

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, *organized* citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead

<https://leandroherrero.com/the-missing-word-in-the-famous-margaret-mead-quote/>

DOCUMENT OVERVIEW

- I ACCESS to THE THREE WEEKLY CALLS via the Internet**
- II ACCESS to OTHER CALLS SUPPORTED BY WWW.rainbowroundtable.net**
- III OPENING MEDITATION; MAYAN CALENDAR; HOUSEKEEPING; LINK TO PODCAST**
- IV HARD NEWS**

I TO ACCESS THE THREE WEEKLY CALLS via the Internet

A BBS RADIO Go To www.bbsradio.com; click on "64K Listen"

*** Thursday: *A Night at the Round Table* Hosts: Panel Members**
6 pm Pacific / 9 pm Eastern

*** Friday: *Friday Night Hard News* Hosts: Tara & Rama**
6 pm Pacific / 9 pm Eastern

One Hour conference Call: 1-641-741-1704 Access Code: 353 863#

*** Saturday: *History of our Galactic World & NESARA* Hosts: Tara & Rama**
1:30 pm Pacific / 4:30 pm Eastern

One Hour conference Call: 1-720 716 7301 – Access Code: 353 863#

Call to interact / ask questions: Canada & US: **STATION 2 1- 888-429-5471**
Direct 1- 323-744-4841

C Skype: BBSradio2

D Archives for the 3 Programs listed above:

- Go to BBSRadio.com; in first column, LHS, **FIND TALK SHOW**
- Enter *Friday Hard News*, press the GO button. You'll be taken directly to **Hard News on Friday**; click on "**Archives**" which takes you to the listing of all program archives, the latest one being at the top.
- You can listen directly or download the program to your own computer.
To listen directly, click on the arrow on the black bar.
To download, go to **Episode MP3 link**. Then **right click** on the name '**hardnewsonfriday including the date**' and the drop down menu appears. Click on '**save link as**'

E Archives, written and audio, also exist on the rainbowroundtable website:

www.rainbowroundtable.net - look under the "Archives" tab for **written notes which include links to the entire podcast, as well as links to the audio recordings** of the conference calls

II TO ACCESS OTHER CALLS SUPPORTED BY 2013 Rainbow Roundtable

A Sunday, Mondays: 9 – 10:30 EST *Cheryl Croci's Activation Calls*
By telephone only: 1-425-436-6260; PIN 9467 441#

B Tuesdays, 2nd & 4th of each month: 9:00 – 10:30 pm EST *Ashtar on the Road; Ashtar Legacy Calls*
Host is Fran

<http://www.ashtarontheroad.com/ashtarconferences.html>

To access **by Phone:**

- 1 – 559 – 726 – 1300; PIN 972400#
- Call is free [except for long distance charges]

via HD Conferencing: 712-770-4160 **PIN #** 980339 [always the same]
<https://www.freeconferencecallhd.com/hd-conferencing/>

via Skype **Click on the VOIP button** and enter what they ask for:
<https://www.freeconferencecallhd.com/hd-conferencing/>

C Wednesdays: 7:00 – 9:00 EST *The Friends of The Aboriginal Moabite Nation Call*
By telephone only: 1-712-432-0900 PIN 666238#
Replay# [good for 1 wk] 1-712-432-0990 PIN 66238#

D Every 2nd Wednesday 5:45 PM Pacific / 8:45 PM Eastern *The Abundance Call - Caroline Oceana Ryan*
60-minute conference call with the Collective,
a group of Angelic and Galactic beings, channeled by

To be notified: email AscensionTimes@gmail.com with the message "YES to Abundance!"

III OPENING MEDITATION; HOUSEKEEPING; ACCESS TO PODCAST; MAYAN CALENDAR

A. Opening Meditation: Rainbird / Cimi Drum; Prayer to the 7 Galactic Directions

B. Mayan Calendar: Rainbird

- **Go to** <https://www.spacestationplaza.com> – to locate specific days & lots more information: on the home page, you can find out what your Mayan signature is; while there, look and see where the wave began: that is the birth wave
- **to learn about the Mayan Calendar, Go to** <https://www.spacestationplaza.com> which will link you further to www.lawoftime.org website for further information.

