

# [***Poll: Trump Leads Biden In Five Battleground States; Biden And Trump Agree To Debate On June 7th And September 10th; Biden In Denial Over Poor Polling Against Trump; House Oversight Hearing Devolves Into Chaos; Trump Defense Questions Cohen Bias, Credibility; Fortenberry Reindicted For Allegedly Lying To The FBI; Politics Jeopardize Our Justice System; White House Walks Diplomatic Tightrope In Israel; Statue Of Rev. Billy Graham Unveiled At Capitol Hill; The Intersection Of Religion And Politics***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C2N-X3J1-JCS1-6119-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Guests:** Jose Aristimuno, Alex Little, Glen Summers, Michael Oren, Franklin Graham

**Body**

MARK LEVIN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST, "LIFE, LIBERTY & LEVIN": Joe Biden is the anti-liberty, the anti-Constitution, the anti-Reagan, the anti-Trump. He is the tyranny part of "Liberty and Tyranny."

The only way to stop him is to defeat him.

I'll see you next time on "Life Liberty & Levin."

TREY GOWDY, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST, "SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA": Good evening and thank you for joining us. I'm Trey Gowdy and it is SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

Election Day is six months away, but potential warning signs are blinking for both sides. Polling indicates former President Trump is leading President Biden in the battleground states of Pennsylvania, Arizona, Michigan, Georgia, and Nevada. At the same time, so-called election simulators forecast a Biden victory.

Moreover, what does it profit a person to gain the presidency if you don't have the Senate for confirmations and judicial appointments? On that front, West Virginia looks like a GOP pickup, but what about Ohio, Arizona, Nevada, Pennsylvania and Michigan?

Media personalities on the left are sounding the law, not pulling the fire alarm like Jamaal Bowman, they're not doing that, I mean it figuratively.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SUNNY HOSTIN, CO-HOST, "THE VIEW": It's very clear that Biden is actually worse off now six months from the election than Obama was and when Bill Clinton was.

VAN JONES, CNN POLITICAL COMMENTATOR: It should be a wake-up call.

JAMES CARVILLE, DEMOCRATIC STRATEGIST: It is going the wrong way. It's not working.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: One thing appears certain, the race will likely come down to a few counties and a handful of states, and don't forget about the debates. Two have been agreed to by the candidates cutting out the Commission on Presidential Debates, and cutting out Robert Kennedy, Jr. It is feeling like a 50/50 election all over again.

Joining us are two political experts, Fox News contributor and townhall.com editor, Katie Pavlich. And former DNC Deputy Press Secretary and strategist, Jose Aristimuno.

Welcome to you both.

Katie, the polling looks encouraging in parts for Trump, but there's this lingering vote for Nikki Haley. So my question to you, does Trump need those votes to win or perhaps to build something resembling a mandate? And is there a plan to attract those reticent voters?

KATIE PAVLICH, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONTRIBUTOR: Well, it wouldn't hurt to have those Haley voters, that's for sure. But Donald Trump is in a position where he has most of his base completely locked up, and he is actually pulling demographics away from Democrats. Joe Biden is in a position where his coalition is actually seeing a lot more fractures than the Republicans.

I've talked to a couple of Nikki Haley voters, they say they wouldn't vote for Trump, even if she were the vice presidential pick, for example. But a lot of Republicans are going to look at the contrast here with Joe Biden and Donald Trump, and the fact that their inflation rate is you know, everything is 20 percent more expensive, they feel like the world is on fire, and they'll come home to the Republican Party.

So Donald Trump is able to get those votes from Black voters, Hispanic voters. It doesn't have to be significant percentages for him to beat Joe Biden in a number of these swing states, but also maybe some states that aren't necessarily in play right now, but could be in a couple of months.

GOWDY: All right, Jose, to Katie's point, polling does indicate that President Biden is struggling with constituencies that once seemed reliable. So first of all, do you believe that and similar to what I asked Katie, I mean, college campus protesters are not going to vote Republican, but they may stay home. So does Biden have an enthusiasm problem? And is he, as Katie has suggested, fighting to keep traditionally reliable constituencies on board?

