

# [***Stormy Daniels Wraps Testimony In New York Versus Trump; Biggest Takeaway From Stormy Daniels Testimony; Trump Civil Fraud Judge Under Investigation; Hunter Biden Facing Gun And Tax Trials Next Month; Rafah Tests Biden's Ironclad Israel Support***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C0H-PM41-JCS1-6000-00000-00&context=1516831)

Fox News THE STORY WITH MARTHA MACCALLUM 3:00 PM EST

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**Body**

MARTHA MACCALLUM, FOX NEWS ANCHOR: All right. Thank you very much, John and Jacqui. Good afternoon, everybody. I'm Martha MacCallum, and this is THE STORY, and what a story it is today. Right now, on the stand, as you just heard, is Madeline Westerhout, she was the former -- president's former executive assistant at the White House. John was just describing sort of her history with the former president. She talked about the Access Hollywood tape and how there was a lot of concern at the RNC back then, you know, if they might need to find another candidate.

We all know how that ended up. It is now day 14 in this criminal trial and a short time ago, Stormy Daniels, wrapped up her testimony after a pretty bruising cross-examination by Trump Attorney Susan Necheles, who tried to portray the adult film actress as an opportunist, an extortionist, using her Trump connection to make money. Prosecutors came in for the cleanup after that, reminding jurors that Daniels had said she wanted the agreement in order to feel safe. Unclear if any of this is really relevant to what the jury needs to decide.

No cameras in the courtroom as, you know, but her attorney posted this picture, excuse me, earlier today saying that he "couldn't be prouder" of his client. Judge Jeanine was in the courthouse. She is here live coming up, and a former attorney, Trump attorney Jim Trusty, current Trump attorney Jesse Binal, Ari Fleischer, Jason Chaffetz, all here with the breaking coverage this afternoon as court is now back underway for the afternoon session. Let's check in with Nate Foy, who is outside the courthouse. Hi, Nate.

NATE FOY, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: Hey, Martha. So yes, Madeline Westerhout, former president Donald Trump's former executive assistant at the White House is on the stand right now. She admitted that she's very nervous. She said she's never been in a courtroom before. Right now, she's just going through sort of what her day-to-day was like and her relationship with other witnesses in the case.

Rhona Graff, Michael Cohen being two names that just recently came up in the past few minutes. You mentioned, she was being questioned about the Access Hollywood tape being released. She said that rattled RNC leadership and recalls a conversation about possibly having to replace Trump as a candidate if it ever came to that, which obviously it didn't.

This comes after the cross-examination of Tracy Menzies, a book publisher for Harper Collins and also a Trump Organization junior bookkeeper named, Rebecca Monocchio, who served as former CFO Allen Weisselberg's assistant. Monocchio testified that she sent checks from New York to the White House for Trump to sign.

And you mentioned adult film actress, Stormy Daniels, wrapped up her testimony today. Trump's lawyer Susan Necheles questioned her motives and her credibility. Daniels denies extorting Trump, telling the court, "I never asked for money from anyone in particular. I was asking for money from publications to sell my story to get the truth out."

Trump's lawyers pointed out she ended up getting paid for the story to not come out. Daniels agreed to an NDA with Michael Cohen for a $130,000. Daniels said she signed it for her safety. Former President Trump is again criticizing the court's gag order today. He said, his lawyers officially challenged the order in appellate court today it's one of three major issues that Trump's lawyers will bring before Judge Juan Merchan when the jury is let out early today at 4:00.

So, the gag order is one issue. We're also expecting Trump's lawyers to ask for a mistrial yet again, and they also reportedly have concerns about possible testimony from former Playboy model, Karen McDougal. Again, that will happen at 4:00. We'll send it back to you, Martha.

MACCALLUM: OK, thank you very much, Nate Foy. Let's bring in Jim Trusty, former Federal Prosecutor and former Attorney for Donald Trump. Great to see you, Jim.

JIM TRUSTY, FORMER FEDERAL PROSECUTOR: Hey, Martha.

MACCALLUM: What's your take on what you heard in there today? How do you think the cross-examination went?

TRUSTY: Well, look this is devolving into more and more of an unrecognizable circus. I mean, you know, Stormy Daniels is trying to go out and celebrate like she had a great day of credible testimony, but this is just not recognizable in today's world. I mean she was apparently asked questions about whether her boyfriend thought she was insane. She started talking, apparently, about how she had communicated with the dead and made money doing that.