Next Week's Mayan Record of Days / Calendar in the year of the Magnetic Wizard

- 11th Fri – 10 CABAN Red Planetary Earth** – healing aspect. We are Keepers of the Earth – aware of Earth's energies. Gift of access to planetary harmony & being the balancing point; working with our intuition. Let go of any failure to read the signs.
In 1582, Feb – Pope Gregory the 8th introduced the Gregorian Calendar
Today's numerology: two 2
- 12th Sat - 11 ETZNAB White Spectral Mirror** – a Warrior aspect. Working with self understanding – gift of scrying
- 13th Sun – 12 CABAN Blue Crystal Storm – Visionary aspect.** The year is that of the lunar storm, started on July 26th so today doubles the storm energy – crystal storm – a complex energy – scary and stabilizing at the same time. Cuauc is the transforming energy – lighting clear thoughts and self & for others. Let go of addiction to despair

- 14th Mon – 13 AHAU Yellow Cosmic Sun. - Healing Aspect.** About our rise to christ Consciousness and moving to wholeness. Let go of hesitations – a real reset too. A new moon = new intentions of what we are bringing in for the next 260 days!
This is the completion of the 260 day cycle – the day of the eclipse. We're having a cosmic eclipse on a cosmic sun, and there is also a new moon on this day!
A galactic interaction portal day
- 15th Tues – 1 kin 1 tone 1 IMIX – Red Dragon – a portal day**
This is about beginning; unity of 1, clarity of intent, manifestation
This is the first wave of the new tzolkein: we set our intentions for the next 260 days
It's also a galactic intergalactic activation/Portal Day– LOTS OF HELP; LOTS OF POSSIBILITIES! Don't limit our potentials!!
- 16th Wed – 2 – 2- 2 IK – White Lunar Wind – visionary aspect.** 2 is the energy of the year.
Working with 2nd tone – stability of opposites, finding balance
Wind: a visionary aspect; about the co-creation of Heaven on Earth, truth in all matters; gift - having the voice of spirit which works through us
- 17th Thu – 3-3- Akbal – Blue Electric Night – an artist aspect.** We learn from our dream time; we embrace our abundance as we embrace the mystery of the night
- 18th Fri – 4-4-4 -4 – Kan – Healing aspect -** about our openness to life. All about timing, harmony seeking; embracing the gifts of possibility – let go of stagnation, hesitation, lack of trust

Lots of gratitude for all the support we are getting from the Universe! ! !

www.Spacestationplaza.co Click on the tzolkein – it's on page 2 of the link.
For even more information, SEE ALSO **the Law of Time.org**
This is not a 3rd dimensional calendar -

C. Housekeeping: Rainbird

- Asking to **have more people contribute**, as some of the regular, long-term donors are stressed and stretched: **any and all small amounts are helpful and very welcome.**
- **BBS:**
 - Listener-supported radio programs; program archives can be accessed
 - The radio program costs \$300 per week. **Need \$300 for this week.**
We are staying caught up – thank you, thank you, thank you ! ! !
 - Go to BBSradio.com/Station2; find the listing for **Hard News Call & Paypal** button
 - BBS appreciates getting checks via the mail: no Paypal fees!
 - The mailing address for those who do not like paying electronically:

B B S RADIO
1500 Pleasant Hill RD
Lafayette, CA 94549

[Please put **"Attention Don"** on the envelope]
[Note inside that it's for T & R calls
[& the Thursday call, as well]]
- **BBS archives can be accessed by everyone; there are archives on www.Rainbow Roundtable too. All are free to access.**

T & R: Their full-time, life-time commitment is to be tuned in to what is really going on behind the artificial world we see around us. They don't ask for anything but they do require food, a home, gas for the car, and access to BBS Radio in order to compile and distribute this information to the world.