JOSE ARISTIMUNO, DEMOCRATIC STRATEGIST: Trey, well, thanks for having me on, and look, I think it is a great question. I think first and foremost, we have to recognize and be very careful to not overreact to polls, whether they're going for you or against you.

We take ourselves back to 2016 when Hillary Clinton was winning, the night before the election, every single poll in America said she was going to be the next president of the United States, and she wasn't, right? We know that, she lost.

So I would, I would advise folks to be very careful, even on my side, Democrats to even though the polls look good for us, right? That doesn't mean people should still come out and vote, the president should continue to travel the country, talking to the American people and say, look, make the case that I'm fighting for your future, I'm helping this economy, even though I'm not done yet, right?

We know prices are still too high in the grocery store and the president recognizes that, but he's brought inflation down from nine percent to three percent, so he is going in right direction. And you've got to point, my advice is we point to the other guy, I'm fighting for your future, and the other guy on the other side, Donald Trump is consumed by his past. He doesn't care about you. He cares about his case. He cares about legal fees and not the American people.

GOWDY: All right, that sets up perfectly for --

PAVLICH: Well, Trey, I'll let you jump in here --

GOWDY: All right, I'll let you jump in.

PAVLICH: I just think with these debates now that we have coming with Joe Biden and Donald Trump, we're going to see a lot of lying about inflation.

My colleague on the other side of the aisle just said that inflation, Joe Biden took it down from nine percent to what it is now. When Joe Biden came into office, it was 1.4 percent, and it went to nine percent after Democratic spending, so you're going to see a lot of changing of the narrative here, a little bit of fudging of the facts on the issues.

GOWDY: Well, let me just say this about ***politics*** in general, I wish I sold polygraph machines, particularly for political debates, because oftentimes, those are fact free zones.

But I do want to get into the debates, Katie, and I'm going to start with you. And then Jose, I'm going to ask you, what would think a country that can split an atom and land something on Mars could come up with a constructive debate structure? But I'm not sure we have one.

So what do you think of the two debates? One is what -- like in a week? And then another one later on in the fall? I mean, how would y'all structure a debate worthy of a country like ours? Katie, you go first, and then you Jose?

PAVLICH: Well, the first debate is at the end of June. So we've got about a month to go here before the first one. It's done traditionally very early ahead of both the Republican and the Democratic conventions in July and August, so that's interesting.

I would structure it as both candidates get to, you know, they are respectfully in conversation with each other, and that there is less interruption from the moderator. And less biased questions for typically the Republican side.

And so I think that it'll be interesting to see the both talk about these issues. You know, Donald Trump did well against Hillary Clinton in 2016. I think it was probably -- it was a tossup against Joe Biden the first time in 2020.

And so I think people are setting expectations very low for Joe Biden, which is probably a mistake, because if we set the bar on the ground, he's going to step right over it.

GOWDY: Jose, do you agree with the decision to --

ARISTIMUNO: Look, let me add this.

You know, maybe Katie and I -- I agree with Katie. Maybe Katie and I should run the Debate Commission moving forward. But look, joking aside, I do think it's important that they're both going to debate. I think there was a lot of talk that Joe Biden is not going to debate and he is not -- you know, he's too old to debate -- all this nonsense. And I'm happy that the ball in Donald's court as they say. They're both going to debate very early.

I do like the fact that they're going to mute each other's microphones when each of them is speaking, that way it is not a shouting match and people can actually -- they can actually go in-depth into each of these topics.

Now, but looking -- historically looking at past elections, Trey, we know that debates don't move the needle all that much when it comes to voters, right? I think -- I do think it's important and I do think they need to have it, but I don't think they'll make a whole lot of difference come November.

GOWDY: All right, before I let you go, I have to get you both to react. I mean, every now and again, something happens that makes me miss the British monarchy and it actually happened last night during an Oversight Committee mark up.

I mean, people said you miss Congress. I miss the British Monarchy after I watched legislators talk about fake eyelashes and physiques. I mean, it just -- it is just not worthy of a nation like ours, Katie.

So I mean, number one, why did they do it? And then Jose, I'll get you to weigh in, too, and I mean, don't you think voters -- I mean, surely voters don't want that, do they? Those ad hominem like personal insults. I'll let y'all take us to the break with last night's oversight hearing.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. JASMINE CROCKETT (D-TX): Please tell me what that has to do with Merrick Garland?