So, you know, we got Ouija testimony coming out in this case. And look, there's these very thin reeds of calling witnesses to try to establish that President Trump was a hands-on guy and that therefore he's going to know that it was somehow, somehow fraudulent to say legal expenses when it should have said legal expenses, NDA. I mean if that's the difference between crime and innocence we're in a very strange world. But on those last points that were made, Martha, you know, in terms of what's coming up at 4:00.

The McDougal issue is a big one, because I think that the, the prosecution probably wanted to call McDougal in the same philosophy of just throwing as much dirt as possible and letting that substitute for evidence. But the Weinstein case of all things, Harvey Weinstein, really reemphasizes that when you get into other bad acts that are not part of the charged scheme, that you're in very perilous territory. They may have already crossed that Rubicon, but if they put McDougal on, they've bought themselves yet another serious appellate issue.

MACCALLUM: Yes, that's such an interesting point because we don't know the other whether or not Karen McDougal is going to be brought to the stand. But as you say the whole reason that the Weinstein case got overturned, they're going to retry it, is that there were too many outside uncharged issues that were brought into that courtroom and the jury got to hear them. So, do you think that, you know, what do you think if you were in the prosecution's shoes, where do you think they go next from after Madeline Westerhout?

TRUSTY: Well, you know what they're doing is they're building space before Cohen. You don't want to finish this case with Michael Cohen. You don't want to have him right next to kind of a spectacular circus-like witness, like Stormy. So, I think they're putting in some filler, some stuff that marginally helps them establish that President Trump signs off on checks, things like that. They don't really establish the endgame, but they're better than going right next to a kind of a ridiculous witness. So, I think we're getting there. I think we're going to see Cohen sooner rather than later.

It's going to be insane. And for those that lament that we don't have cameras in the courtroom, I get it. But of course, knowing Cohen, maybe he'll record it. You know, he used to record his own clients, so who knows. But yes, you know, these are going to be wild days. And if they finish, if they really end up finishing with Cohen with almost nothing after that, you know, I would expect, the defense turns around and says in light of that, we're not putting on a single witness, let's go, and they actually have a shot.

MACCALLUM: Well, that's so interesting, right. I mean, that's one of the things that, you know, this defense so far has been lengthy in its cross- examination, and I've heard some attorneys say that they would have advised sort of a more direct shutdown of why this doesn't matter, why that person isn't relevant to the case. Why do you think that is? The three hours of cross-examination today of Stormy, could that have been done quicker?

TRUSTY: Well, look, I mean, yes. And I've been a proponent of streamlining where you want the entire attention to be on Cohen. You want this jury, again, New York jury, difficult place for President Trump. You want this jury thinking of the case as a referendum on Michael Cohen. You know, you have to believe him to find beyond a reasonable doubt any crime occurred. Could you possibly do that as a juror? So, I mean, that's the battleground you want from the defense. That bodes in terms of the other witnesses to being very succinct. And what we've seen with the exception of Stormy, I think has followed that course of basically friendly cross, get in and get out.

MACCALLUM: OK. Jim Trusty, great to have you here. Thank you so much.

TRUSTY: Good seeing you.

MACCALLUM: You as well. So, coming up, Judge Jeanine Pirro joins us here after being at the trial at the courthouse this morning. Who won in there today? Her takeaway from the judge. And here's another take on what happened today.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I think you see Donald Trump, I think he was cursing yesterday. And you can see, I think that it is his motivation to really shame this woman and it's not working.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: All right, folks. For now, Stormy Daniels in the books for this trial after more than three hours of cross-examination earlier today. They are now on to Madeline Westerhout, a former senior assistant to former President Trump during the campaign and into the White House as well. "THE FIVE" co-host, Judge Jeanine Pirro, spent the day at the courthouse so it is very familiar down there to her of course but this time she was observing. Judge, great to see you. What's your big takeaway from today?

JEANINE PIRRO, FOX NEWS HOST: Well, first of all, the first thing that occurred to me was that I miss being in the courtroom but the big --

MACCALLUM: Did it feel weird to you to go in there and like, you know, check in, and get your little yellow card, and find a seat in the back?

PIRRO: Very weird and I'm like, I used to sit right there.

MACCALLUM: That's wild.

PIRRO: Anyway, the big takeaway today was that the cross-examination of Stormy Daniels was, and I think I said this before, a master class. She took everything that Stormy Daniels said and she tore it apart. Stormy Daniels was well prepared on direct but not on cross-examination. Stormy Daniels --

MACCALLUM: That's a sign of a bad lawyer, right?