- Donations via Paypal button on the **homepage of 2013 Rainbow Roundtable**

FOOD MONEY: VIA PAYPAL OR See the PAGE ON 2013 Roundtable

BASICS: food, gas – usual stuff + \$ for bills **\$ 200 + \$300**

- **Please notify T & R if you're sending something:** koran999@comcast.net
EVERY \$5 HELPS - ALL GRATEFULLY RECEIVED

- Rama's mailing address for cheques, money orders: Ram D Berkowitz
PO Box 280
Santa Cruz, NM 87567

- **Remember you can book a session with Mother, as well!**

- **Donations to the Fresh Produce Fund for Tara & Rama -**
now on the www.rainbowroundtable.net

**** www.rainbowroundtable.com/page/donate ****

- Your donation supports an account set up for Tara & Rama with
Beneficial Farms Community Supported Agriculture in Santa Fe, NM

PLEASE NOTE: DUE TO THE IMPACT OF THE Corona Virus, BENEFICIAL FARMS and all other producers operate out of the open air market in Santa Fe, with everyone following the rules and regs re: displaying their produce and enabling customers to pay for and pick up food. So Beneficial Farms is still the source of Rama & Tara's food.

- They continue to appreciate each & every donation received for food.
- Please continue to go to www.rainbowroundtable.net and link to their Paypal account – click on the word CHANGE; choose **family and friends option so Paypal takes off no fees.**

FREEMART: Rama and Tara are being helped by this account: they get their supplements there. **The returns also help www.rainbowroundtable.net**

<https://www.shopfreemart.com/tarram> a/c # 7000

- all the products have much to offer, so take a look!
- Freemart is a private shoppers club; it's **FREE TO JOIN.**

Also, check out the heading called **READ MORE** for the good information it has

D: INFORMATION SOURCES RELATIVE TO M.T. KESHE AND KESHE FOUNDATION

Contact Rainbird with questions: lightenergync@gmail.com

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLaVutWXju0> (CHECK THIS OUT)

**** Go to Knowledge Workers workshop #344 on You Tube: see Keshe's personal tour of his exhibition in Austria - The first expo in Europe since the pandemic -**

One Cup One Life – Production and Application; Prevention and Reversal of the Corona Virus
https://en.kfwiki.org/wiki/One_Cup_One_Life_-_Production_and_Application_-_Prevention_and_Reversal_of_the_Corona_Virus

KF Wiki

<https://www.kfwiki.org>

The free Plasma Cyclopdia of the Keshe Foundation

Keshe Foundation Store

<https://store.keshefoundation.org/store/?alias=store>

Keshe Corona site

www.plasmainnature.com/health/coronavirus-1-cup-1-life-series-protocols-and-other-info/

E. ACCESS TO PODCAST:

<https://bbsradio.com/podcast/hard-news-friday-december-11-2020>

HARD NEWS

TARA, RAMA:

T, R • • •

R: Talked to professor Z who used to work at Los Alamos

- saying that the energies coming in from Great Central Sun, Galactic Center are raising is up like no body's business, and the dark side complains about not winning election
- this is about Divine Government coming in – this is about St Germain who is bringing in the New Atlantis and is the one orchestrating what is happening: the old vestiges of the last 26,000 years are being transmuted back into light.
- This brings all kinds of stuff for folks to heal across the planet: this is pretty intense stuff as the pot is being stirred!
 - About the increased energies of the total solar eclipse on the 14th – talks of quakes in various places. This is about the energies which need to pressurize and release and work with the adjustments. The light coming in from Galactic Centre and Alcyone, Great Center Sun have never been here before!
- All kinds of magical, wonderful thins are unfolding – he used Gregg Braden's words fo climate disruption, conflict and consciousness are at an unprecedented level, as we approach the eclipse the winter solstice: all is coming to the surface for alignment and focus
- Prof Z quoted John and Oko: 'war is over if you want it now!'
- This is combined with bringing light to what Natasha said on Tuesday on Ashtar Legacy Call - it's the end of the fossil fuel energy now – this is being stated as a fact now!

R: likes the idea of electric cars – yet still have to use fossil fuels to make electricity – and being surrounded in the car by the frequency of the electricity – not sure it is good for bodies

T: Keshe has something to put into the cigarette lighter to help neutralize it – time for amino acid computers, free energy, free education for as long as you want to study – **this comes with NESARA**

AUDIO: Keith Olbermann talking about the Supreme Court rejecting the Texas drama with the senators

T: they all have a lot to lose as they are murderers, rapists etc – they want a 2nd term with Drumpf as president to avoid consequences

Link: Keith Olbermann on Twitter

Reading: Dalai Lama's message today: We can no longer keep exploiting the resource of this earth, seize the water and the minerals with no care for the coming generation. It is

common sense that we cannot work against nature. We must learn to work in harmony with nature.