Do you know what we're here for?

REP. MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE (R-GA): I think your fake eyelashes are messing up what you're reading.

REP. JAMIE RASKIN (D-MD): That's beneath even you, Miss Greene.

REP. ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ (D-NY): That is absolutely unacceptable. How dare you attack the physical appearance of another person.

GREENE: Are your feelings hurt.

OCASIO-CORTEZ: Oh, girl, baby girl.

GREENE: Oh, really?

OCASIO-CORTEZ: Don't even play.

GREENE: Baby girl? I don't think so.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PAVLICH: I just think it's so embarrassing and when you think of Congress, do you think you're sending people there who have respect for the process and respect for the position and when you start hearing about eyelashes and people's body types and screaming when you're supposed to be dealing with very serious contempt of Congress charges for the attorney general, that is quite debasing and undignified and not something I think regular Americans would like to see from their representatives.

GOWDY: Jose, I bet you agree that we can do better.

ARISTIMUNO: That's exactly right.

Look, it is no surprise that Congress has the lowest approval rating year after year and it is with reason, right? Because they -- it seems to me that they forget who they're there to serve, right? It's not each other. It's to serve the American people.

So I think Congress ought to do a better job and I really hope they do.

GOWDY: Yes, I can also tell you, I mean it's just -- it's also not persuasive. I mean, it may be gratifying for a very small part of their respective bases, but it is not persuasive.

And it's -- I just think we're better than that. But y'all showed remarkable civility to one another. So y'all are disqualified from Congress, but you're welcome to come back anytime you want and join me on a Sunday night.

PAVLICH: I'm fine with that.

ARISTIMUNO: Thank you.

PAVLICH: Thanks, Trey.

GOWDY: All righty. Great. Thank you all.

Coming up, President Trump's former lawyer is the star witness for the prosecution. So how did Michael Cohen hold up? That and more right after the break on SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

LEVIN: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

Michael Cohen was not only Donald Trump's attorney, he said he'd take a bullet for Trump. But this week it was Cohen holding the gun.

He is the most important witness for the prosecution because he claims to have orchestrated the catch and kill scheme that paid women for silence, he says it was done to further Trump's political ambitions, that the invoices were falsified to make it look like legal expenses and that Trump was in on it from the beginning.

But Cohen comes with more baggage than an airline. He is a convicted liar. As a general rule, those don't make good witnesses.

Cohen is also openly biased against Trump. He wants to see Trump in prison and brags about revenge. Cohen makes money off of this prosecution and his animosity is palpable.

In the past, Cohen said he had nothing incriminating on Trump, and now he sings a different tune. Those are called prior inconsistent statements and they're not endearing qualities for a crucial witness in the eyes of a jury when it comes to credibility.

Virtually no one would believe Michael Cohen beyond a reasonable doubt. The question is whether the jury has to believe Cohen to convict or is there enough corroboration even accepting his mendacity?

Joining us is former federal prosecutor Alex Little.

Alex, welcome.

ALEX LITTLE, FORMER FEDERAL PROSECUTOR: Good evening.

GOWDY: Did Cohen -- do you think Cohen helped the prosecution prove the essential elements of this alleged crime? I mean, you can literally feel the bias through his testimony. I don't know that I've ever seen a witness, a government witness with that much palpable bias.

LITTLE: It's a difficult situation. You see it sometimes when the prosecution has to put a witness on, they can't do this case without Michael Cohen's testimony. But you're right, his baggage is terrible. It makes their case look miserable.

I think they tried to put on as much corroboration. They stuck to the documents, they plotted through those one at a time, hoping that that would be enough sort of a paper trail to make the jury believe that what he is saying is true.

Look, true or false, he is clearly a biased witness. He has all sorts of problems with inconsistent statements. It's a defense attorney's dream to cross-examine someone like him. But at the same time, you know, there is a great deal of documentation that backs up what he's saying.

It's a very classic case of jury determining the credibility of a witness and it is going to depend on how they view the way he performed.

GOWDY: All right, even if the jury does believe that the former president and Stormy Daniels had an intimate relationship, does that ipso facto equal a guilty verdict? In other words, could they believe her testimony but still conclude that no crime was committed?