PIRRO: Yes, it is.

MACCALLUM: I mean, you can tell your story perfectly, but then they're going to press into every single hole they can find and you better be ready.

PIRRO: And she was not ready and the truth is she said she just wanted to get her story out and it really wasn't about the money, but the reality is that she started making money, serious money, the day she met Donald Trump because she cashed in on everything from the non-disclosure of 130, a book deal for 800, there was another contract for 120. There was another contract for make America Horny Again. But you know, she goes on and on.

MACCALLUM: Very profitable, that one.

PIRRO: It was very profitable. And here's one of the things that I thought was incredible. She said, I never sold myself to anyone. Are you kidding me? You are the essence of someone who sells themselves to other people. And she talked about the fact that even though she had been in 200 porno flicks and she had written and directed 150, the truth is that, you know, she was able to write and create, and make up stories about sex. So, that was brought out on cross-examination. Everything that she said about, you know, I just wanted to get it out and it wasn't about the money, was contradicted by everything else she said.

MACCALLUM: Let's play a soundbite to that to that point, Jeanine. This is Keith Davidson who we heard from last week. He was Stormy Daniels' attorney who handled this agreement between two sides, $130,000, and we won't talk about this deal. Here's what he had to say, watch, with Michael Cohen. This is Michael Cohen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MICHAEL COHEN, FORMER LAWYER TO DONALD TRUMP: I wouldn't be the least bit surprised if he comes out and says, "You know what, Stormy Daniels, she wanted this money more than you can ever imagine. I remember hearing her on the phone saying, you -- Keith Davidson, you better settle this -- story, because if he loses this election, and he is going to lose, if he loses this election, we lose all -- leverage. This case is worth zero."

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: So, that's her pressuring. And then he, in turn, pressuring Cohen for the money, because she wanted to be paid right away.

JEANINE PIRRO, FOX NEWS HOST: And that's exactly what I'm talking about.

MACCALLUM: Yes.

PIRRO: That everything that she alleged to try to put herself in a better light or to try to make Donald Trump look bad was contradicted by other statements that she made herself. None of this was from other people saying things. It was things that she was inconsistent with.

Her credibility has been totally destroyed as a witness. Everything she said, there was something to contradict it. And in the end, when she talked about tarot cards and speaking to dead people, I thought I was watching (INAUDIBLE) TV show, "The Sixth Sense". She was not a good witness.

MACCALLUM: It -- let's your -- you know, I'm always wondering as I'm sure you are, how's the jury taking all of this in? Right? What are they taking away from all this? Because we can analyze and look at both sides.

This is CNN's senior legal analyst Elie Honig. Watch this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ELIE HONIG, SENIOR LEGAL ANALYST, CNN: Today, to me was off the rails though. That the line of questioning that we opened this segment with about -- well, you -- you're in pornography, you know how to fake stories about sex. All of that is useless. It's pointless. I think it probably turns the jury more in Stormy Daniels favor. I think they just completely lost the thread this morning with the cross exam.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: So, he is arguing that the cross was too tough on her, and that it will make people sympathetic to her.

PIRRO: Absolutely not. He is absolutely wrong there. If the jury is going to turn against anyone, it's going to be on the prosecution. They are there to analyze and determine whether or not the people have proved beyond a reasonable doubt that Donald Trump committed 34 separate alleged felonies, which we all know are all misdemeanors, that are beyond the statute of limitations. And that they have to sit there and listen to this.

And make no mistake, Martha, that defense had to cross examine that witness the way they did. They brought in something as far as I am concerned, if I were on that bench is the collateral issue that occurred decades before the actual crime that's alleged.

And so, for them to bring that in and as expected jury to be subjected to that, we already know one of the jurors had her head in her hand, we already know that, you know, some of this is almost laughable.

Even the way she behaved on the jury, even the way she looked on the witness stand. I mean, she was just -- she was just very uncomfortable. She kept touching her face and touching herself. And she looked like a train wreck, to be honest with you.

And no one is going to feel sorry for her, because she made a fortune from the day she met Donald Trump. She knew that was a gravy train. And that's what they were talking about in that audio with Davidson. And in the end, nothing that she said, put Donald Trump in contact with anybody as it relates to the payments of Michael or from Michael Coleman (PH) to Stormy Daniels.