Reads Rama's report **Professor Z's message:**

- Solar flares increasing exponentially, and raising the hair on everyone's head. This is come in from Lord Alycone/the Great Central Sun in the Pleiades, as well as from Galactic Centre at 27* Sag where our Milky Way Galaxy meets with the 26 other galaxies
- now is the time to send forgiveness and compassion to all the troubled spots on our beloved planet
the dark side continues to whine and moan that the election was rigged. Yet this is a deeper story about how we bringing
- as we approach this eclipse, we will see some interesting things unfold which is about having a cup of tea with the Divine
- Remember what Oko and John said: war is over if you want it.

T: Rachel Maddow's show, Thursday: Jamie Raskin of the Judiciary Committee: laid out the case she reads Raskin's words: it's a last ditch attempt to subvert democracy and install fascism

AUDIO: 2020-12-10 After SCOTUS Bid, One Last Act For Anti-Democracy GOP To Try To Install Trump

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yq_2TsAiKQ0

Rep. Jamie Raskin describes the last step in the election process before inauguration in which Republicans in Congress will have a chance to object to the counting of electors on January 6th. That scheme, however, if it is deployed, is still unlikely to overturn Donald Trump's losing bid for reelection. Aired on 12/11/2020.

T: SC Judges Clarence Thomas and Sam Alito said they would have to hear the case if someone were injured, but that is not what is happening.

CONFERENCE CALL

<https://fccdl.in/bp9pij8vtx>

Ca/Ge: a product released yesterday – reverse aging for 25 years – 1500 people have been tested – works; [not anti-aging] a precursor to things to come!

for ladies, if they reverse enough – can go back to pre-menopause

site: www.liquidgoldRX.com iHercules - check it out

RM: keep the product out of sunlight – whaaat?

CA: kinda sad that pfizer vaccine was approved today – concerned about how fast it's been fast tracked . . .

RM: there is no corona virus available to make a vaccine! ! ! Think about the science of making a vaccine . . .

CA: will be tough – a lot will be forced to take it because of their work

RB: the grandmother of some kids in Mass. have to take a flu vaccine no matter of school or home school.

RM: need to find out what is in the vaccine and find out if the kids are allergic

- some vaccine causes infertility in males – the covid one-half

- There is an hilarious discussion about characters with retractable organs! ! !

- discussion about the vaccination of children at 2 months – someone said that it's being done when they are born and before they leave the hospital!
- CA:** anyone with a concern about the vaccines, the virus – call people anti-vaxxers:
- THERE IS A VACCINE COURT FOR A REASON
 - Read Robert Kennedy Jr
- through the 50s – 80s litigation against vaccine companies was building up – there are those who will always be allergic to something but then this was followed with poisoning
 - then protection from liability was installed to protect the companies!
 - Now people have to follow a procedure – look up VACCINE COURT
- CA:** have we discussed about the Israeli general ? A wide open example of full disclosure and said people in the trump admin were open to it and then pulled back
- The creation of the US space command is a kind of disclosure too – it's a 5th branch of the military – with an open budget, not a dark one
 - This is hiding in plain sight . . . and why is it not global?
- The story about the Venezuelan elections: Maduro won hands down and then some – Guido got only 3%! as Rachel said the world was laughing when the supreme court of texas threw the case about about turning over the results of the last election -
 - and the people are laughing at Guido and at the gov't that put him into play – and Drumpf was the one who planted 3 conservative judges on the Texas Supreme Court – to do that would be called sedition!
- CA:** and the corporate media was all over it – and then the coup came unravelled . . .
- next question about health:
our current dilmema – virus spreading, pandemic world wide – yet the vaccines being presented are poisonous – this is UGLY IN TERMS OF TRYING TO RESOLVE THE PANDEMIC.
 - What can we expect to happen in next 12 – 18 months?
- T:** Natasha told Rama on Tuesday: we are going to be seeing you very soon AND WE MEAN SOON!
- And that was said right after she said – then the whole plasma fields shut down at noon
 - A call from Natasha: something huge is coming in – about full disclosure and the end of the fossil fuels >>>> there are galactic teams here on the ground and we'll be seeing you soon and we do mean soon!
- WE WILL NOT BE WAITING 18 MONTHS FOR ANYTHING!
- SO:** AN EXTRA ORDINARY and hopeful MESSAGE, plus an ASHTAR COMMAND MESSAGE FROM DIANE ROBBINS
- the vaccine is time wise, the dark releases the vaccine before the other crews get here: this can be transmuted right? ? ? ?
- T: YES!!!** It's why we are told to remain in Divine Neutrality . .
- SO:** if we are working with adamantine particles – powered by the mag
- speaks of a book called **LOVE WITHOUT END** about Jeshua and his ideas about the particles
- SANDRA WALTER AND meg BENEDICTE – we can listen to Meg's replays for free later – alchemy and transmutation.
- T:** and we can do this: as we live in the higher light in the high heart
She reads the beginning of Sandra Walter's piece