LITTLE: Oh, sure, absolutely. They could believe many parts of this case, and that's really why Cohen's testimony is so important, because to prove the crime, they have to show there was an intent to falsify records. And that's really, you know, a small piece of the story that's been told over these weeks about the trial.

But it's ultimately the only criminal pieces whether in the course of this alleged affair and the cover up of the affair, whether the actual documents were manipulated for that purpose, and also that the documents were done in a manner to protect the re-election campaign or the election campaign at the time.

GOWDY: All right, almost all witnesses, at least in my experience, are capable of telling the truth at some point, and almost all are capable of not telling the truth of even murder defendants who testify at least get their names right when they're introduced to the jury.

So how much -- you mentioned that the jury can accept a lot of it and still not convict. What do they have to accept from Michael Cohen to find President Trump, the former president guilty beyond a reasonable doubt?

LITTLE: I think they have to believe that Cohen let the former president know the specifics of what he was doing with the particular record keeping of how these payments were going to be documented. If they don't believe that, I don't think there's any really good direct evidence that the former president knew that those false statements were being made in the books and records of the organization.

GOWDY: All right, I want us to listen, Michael Cohen's a lawyer, but he had a lawyer. Let's listen to his former lawyer, and then I'll ask you one more question.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ROBERT COSTELLO, ATTORNEY: He kept on saying over and over again, 10 to 20 times, I swear to God, Bob, I don't have anything on Donald Trump. And then when we got into the discussion of the Stormy Daniels NDA, he said specifically, and I cross-examined him on this, this was my idea.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: Not sure I want my lawyer doing a whole lot of interviews, but if you were a defense counsel, who if anyone would you call? I mean, are you confident enough right now that there is reasonable doubt? Or would you put up a defense case? And if so, who and how?

LITTLE: I would absolutely put on a defense case. I think Cohen's former lawyer to the extent he can testify about those statements would be one of them. I think ultimately, a lot of times, the defense lawyers or prosecutors who are competent in our case, we believe that everybody thinks the same way we do.

I think you do enough trial as you learn to experience, the jury has got a different view. And so yes, you may think you slaughtered him on the cross- exam, but to drive that home with additional witnesses, which I think they will do is to me the proper strategic call.

GOWDY: Yes, I remember judges used to tell me that I had enough. I could stop and I've always said, well, will you give me a new trial if you're wrong, if they come back not guilty? And of course, the answer is no, I can't, so you've got to keep going until -- really until the jury is saying look, we get it. Please stop.

Alex Little, thank you for your insight.

LITTLE: Thank you. Take care.

GOWDY: Few things jeopardize our justice system quite like vindictive prosecutors.

Jeff Fortenberry is a former Nebraska congressman primarily known for defending persecuted Christians. That was his work in Congress.

The FBI placed a phone call to Jeff during an investigation into a California fundraiser and recorded the call, and then the FBI waited months and months to ask Jeff about that conversation.

I don't remember what I said last week, but the FBI expected Jeff to recall with precision a conversation from half a year earlier. And of course, the FBI didn't need you have to recall the details. They recorded the call. They knew exactly what was said and by whom.

They wanted him to fail their memory test so they could put a political pelt on the wall. The FBI botched the Dylann Roof background check, mishandled the USA Gymnastics sexual assault case, sullied its own reputation with Crossfire Hurricane, but they get really excited going after a congressman.

He was tried in California, although no interview took place there. They did it because it's easier to convict a Republican in California, but that conviction was overturned and DOJ waited until the statute of limitations had run in Nebraska, so they could try him in Washington, DC.

I'm very familiar with that DC interview. I was there for it. There never would have been an interview in DC except for two facts: Federal prosecutors made patently false statements and Congressman Fortenberry very much wanted to help the investigation. He had nothing to hide.

He had done nothing wrong. He believed it was his civic duty to cooperate. In other words, he trusted federal prosecutors and FBI agents and took them at their word and that proved to be a fatal mistake.

So now, even though his career was ruined, his life savings depleted, he served probation and paid the fine, DOJ is not satisfied. They lost on appeal and their vindictiveness is driving them to try and punish him all over again.

Joining us is his attorney, Glen Summers.

Welcome, Glen.