And that is the issue. And if the jury is going to be angry, they are going to be angry they have a listen to this, because it's nonsense, it doesn't relate. And this is reversible error.

MACCALLUM: Do you think we're -- Trust (PH) and I, we're just talking about this.

Do you think that they bring Karen McDonald (PH) or do they think that it's not a good idea to do that at this point? McDougal.

PIRRO: You know, I -- yes, I know -- I know about Karen McDougal. I don't know, in fact, I thought today when I saw it from distance that the brunette might be her. I don't think so. I don't think she adds anything. I think they know that with Stormy Daniels, you know, it was -- from their perspective, they are probably thinking, well, you know, it was pretty good. Maybe not so great.

But there is nothing to gain with Karen McDougal at this point. But who knows? They want to prolong this. So, and you know, you see Joe Biden in Florida, or wherever he is with his aviator sunglasses. Well, Donald Trump is in the bowels of Manhattan in a courtroom, talk and listening to a porn star. I mean, is she even a star? I don't know.

MACCALLUM: I don't know. I can honestly say I don't know.

In terms of challenging the gag order, we heard that they, you know, filed a new bit of information to get that gag order appealed and overturned. That obviously -- all of that is building the appeal case, if they don't do that now. How do you think that side of it is going?

PIRRO: I think that the gag order is totally unconstitutional that they would gag one side and not the other. And that they would gag an individual who's running for president on top of that, who's got first amendment rights.

And even at some point, even Judge Merchan seem to indicate, you know, it's something I have to think about.

(CROSSTALK)

MACCALLUM: Right.

PIRRO: This man was a president and may be another president again. That signaled a huge -- something bigger to me than anything else, Merchan has done. I think he maybe he's hearing that, that is reversible. A lot of what Merchan is doing is doing is reversible.

And if I were in that courtroom, those lawyers would have been up at my sidebar, when as soon as Stormy Daniels walked that --

(CROSSTALK)

MACCALLUM: He is not a muscular judge.

(CROSSTALK)

PIRRO: Yes.

MACCALLUM: In terms of -- you know, he -- at one point yesterday, he's like, well, you guys should have objected more.

PIRRO: They objected to every question. They objected to the witness.

MACCALLUM: Right.

PIRRO: They -- what he is doing Martha there, is he is blaming the defense, because he knows it's an appealable issue, and he's saying to the higher court, they didn't object. All you have to do is read the transcript they objected. And they are covered totally on that.

MACCALLUM: OK. Judge Jeanine Pirro, thank you so much.

PIRRO: Thank you.

MACCALLUM: We'll see on "THE FIVE".

PIRRO: Yes, I'll be there.

MACCALLUM: Great to see you. Great coverage today.

So, as we monitor Trump's New York trial, which is ongoing, you can see the latest. Westerhout testifying that Trump was attentive to things brought to his attention in the first year the White House are going back and forth on checks that were signed and sent back and forth to New York, and doing some business here with his former assistant.

But, you know, we're watching this, all of this remarkable turn of events in other legal battles, have some hearing that maybe the president could escape further trials prior to the election because of all of the movement that's happening in those other three cases. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MIKA BRZEZINSKI, CO-HOST, MORNING JOE, MSNBC: Meanwhile, the documents case is delayed. Meanwhile, Georgia, what's going on here? Everything seems to be delayed and moving down the road. And there are even those who argue that this Manhattan cases, it's not as big, it's not serious and you might get off anyway or not.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Well, the frustration there.

So, one of a former President Trump's attorneys Jesse Binnall, joins us with his reaction to all of that, next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: So, we do expect that we will hear from former President Trump and current candidate for the presidency, as he comes out of the courtroom. Usually, around this time they take a break. So, we will certainly bring that to you live as soon as that gets underway.

Big day to day. Stormy Daniels wrapping up her testimony. She is obviously a central person in this case, in terms of the larger narrative of the case. This is a picture that she released with her attorney. Looks very happy.

Earlier today, on the stand now, Madeleine Westerhout, the former president's executive assistant at the White House, she is testifying under subpoenas, and she was nervous, she has never been in court before.

And, of course, this is not the only legal battle that the former president is dealing with in this string of indictments, which we've watched over the course of the last year. The judge in the classified documents case.

So, this is a look at sort of the roster, right? You've got the classified document case, that's the Mar-a-Lago case. That one has just been postponed. It was set to start this month, saying that both sides are still battling over too many pretrial motions that they have to work through. So, no date on that one for right now.