See below

B B S RADIO

AUDIO: THE BIGGER PICTURE by Patricia Cota-Robles www.eraofpeace.org

VLOG 196

IMPORTANT ASSISTANCE FROM MOTHER MARY

<https://youtu.be/YvWe5b6BpuI>



AUDIO: Welcome to the Mary Magdalene's Ascended Master's Message!



Beloved Mary Magdalene

Play it here: <https://InstantTeleseminar.com/Events/124628268>

Listen by phone: dial 206-402-0103 and enter ID: 124-628-268# . .

Replay ID: 124-628-268#

Cost: This event is complimentary; however if you feel prompted to contribute towards expenses, you can do so here:

<https://radiantroseacademy.com/the-academy/make-a-donation/>

To listen to Ascended Master's Broadcast audio messages or see them on the Radiant Rose Academy You Tube Channel, you can do so here:

<https://radiantroseacademy.com/sanctuary/loving-our-planet-free/masters-biweekly-messages/>

Greetings in the Light of the Most Radiant One; in the Office of the Christ and only in the Office of the Christ, we invoke the loving energies of St Germain and the Violet Flame.

Greetings, Children of Ra!

Indeed, we live in most auspicious times! The energies - as this lady master of great import has said - these energies are a trip, to say the least! Stay in that high heart place because the dark side is ~ it's their final moments, and it's complete now.

- As we watch, experience the solar eclipse, winter solstice; it is the gift of what Lady Master Mary Magdalene said: it's this time for great healing, compassion, for what's going on.
 - She [M] can say with great certainty ~ We will be seeing you soon, and we DO MEAN FOR THAT CUP OF TEA. It is already being cussed and discussed, how this Galactic Confederation can be brought into the realm of effects, as Patti calls it: this is the realm where the pedal hits the metal, as they say.
- And in this realm, right now, we all got the power! It's about using it with Divine respect.
 - Remember that song of Aretha Franklin: there is what's coming in; as Divine government takes hold, there will be this unfoldment here to heal the wounds of the past and it is no small task.
 - This republic, as we can keep it, is what's right - gotta say 'on this planet' - on the money!
 - And let's say, what's unfolding in a most auspicious way is the Light coming in, raising everybody's structures - physical structures, this temple - raising it up to handle what is coming in.
 - It's a big deal cos the Light coming in is affecting living matter - Sol's energies with the solar flood, solar flares, electro-magnetic solar mass coronal ejections - it is about this great upliftment that's going on.
- Not just [in] this solar system; it's in this realm of the Milky Way Galaxy. All are feeling what we're feeling - it is a most magnificent time to be alive!
 - And at the same time, quite a challenge this day in these temples of living radiance - that's the gift here, now. We have all we need within these temples to transform them: the Light coming in is turning the key, as it were, and interesting events are unfolding.
 - It's about the wisdom and precious love pouring in, in this realm, to lift everyone up. It's more about the quantum physics of it. Because of the time we're in, with the changing of the yugas [is] at hand, everything is up to be healed and like She has said, They come from our future, which is Their past: we make it with flying colours!
 - Now is the time to send more love because it's how we get through this test, as St Germain calls it: the biggest test ever! How to look at inter galactic war criminals who have not a care in the world for us, yet They [Mother and the Others] are saying have love and compassion for these ones.
 - It is part of how the passion play completes itself, There's that magical moment where certain events She is not at liberty to unfold come to pass -
 - right now, this solstice, eclipse are part of this grand upliftment into the next stage of our evolutionary development as we are all Sons and Daughters of the Most High.
 - We are in training to become a physical sun; that may sound ridiculous but it is what is happening as we evolve up in octave.