Let me try to summarize the case: The FBI and federal prosecutors could lie to you, but you cannot mis-recollect facts from a phone call six months ago back to them. That's my summary of it.

GLEN SUMMERS, ATTORNEY TO JEFF FORTENBERRY: You know, Trey, first, good evening to you. It's great to be on the show. Thank you for having me.

But you've summarized the case perfectly. The evidence was undisputed that Congressman Fortenberry had no knowledge of the illegal campaign contributions. They placed a couple of phone calls to him and basically set him up.

And at the interviews, they again deliberately set him up for a false statements case and the whole case is about -- he was very forthcoming about the fundraiser, what happened, the people involved.

This case now is about one tiny characterization of what occurred on that phone call and one little detail and to be clear, the phone call that they placed to him and that they record had occurred nine months before the first interview and almost a year before the real interview in Washington, DC.

And they of course knew all of the facts that no one was misled by Congressman Fortenberry. This was a setup from start to finish. And the real question now is, having forced him to resign, having forced him to basically spend his entire life savings defending himself on an improper prosecution out in Los Angeles, having served his probationary sentence, why are they doing this all over again to him? It just makes absolutely no sense when you look at the normal standards for prosecutorial discretion.

Why on earth would they prosecute this man a second time as again, while his case was up on appeal, he served his probationary sentence. He fulfilled all of the terms of his sentence, and we have to keep in mind, at the conclusion of the first trial, the federal district judge who heard all of the evidence, declined the government's request for a custodial sentence. They refused to put -- the judge refused to put Congressman Fortenberry in jail. Why? Because he found that the evidence was overwhelming that Congressman Fortenberry was a man of -- and I quote the federal judge now "of exceptional character."

And the judge found that all of the witnesses, including the government's witnesses said that he was a man of exceptional character and a man of extraordinary truthfulness.

So that the great irony of this case is that fellow congressman and in particular, a Democrat, Anna Eshoo from California from the Bay Area, were lined up and testified in his behalf. Anna Eshoo testified on his behalf, and others were lined up, prepared to do, that he was one of the most honorable men in all of Washington, in all of Congress.

So we have undisputed testimony that we have one of the most truthful, honest, good men in Congress and he is the person who is now being prosecuted twice for making false statements to the FBI and to the DOJ. And it just makes no sense, Trey. This is one where the world has been turned up on its head and you just have to scratch your head and wonder what is really going on here?

GOWDY: Well, I wish I could scratch my head and wonder. I'm afraid I know Glen, it is vindictive, ambitious prosecutors, and you know, being a prosecutor was my favorite job, because there is nothing more beautiful than pursuing justice.

And there is nothing uglier than being vindictive and trying to further your own career at the expense of someone. Everyone would have told you what Anna Eshoo said, everyone who worked with Jeff Fortenberry would have told you he's known for defending Christians and being a follower of the rules.

And DOJ, I hasten to add, waited until the Trump administration was out. They waited nine months to interview. I mean, then they waited until the Trump administration was out and gone before they indicted him and this is an outrage.

And you and I will be back on. I don't know when the trial date is, but we're going to follow this case. We may be the only two people in the world following it. But you and I are going to follow it together, Glen.

SUMMERS: Thank you, Trey. I appreciate your time tonight and thank you for following us because it's a real travesty of justice, and it makes you wonder where the mature people at the DOJ are? Where are the adults? And how are they allowing something like this to happen?

This -- you know, this DOJ is out-of-control and it is a ship without a captain right now.

GOWDY: Of all the things to go after -- of all the things that they take a pass on, to go after someone like Jeff Fortenberry is truly staggering.

Glen Summers, thank you so much for joining us on this Sunday night.

SUMMERS: Thank you again, Trey. Take care.

GOWDY: Coming up, Israeli tanks are plunging deeper into Gaza as the Biden administration move forward on a $1 billion worth of new weapons for the Jewish state.

Former Israeli ambassador to the US, Michael Oren joins us next on SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

ASHLEY STROHMIER, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: Welcome to "Fox News Live." I'm Ashley Strohmier in New York.

Former President Trump's New York criminal trial could be coming to an end soon. His former attorney, Michael Cohen will be back on the stand tomorrow for what is likely to be his final day of cross-examination.