His federal election interference case, the Georgia -- the January 6th case is on hold while the Supreme Court considers the immunity claim.

We expect to hear something from the court in June -- on that. And the Georgia election interference trial could be delayed as an appeals court is considering the former president's push to kick D.A. Fani Willis.

I mean, that whole mess that happened in Georgia really set that one way back as well. So, the judge ruled that Fani Willis could stay if the prosecutor stepped down. You remember all this drama that happened in Georgia, because of that relationship that they had, had in the past?

So, let's bring in Jesse Binnall, an attorney for former President Trump, who is not representing him in any of these cases, but represents him and others. Good to have you with us today. Hi, Jesse.

JESSE BINNALL, ATTORNEY FOR FORMER PRESIDENT TRUMP: Good to be here, again, Martha. Thank you.

MACCALLUM: So, let's talk a little bit about these delays. And there's obviously a lot of consternation in some corners about the fact that it looks like he may -- this cup might pass him by a bit for some of these before the election.

This is Adam Schiff. He says, "First, the Supreme Court delays Trump's January 6 prosecution. Then, Trump-appointed Judge Cannon postpones the trial in Florida. Now this in Georgia. The courts are deliberately delaying justice and effectively denying it," says Adam Schiff.

And here is Hillary Clinton in a wide-ranging interview she did this morning on "Morning Joe". Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

HILLARY CLINTON, FORMER FIRST LADY OF THE UNITED STATES: Justice delayed is justice denied, and the people in our country, it looks as though will most likely go to vote without knowing the outcome of these other very serious trials.

These are very serious charges against any American. But someone who's both been a president and wants to be a president again, that should cause any voter to think not twice, but many, many times over.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: What's your reaction to that? And what are your thoughts on these various delays which continue to push these things further out?

BINNALL: Well, what you're seeing is the left is really saying the quiet part out loud, which is that they have been depending on these cases, not for some sort of pursuit of justice, but in order to impact the 2024 presidential election.

And now, that you have appellate courts, and you have judges that are starting to take a deeper look at these cases, and not moving them as fast as these, you know, left-wing prosecutors want them to move these cases, then, the left is wringing their hands because of it.

It takes a lot of gall for Hillary Clinton after everything that she's been through to say that justice delayed is justice denied, because in her case, it was both. But what we know for sure, at this point is that each and every one of these cases was so unprecedented, that once you start to take a deeper look at each of them, they start falling apart, which is why each of these cases that are either on hold or, in the case of New York, are completely falling apart as the case proceeds through the litigation.

MACCALLUM: So, you know, we can go back too to the Judge Engoron case on the real estate valuation, where the former president was supposed to pay $500 million on that case. And was able to pay a bit of a lower bond.

There is now a story that says that another attorney spoke with Engoron and gave him sort of side advice on this. He said, "I actually have the ability to speak to him three weeks ago. I wanted him to know what I think and why. I really want him to get it right. He had a lot of questions about certain cases, and we went over it."

Why is that not allowed? And what might that signal for that real estate case?

BINNALL: Martha, that is something that is absolutely prohibited in our justice system. If someone wants to make an argument to a judge about a case, you do it in the courtroom. And you cannot take and go behind the scenes to start making arguments to judge. That's incredibly improper. And let's remember, this is also the same judge who bragged about his handling of the case in his high school alumni newsletter was, you know, hamming it up on the bench for the cameras when the case started, when the trial started.

This is a judge who has, at every possible opportunity, has handled himself improperly. He, quite frankly, has no business being on the bench if he's going to make ex parte communications about a case the way that it appears he might have. So this is a very serious accusation against Judge Engoron.

MACCALLUM: What is your best estimate when you look at these cases as to whether or not any other case besides this one is likely to be able to happen before the election?

BINNALL: Well, none of these cases should proceed, not only before the election, none of them should proceed at all because none of them have a proper legal basis. And so as we see right now, you know, for instance, in the Florida case where Judge Cannon is properly. You know, once it's been represented to her that the prosecution, when has effectively been the prosecution was the one who mishandled classified evidence, is taking a hard look at a bunch of the issues and is doing the proper thing, that they're not allowing the prosecutors to engage in a rush to judgment where you just take and railroad President Trump because they want to get this done before an election.

You actually have some judges at this point, whether they be trial judges or appellate judges, that are properly taken and saying that we're going to slow these things down and do it right. And if you do these cases right, every single one of them should be thrown out of court.

