror being told, authoritatively, that a nuclear missile was on its way to her home, at that point. Otherwise, I'm looking at two people who had the Pentagon papers in their possession before the New York Times published them. Noam, Dick, and Howard Zinn was the third, another wild man in the wings. Meaning, that you were as prosecutable under the Justice Department's interpretation of the Espionage Act as I am. That's what Daniel Hale is in jail right now in Marion, Illinois, we're trying to say. I get calls from him, for putting out information, holding information on drone attacks of the kind that are going on right now. But I, saw the possibility of actually telling the truth or you know, disobeying these regulations; look, we've got right now, Chairman of the joint Chief of Staff, who is the single official who has come out publicly for negotiations and now on the grounds that it's implicitly a stalemate. But what he said was, it will be very, very hard, very, very bloody, to try to achieve Zelensky's objectives of getting every Russian out of Ukraine. And what he's saying in effect, I'm sure with the agreement of his fellow Chiefs, is against what Lincoln and Austin and President Biden are saying: all the way to Crimea and out of there! And he says, it's time for negotiations now. So he can be, you know, I have a principal at 92, almost, that I've learned, you can't count on anyone to be wrong about everything all the time. Milley of course accompanied Trump to the Episcopal church in his camouflage with his Bible held upside down. But Millie is saying the truth right now, and on my principle the greatest confirmation of it, I would say the greatest counter-example is Lindsey Graham. You can count on pretty well. But Marjorie Taylor Greene is saying, it would be insane to invade Crimea. Well, okay. Except that, of course, I suspect she'd be fine with invading, or rather, with going to war over Taiwan with nuclear weapons. But anyway, I want to congratulate, as I say, my two buddies here, who had the Pentagon papers then, who were subpoenaed by a grand jury when I was on trial for the Pentagon

papers. So, this is my family. Thank you all.

CL: Thank you, Dan. For those again beautiful words. And again to you and Noam and Richard for this incredibly inspiring conversation. We've ended on a very hopeful note in terms of each of you; Noam, saying mass mobilization is what it's going to take; Dan, you're saying it's up to us the wild men and women in the wings who need to come out into the streets again; and to Richard, for you reminding us about the importance of agency of civil society, coming forward at this moment and that we have this capacity and we can do it. As Nelson Mandela said, it always seems impossible until it's done. So we have a lot of, a lot of work to head and I turn it back to you. Thank you all, again. What an honor. And Ivana, back to you.

INH: Yes, just really to take a moment to thank everyone for your wise remarks, for the generosity of sharing your wisdom and your time and sharing the decades of knowledge and thought that you each carry with you. We are all so much better for it and truly this conversation has been such a gift. Also to thank Cynthia for her masterful and superb moderating. I just wanted to apologize to everyone on the call for the technical difficulties at the beginning. And if you know people who tried to come in but weren't able to please just reassure them that we will make a video of this event available, as well as the transcript. We will have some follow-ups to let everyone be able to enjoy and learn from these giants. I am just so happy and so grateful to everybody for your participation today. And yes, we have a long way to go, and it's clear what we have to do, and Nuclear Age Peace Foundation has been at the forefront for 40 years. And if I have any say in it, it will continue to do that for many decades into the future. So, thank you all, so very, very much. And thank you everyone for staying with us for such a long time, thank you.