Cohen is believed to be the prosecution's last witness. If that is the case, the defense will have the opportunity to begin calling their own witnesses to the stand. If they decide not, too, closing arguments can begin as soon as Tuesday.

And millions of people in our nation's heartland are facing another week of harsh weather. Today marks the beginning of a multiday and multistate severe weather threat. Much of the Plains and Midwest could see large hail, tornadoes, heavy rain, and damaging winds.

The rocky weather pattern isn't expected to calm down until midweek.

I'm Ashley Strohmier, now to back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

For all of your headlines, log on to FoxNews.com.

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

The Biden administration is trying to walk a political tightrope in the Middle East. Withholding arms from Israel one day, and then professing some solidarity with the Jewish people the next.

Here is the State Department spokesperson using a lot of words to say not very much.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

VEDANT PATEL, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY SPOKESPERSON, US STATE DEPARTMENT: It is fully legitimate for the United States to be concerned about the use of certain security assets of ours in an urban and dense setting. It's as simple as that.

But in the midst of all that, we also believe strongly that every step possible needs to be taken to minimize civilian casualties.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: You know, for many of us, the analysis is much simpler. Do you support the lone democracy in the region? Do you support the eradication of a terrorist network? Or would you prefer to leave a remnant so it can grow and launch another attack?

Israel is not the 51st state. Israel is a sovereign nation surrounded by countries and elements that desire its nonexistence.

Biden wants to get re-elected. Israel wants to keep from being eliminated. The US used to be Israel's most reliable ally. But what about now?

Joining us is former Israeli ambassador to the United States, Michael Oren.

Welcome, Mr. Ambassador. We'll start with two questions from your viewpoint, the state of the war in Gaza currently and the state of US- Israeli relations.

MICHAEL OREN, FORMER ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES: Well, the state of the battle in Gaza is fierce in various places around the Gaza Strip, certainly in the south along the southern border with Egypt, a place called Rafah, everyone knows that name now, where Israel is trying to move hundreds of thousands of Palestinians away from the combat area to do precisely what the Biden administration wants us to do and that is minimize as much as possible civilian casualties because we're fighting an enemy that is not only hiding behind those civilians, it's fighting -- it is hiding under the civilians in over 400 miles of tunnels. It is inconceivable.

Israel throughout this war has striven to reduce the civilian casualties and while every civilian casualty is a tragedy, Israel probably has the lowest ratio of combatant to civilian casualties of any army in modern history, including the United States Army in Iraq and Afghanistan and Syria, so that is occurring.

The state of the US-Israel relationship is complex. There are tensions. Yesterday, the National Security adviser, Jake Sullivan came out and once again reiterated America's support for Israel's war aims of destroying Hamas, which is very welcomed.

Other voices have come out and say that the United States is going to withhold certain types of ammunition from being used in Rafah. And a report in "The Washington Post" last week that the United States was withholding sensitive security information about the whereabouts of senior Hamas leaders underground, and one would assume if they are underground, they also have hostage underground, withholding that information unless Israel conforms to America's demands about Rafah and not entering Rafah.

So it's a mixed message, and we appreciate deeply the support we've been given including a billion dollars in military aid just last week, but we had hoped the United States would stand foursquare with us in what the vast majority of Israelis regard as a war for our survival, not just for our security, and war to release the hostages because Hamas will not accept any deal on the table, won't even accept the table, as we have no choice but to continue the military pressure on Hamas, that is what has worked in the past in order to secure the release of our hostages.

GOWDY: Mr. Ambassador, you have a unique perspective when it comes to Israel as a sovereign nation on the one hand, period, full stop, next sentence. It also needs support from the United States.

So how does that dynamic play out, especially when the US seems to -- seems to be trying to manage this war from afar?

OREN: Well, we try to convey our interests, our perspectives to the United States, it's hard. The United States is a big country. It's far away from the Middle East. You have some pretty nice neighbors and you've got oceans around you as well.

And when the United States -- when American leaders say to us well, you share our experience in Iraq and Afghanistan, that's very good. But in Iraq and Afghanistan, American forces could pick up and go home. Our forces can't pick up and go home because we are home. There is no place to run away to.