MACCALLUM: Jesse Binnall, thank you, Jesse. Good to see you.

BINNALL: Thanks for having me.

MACCALLUM: So Ari Fleischer and Jason Chaffetz, and Robert Wolf on whether Trump's courtroom campaign is giving Biden a boost next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: All right, so this just breaking. It looks like Hunter Biden is going on trial on gun charges in Delaware next month. Two weeks before his trial on tax charges is set to take place in California, an appeals court denying his bid to throw out the gun case, a hearing set for tomorrow. No word on whether Hunter Biden will be there. He is pleading not guilty in both cases after a plea deal with the feds fell apart last year. We all remember that, that was pretty dramatic when it fell apart in that courtroom.

And the lawyers, his lawyers say that agreement should still be in effect but we don't have a final word on that.

So we are waiting to hear from former President Trump at his criminal trial here in New York. They usually take a break right around now, so we will see if he comes out and speaks to the cameras. If so, we will take that. Obviously, all of this is cutting pretty dramatically into the time that he has to go out on the campaign trail.

And now we've got a new poll out of Wisconsin, which is a bit of an outlier. And most of them, they're very close in Wisconsin, but this one just came out and shows a pretty big jump for Biden, up 6 points, razor thin margins in the past two elections in Wisconsin. Biden in 2020, Trump in '16 were the winners, both by 20,000 votes in that neighborhood of 20,000 votes.

But now Biden is ahead by six in this new Quinnipiac poll. As I said, that is the largest margin that we've seen in Wisconsin polling so far. So the head to head edge, though, gets nearly wiped out when they add these third party candidates into the race. Kennedy, Stein and West eat up -- that they're up to 17 percent of the vote. And that brings it to 40-39 for Biden and Trump.

Let's bring in Ari Fleischer, former White House press secretary, Jason Chaffetz, former House Oversight committee chairman, and Robert Wolf, former Obama economic advisor, now founder and CEO of 32 Advisors, all our Fox News contributors and great to have all of you with us.

Obviously, Wisconsin is a big battleground state. It was big obviously in 2016. Trump swept Wisconsin and Michigan, and Pennsylvania and really brought down that blue wall that had existed in those areas. And a lot of discussion around Wisconsin has to do with the economy. And one of the things that a former advisor, and Robert, I'll go to you on this. David Axelrod feels that Biden is making a pretty big mistake when it comes to the way that he's talking about the US economy. Here's what Axelrod had to say right after that CNN interview that Biden sat down for last night. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DAVID AXELROD, CNN POLITICAL ANALYST: They're experiencing it through the lens of the cost of living. And he is a man who's built his career on empathy. Where is -- why not lead with the empathy? And I think he's making a terrible mistake. You know, it may not be, if he doesn't win this race, it may not be Donald Trump that beats him, it may be his own pride.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Robert, Axelrod has never been scant on his criticism of this president. He pretty much, you know, goes at him every chance he gets. What do you make of that?

ROBERT WOLF, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: Well, David was -- did a great job for President Obama. I'm glad that I'm the economic guy and he can be the PR guy. I think the reason President Biden is doing well in Wisconsin, and actually they have him up now in Michigan and Arizona, is because in Wisconsin he just announced the Racine plant, 3 plus billion Microsoft AI. In Arizona, he announced the multi-billion chips plant that came from the Inflation Reduction and CHIPS Act. And then in Michigan, he's been the biggest supporter of any president with respect to unions and getting wages up.

So I don't think it has anything to do with, you know, what we're seeing, the nonsense in the courts. I think it all has to do with he's going on offense and he's acting like the president as he should.

MACCALLUM: Yes. Ari, though, in that interview, Biden said, you know, all of the polls on the economy are wrong. You know, basically denying that people are feeling what they're feeling when they speak to these pollsters about the economy. You know, and I think that's what Axelrod is responding to there.

ARI FLEISCHER, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: Yes. We know when a politician of either party says all the polls are wrong. What they're saying is, all the people are wrong and I'm right. So the people need to listen to me. No, this is how you get to be out of touch, and that's the problem. And this is why inflation is such a killer, because as any economist would tell you that as the rate of inflation comes down, any consumer will tell you the prices of everything keeps going up. And that's the economy we live in today, where the price of housing, rent, food, gas isn't going up as much as it used to, but it is still going up and it's way up from the day that Joe Biden took office.