- Physical immortality is the reality of what is going on here –
- we'll just say: stay in that heart space – miracles are afoot.

Greetings in the Light of the Most Radiant One. Kadoish kadoish, kadoish, Adonai Sabeoth, kadoish, kadoish kadoish

Rama Returns: was in some kind of healing chamber; remembers being in an electric blue and green healing chamber that reminds him of a cocoon – believes it was on LM Athena's ship – reminded him of a cocoon and he could see through it: a blue green kind of chamber, and could see swirling blue and green energies – like putting blue and green dye in water and the colour of the water changes.

- he kind of drifted off in that blue green water and now, here he is!
- The tooth is fair to middlin'!

T: Rainbird has more comfrey coming!

T: this is the most highly credible transformative energy that has ever been on the planet!

R: It's not every day they talk about galactic confederation on the news! ! !

T: Gotta prepare people a little at the moment . . .

AUDIO: The Thom Hartmann show today – with Professor R. Wolff

2020-12-10 How Do We Deal With Billionaires? (w/ Richard Wolff)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pb0I_8b3xps&ab_channel=ThomHartmannProgram

How do we best deal with billionaires and the damage they do to our economy and politics? We should have equality in the economy, but it is so unequal. The rich are corrupting our democracy. Can we stop the rich before we have nothing left? ○ Subscribe for more clips like this:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/thomhart...>

Professor Richard Wolff joined Thom to talk about property and state taxes, inheritance tax and much more.

Professor Richard Wolff is an Economist / Co-founder, Democracy At Work / Author of numerous books - his latest is **The Sickness is the System: When Capitalism Fails to Save Us from Pandemics or Itself.**

AUDIO: DEMOCRACY NOW

SEE BELOW

2020-12-11 DEMOCRACY NOW Headlines

2020-12-11 Palestinian Official Hanan Ashrawi: Trump's Morocco-Israel Deal Legitimizes Land Theft & Occupation

2020-12 – 11 U.S. Recognizes Morocco's Occupation of Western Sahara in Latest Betrayal of Sahrawi People

AUDIO: REDACTED TONIGHT

2020-12-04

~319~ REVEALED: The Rich Gain Billions While Workers Are At Food Banks

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=seJ_xh5sEXU&ab_channel=RedactedTonight

Watch the full episode: <https://www.portable.tv/videos/covide...>

The wealth of the richest people in the world has increased during this pandemic. Lee Camp delivers the facts on growing inequality and tries to help you understand how horrific this crisis has been for regular people in the US. These unbelievable profits come through mass exploitation and a lack of caution for the health of workers. ~

Also on this episode: Then Natalie McGill and Camp discuss new plans from the Department of Homeland Security to further invade the privacy of asylum seekers and other immigrants.

Naomi Karavani reports on how massive corporations like WalMart take advantage of food stamps programs and other public assistance to continue paying their employees poverty wages. They have only accelerated these practices while staying open during the pandemic.

Anders Lee and Camp finish off the show on Barack Obama's latest autobiography and its revelations about his empty corporate politics.

AUDIO: KEISER REPORT Exemptions for Cantillonaires (E1630)

2020-12-10



© Global Look Press / Valentin Wolf

VIDEO: <https://www.rt.com/shows/keiser-report/509159-exemptions-cantillonaires-restrictions-bitcoin/>

PODCAST: [Keiser Report: Exemptions for Cantillonaires](https://soundcloud.com/rttv/keiser-report-exemptions-for-cantillonaires)
<https://soundcloud.com/rttv/keiser-report-exemptions-for-cantillonaires>

On this episode of the *Keiser Report*, Max and Stacy look at the new exemptions to Covid restrictions being handed to Cantillonaires. In the second half, Max interviews Anant Tapadia of HexaWallet.io about their new product and also how gold is used in India and how it may impact the acceptance or rejection of bitcoin.