And though it doesn't make the news here very often, our forces up north are being pummeled -- pummeled -- by Iranian made missiles in the hands of Hezbollah. My own assistants in my office are up there they tell me they can't even get out of their bunkers to go and eat because they're under such intense bombardments by rockets and drones. The entire northern part of the Galilee is uninhabitable today.

This is an intolerable situation for any sovereign country, certainly a country that is threatened with national destruction.

So we have to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure not just our security, but our survival and that's a difficult reality to convey to Americans who in their neighborhoods, in their communities, in their schools, in their places of worship have never been under intense rocket fire.

It is difficult reality, you'll agree with me, but we have no choice.

GOWDY: Yes, the United States is surrounded by friendly neighbors, non- adversarial neighbors, and two really big bodies of water, that is not a luxury that Israel has.

Ambassador Michael Oren, thank you for joining us on a Sunday night.

OREN: Thank you very much. Bye-bye.

GOWDY: Up next, the Reverend Dr. Billy Graham is officially on Capitol Hill. It is a rare honor for a humble man. We will speak with his son, Reverend Franklin Graham right after the break.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

Dr. Billy Graham was the most influential minister of my lifetime. His revivals were known for the elegant simplicity of the message and the difficulty of the challenge. GK Chesterton may have said it best, it is not the Christianity has been tried and found wanting, it is that Christianity is hard and therefore untried.

Turn the other cheek, pray for those who persecute you, love your enemy, no political adviser on Earth would give that advice. But the most significant person to ever walk the Earth did. So what is the role of Christians in the political process? What is the future of the church? Was Christianity ever supposed to be popular?

Joining us is the president and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Reverend Franklin Graham.

Welcome to you, sir. It is wonderful to see you again.

Your father is being honored in a rare way, a private citizen who never held political office now has a statue in Statuary Hall. He struck me as a very modest man. So what would his reaction to this be?

REVEREND FRANKLIN GRAHAM, PRESIDENT AND CEO, BILLY GRAHAM EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION: Trey, he would have been -- he'd be a little uncomfortable, to be honest with you, because he would not want the attention to be drawn to him. He would want the attention to go to the one that my father served, and that was the Lord Jesus Christ. He would want all the attention to go to Him.

GOWDY: You know, Reverend, when I think of your father, I also think of your mother, because I knew so many people that were impacted by her during the course of her life. So she may not have a statue in Statuary Hall, but to me, she is right there beside your father, at least in my mind.

GRAHAM: Well, she is in the hall with my father. My father received a president or excuse me, the Congressional Gold Medal. It was to her and my father, so the artist of the statue at the foot of the statue is the Congressional Gold Medal, but with my mother's face, and so it's right there at my father's feet.

And so, and the open Bible, what I like about the statute, my father is standing there with an open Bible in his hand on the Scriptures, and the Scripture on the open Bible. I'm not sure if it was engraved, but I know the reference was and that's Galatians 6:14, where the Bible says that God forbid that I should glory, saving the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I into the world.

And that was the last message my father wanted to preach, but he was never able to preach it. So the artist, put that on the open Bible. And then on the side of the pedestal is a cross with John 3:16: For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but should have everlasting life.

On the other side of the pedestal was John 14:6 where Jesus said, I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, No man comes to the Father, but by me.

And on the back of the pedestal is what's on my father's grave stone. I didn't want there to be an argument after his death among us children. So I thought, well, I'm just going to ask my father what he wants on his gravestone. I'm going to -- we'll type it out, and he can sign it. We'll just put that in the file, so when he passes away, if there's any argument, we can pull it out, and say, here's what daddy wanted, and he just wanted preacher, preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ, that's all it is.

So that's what he wanted.

GOWDY: What a humble man, and speaking of humble, that was the -- that's one of the few things that Christ actually described himself as, being low in spirit or humble.

I'm not going to get into a Bible sort of drill with you because I'm going to lose, Reverend Graham, but I do want to ask you, the story of the Good Samaritan has many layers, but one of those layers could be that help come from unexpected sources. Those who should help us don't, those who should pass us by stop and they helped.

It is hard to see much of God at least for me in the current political environment. It is hard for many, I think to see the teachings of Christ in ***politics***. So how do we navigated it to being interested in government and ***politics***, but being more interested in following the teachings of Christ?