That's the pain, the real life pain that people are feeling. And that's why, Martha, for all these states, pay no attention to one day movements and polls. There are seven battleground states. Joe Biden won six of them last time, Donald Trump won one, North Carolina. All seven are going to be close from now through November. So I really pay very little attention to a one day fluctuation here or there. Keep your eye on those seven battleground states.

MACCALLUM: Absolutely. Jason, let's take a look at this because it's interesting. There are a lot of comparisons both in the place we are in history and the presidencies with the Reagan 1980 election when he ran against Jimmy Carter. It's always interesting to look back at what was going on then. Here is what Reagan had to say about Carter and inflation. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

RONALD REAGAN, FORMER US PRESIDENT: Mr. Carter has blamed OPEC for inflation. He's blamed the American people for inflation. He's blamed the Federal Reserve Board for inflation. The symbol of this administration is a finger pointing at someone else. Mr. Carter seems to have forgotten or not to have learned at all. Inflation hurts people.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Reagan message there. Jason, what do you think about that?

JASON CHAFFETZ, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: He was one of the greatest communicators. Donald Trump is probably one of the best retail politicians that we've seen. Joe Biden is not able to communicate. I mean, that interview on CNN, just keep running that. Just keep doing interviews. Joe Biden tell us that he inherited a 9 percent inflation rate from Donald Trump. That wasn't true.

MACCALLUM: No.

CHAFFETZ: And when asked what his greatest accomplishment was to drive down the economy, he took the bank fee, you know, at $30 down to $8 if you bounce a check. That's it. That was his go to line. This is the president of the United States campaigning for the presidency and that's what he's talking about. He won't even go on a Super Bowl ad, basically to go out, talk to 100 plus million people. He's not able to communicate like a Reagan or a Trump.

I still give the Democrats an advantage, though. I really do because I think they're better at getting out the ground game. Trump may be right on all the issues, but if you don't have a ground game, you're not going to win. And I think the Democrats are much better at getting out the vote.

MACCALLUM: Yes. A lot of people think that. Exactly as you do on that. And so much for the real time fact checking over there for the 9 percent inflation rate when he came into office. Gentlemen, thank you. We're going to be back with you in a bit. So thanks for joining us. Thanks for sticking around.

We've got another big story that we want to get to this afternoon involving President Biden's Rafah red line for Bibi Netanyahu.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU, ISRAEL PRIME MINISTER: If Israel is forced to stand alone, Israel will stand alone. And I say to you, we will defeat our genocidal enemies. Never again is now.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: President Biden insists that his commitment to Israel is "ironclad," but then he said this in an interview last night.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF UNITED STATES: If they go into Rafah, I'm not supplying the weapons that have been used historically to deal with Rafah, to deal with the cities, to deal with that problem. We're going to continue to make sure Israel is secure in terms of Iron Dome and their ability to respond to attacks that came out of the Middle East recently.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Here is Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu today. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

NETANYAHU (through translation): We are determined and we are united in order to defeat our enemies and those who want to destroy us. If we need to stand alone, we will stand alone.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Let's bring in Ari Fleischer, former White House press secretary, Jason Chaffetz, former House Oversight Committee chairman, and Robert Wolf, former Obama economic advisor, now founder and CEO of 32 Advisors. He was just at the Pentagon and the White House, but is here speaking for himself. He serves on some advisory committees there. And all three are Fox News contributors, great to have you with us today again.

Robert, this is very reminiscent of what we heard with regard to Ukraine. We're going to give you defensive weapons, not offensive weapons. And we see what has happened in that environment. The President said after October 7th that he would stand by Israel. And Israel said that their goal was to eradicate Hamas. Now they are sort of, you know, at the last door of doing that. And he says we will not help them.

What do you say to that? And, you know, what can you share with us about what you understand?

WOLF: Yes. So just speaking personally here, because I spent the last two days at the Pentagon and have clearance, so I want to be clear on that. First of all, he's absolutely standing with Israel. I think we have to separate fact from fiction. He's absolutely ironclad with respect to the security of Israel. Just look what happened when Iran attacked with 300 missiles, and it was the US that was shutting down that missile avalanche into Israel alongside the Iron Dome.

Number two, we're talking about munitions that are indiscriminate. These are 2,000 pound bombs that will be going into urban areas. And it's clear that President Biden has made it very clear to everyone that he does not believe that those should be used in those type of populated urban areas.