GRAHAM: You know, the Apostle Paul said, I'm not ashamed of the gospel, for us the power of God unto salvation, to everyone who believes to the Jew first and also to the Greek. I believe that politicians that are Christians should live their faith.

I don't think just because you go into Congress or whatever that you check your religion at the door, you take it with you. And I think we need men and women in the halls of government who live out what they believe.

And of course, we have seen some of the problems this week with some of the name calling, back and forth among Congress people. And so they kind of have that kind of remarks, it's discouraging, but we need more Christians taking a stand and just saying, this is what God has to say.

And men are not afraid to pray. And of course, I was with Speaker Johnson, I appreciate him so very much, just the little bit of time I spent with him. I believe he's a man of deep faith and, and he's got a tough job. I wouldn't want it for all the tea in China, but I'm glad there are men like him who are willing to take a stand.

GOWDY: You're right. He is a very authentically spiritual person, and for all the members of Congress, at least they will have to walk by one of the most modest, humble men, had all the reason in the world to be full of himself, Billy Graham, one of the most famous men to ever walk the Earth, but he had a modesty and humility about himself and we can all learn from that.

Reverend Franklin Graham, thank you so much for joining us on a Sunday night.

GRAHAM: Thank you, Trey.

GOWDY: God bless you, sir.

GRAHAM: God bless you, too.

Next we hear from you on SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

Each week, we enjoy hearing from you via e-mail and social media. We love hearing what's on your mind. This week, we look to the past, the present, and the future, starting with this question.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

CARMINE FROM NORTHERN VIRGINIA: Hi, Trey. My name is Carmine and I'm from Northern Virginia. And the question I had for you is, what is the biggest difference you see between today's society and when you and I were young?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: I would say two things, Carmine, the instant access to information and the unreliability of the institutions you and I once relied upon.

Growing up, I spent a lot of time reading newspapers, the encyclopedia, waiting on Reader's Digest to come in the mail. And now information is everywhere all the time, sometimes reliable and sometimes not.

And we figured out how to monetize that information by making folks think the world is on fire every hour of every day.

Plus, the sanctuaries of yesteryear are gone. I wasn't always happy at school, but I was never scared of being killed. I did not always want to go to church, but I wasn't afraid of being shot or assaulted by an adult. Movies were a treat, not a reminder of mass shootings.

It just seems we cannot rely on the institutions or the safety that you and I grew up with.

Next is a question from John.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOHN, MASSACHUSETTS: Trey, this is John from Massachusetts. I was wondering what historical event interests you the most.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: There would be a lot, but let's start with the Battle at Thermopylae. It was soldiers going to a battle they could not win and a war they could not afford to lose.

So what motivates people to willingly go to their own deaths for a higher purpose? What is important enough to know ahead of time that you will die for the cause, but not only do you still go, you can't wait to go.

I'd also be interested in observing how someone like Adolf Hitler could ever rise to power. It happened in my parents' lifetime, so it wasn't ancient history. But how could a country a population embrace the systematic elimination of a people?

It's a staggering fault to us, perhaps to them, too, and yet it happened.

Lastly, a question from Nathan.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

NATHAN FROM TORONTO, CANADA: Hi, Trey.

My name is Nathan from Toronto, Canada. And my question for you is, what's the biggest unchecked box left on your bucket list?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: Two years ago, I could have answered that question pretty quickly. It would have been take my wife to Israel so the Bible she reads daily could come to life and thankfully we were able to go, so I got to check that off.

Beyond that, I've done things I never dreamed I would ever do. Met presidents, played Augusta National, met Bono, met Martha MacCallum and Dana Perino, watched our kids grow up, surprised every single school teacher I ever had, made amazing friendships.

So to me there are no unchecked boxes. I would love to one day be able to afford a small little place near a quiet beach for my wife because she loves walking on the beach at sunset, but that would require me winning the lottery, so I am content all the boxes have been checked.

If you have a question, e-mail us [*GowdyAmerica@fox.com*](mailto:GowdyAmerica@fox.com) or find us online @GowdyAmerica.

Thank you for spending part of your Sunday with us. I hope you have a great week ahead. Goodnight from South Carolina.

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