That doesn't have anything to do with making sure that Israel gets to protect themselves, that they can overtake Hamas. And I would also be clear that we have not stopped any supplemental financing. And so I think we're taking things out of context here. Absolutely it's an ironclad commitment that we will support Israel and we will continue to supply them the weapons. But with respect to Rafah, President Biden has also been equally clear that they have to be targeted.

But he no longer believes that Hamas has to be completely eradicated apparently. He's OK leaving Hamas in charge of Gaza.

WOLF: I would totally disagree with that, which is why, you know, their conversations with Saudi and releasing the hostages, and making sure that, you know, President Biden has been clear on his two state solution and that there would be the Palestinian authority taking over in some way in the future. But we know that Bibi doesn't accept that.

So this is complicated and there's a reason that President Reagan paused with respect to giving supplies on Lebanon. George H. W. Bush paused with giving supplies to the West Bank. This gets complicated because they've been in a multi-year war. But there's no question US stands by Israel with every president.

MACCALLUM: OK. But, Ari, those are two different questions. Standing by Israel in a defensive posture is one thing, standing by Israel to prevent the next October 7th, which Hamas has been very clear, they want to carry out again and again, and again, does that require going into Rafah and rooting out Sinwar and the leadership of Hamas just like went after al- Qaeda and ISIS.

FLEISCHER: Yes. And just like we finished the job in Germany, we didn't stop at the Belgian border in World War II. We continued on to Germany to get Hitler. If Joe Biden were the American president, I guess he would have said stop at the Rhine, don't go after him.

Look, I don't even know where to begin with Joe Biden on this issue. First, if this is ironclad, he's about as ironclad as a limp noodle. He doesn't even remember in that (inaudible) you just played when he talked about he protected Israel during those missile strikes from somewhere in the Middle East. He doesn't even remember the name of the country that just attacked Israel was Iran.

What does he want to do? He wants to protect Gaza. He wants to protect Hamas in Rafah, and let Hamas survive. How can you do that? Israel is fighting for its survival. Joe Biden is fighting for Michigan.

MACCALLUM: So obviously, there's a ton of political pressure on President Biden over this issue. We've seen what happened across the campuses. We know that Ilan Omar basically said, look, protesters, you're winning. You're winning with the White House, so keep going. And here's a Democratic Michigan Representative Rashida Tlaib, watch.

REP. RASHIDA TLAIB (D-MI): I've been waiting for the warrants. I don't know how many more people have to be slaughtered in the hands of genocidal maniac Netanyahu. So he should be already at The Hague.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Jason Chaffetz?

CHAFFETZ: Joe Biden clearly puts ***politics*** before getting rid of the terrorists. That's the fundamental problem, is that he does put ***politics*** first. He is being pro-Hamas. Hamas wants to destroy, kill every Jew that they possibly can. And here Israel is on the attack. They're going in to root out the terrorists. If you're not going to support Israel in doing that, then you're not serious about killing and taking care of the terrorists. That's where they are. That's where you're going to have to go.

And Israel continues to take it from Iran. They take it from Hamas. They take it from Hezbollah. And if you're serious about rooting out terrorists, then you're going to have to go get them where they are. And they happen to be in Rafah.

MACCALLUM: So who's going to take out Hamas, Robert?

WOLF: Say it again.

MACCALLUM: Who's going to take out Hamas?

WOLF: It has to be Israel. And under no scenario do I support Hamas being the neighbor of Israel, just to be clear. And absolutely, the idea that, Jason, you're a better person than to say President Biden's pro-Hamas but we'll just leave that as a political slip. That's insane to say and you know you're wrong.

CHAFFETZ: No, I don't. I don't buy that. Why slow down? Why slow down? Why not give Israel, why micromanage Israel? Israel's on the fight. They're on the offensive, and they are not letting him finish the job. They are not -- that is not ironclad support of your best ally in the Middle East.

MACCALLUM: Well, if I was interviewing President Biden, I would ask him exactly that question. Who is going to get rid of Hamas? Thank you, gentlemen. Thank you very much. We'll continue this conversation as we move forward.

A live look now at the New York City courthouse where we expect to hear from former President Trump when court wraps minutes from now, we'll take you there live.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: Some emotional testimony happening right now in the courtroom as the cross examination is underway of former President Trump's executive assistant, Madeleine Westerhout. She was speaking fondly of her time at the White House and her time working for President Trump back then and before he was president. So we'll keep on top of this. We'll wait for them to come out of the courtroom as well.

That's "The Story" for today. We will see you back here tomorrow. Have a great afternoon.

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