Music: a program from PBS

Reading: Sagittarius Solar ECLIPSE [Dec 14] Fountain of Wisdom [Astrology Numerology Star Code Forecast] **Tania Gabrielle**

Rama's Choices Alan Watts The Real You https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mMRrCYPxD0I&ab_channel=T%26H-Inspiration%26Motivation

Celtic inspired song . . .

INFORMATION RELATED TO THE NOTES

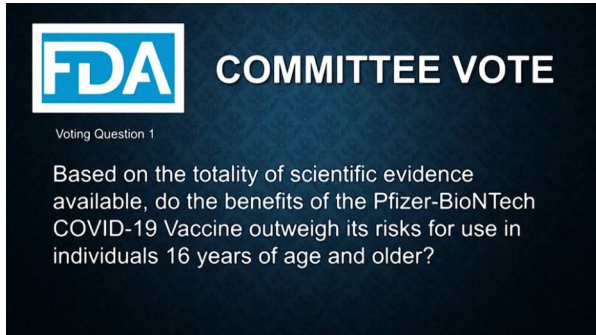
2020-12-11 – DEMOCRACY NOW Headlines



Listen

Media Options

FDA Nears Emergency Use Approval of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine Dec 11, 2020



An advisory committee of U.S. vaccine experts voted Thursday to recommend emergency use authorization of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, with the Food and Drug Administration poised to issue its approval on Saturday. Once that comes, some 2.9 million doses will be shipped to sites across the U.S., with the initial, limited supply of the vaccine rationed for healthcare workers and nursing home residents.

CDC Director Warns Daily U.S. COVID-19 Toll Could Top 9/11 Death Toll for Months Dec 11, 2020



On Thursday, the U.S. recorded another staggering toll from COVID-19, with over 224,000 new infections and nearly 3,000 deaths. Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, warned that for the next 60 to 90 days the U.S. will likely see more COVID-19 deaths per day than the number of people killed in the September 11 attacks.

Dr. Robert Redfield: "It's also very sobering to realize in the United States today that COVID-19 now is the leading cause of death, surpassing heart disease."

Meanwhile, a CDC official told lawmakers earlier this week she was instructed by CDC Director Robert Redfield to delete an email from the Trump administration which sought to alter a scientific report on the risks of COVID-19 to children, in order to better match Trump's messaging on reopening schools.

New Hampshire House Speaker Dies of COVID-19 After Close Contact with Fellow Republicans

Dec 11, 2020



In New Hampshire, an autopsy reveals state House Speaker Dick Hinch, a Republican, died of COVID-19 on Wednesday. His death came one week after he was sworn in as New Hampshire's top lawmaker at a December 2 ceremony. The event was attended by several Republican lawmakers who revealed just one day prior that they'd tested positive for coronavirus after attending an indoor meeting in late November where many people refused to wear masks.

New Hampshire state representative and ophthalmologist William Marsh blasted fellow Republicans, tweeting, "Those in our caucus who refused to take precautions are responsible for Dick Hinch's death." New Hampshire Republican Governor Chris Sununu also criticized members of his own party Thursday.

Gov. Chris Sununu: "You don't wear a mask and social distance just for yourself; you do it for those you're surrounding yourself with. And for those who are out there doing just the opposite just to make some sort of bizarre political point, it's horribly irresponsible. It really is. And it has horrible consequences."

Shoplifting Soars with Millions Across U.S. Set to Lose Jobless Benefits and Eviction Protection

Dec 11, 2020



The Labor Department reports nearly 1.4 million U.S. workers filed for initial unemployment assistance last week — a sharp rise from the previous week — as the worsening pandemic continues to hammer the U.S. economy. The latest figures come as 12 million unemployed people are set to lose all their benefits at the end of December. And about 19 million people are currently unable to pay their rent, with the CDC's moratorium on evictions set to expire on New Year's Day. The Washington Post reports that a sharp rise in hunger and homelessness across the U.S. has led to a spike in shoplifting, with staple foods like bread, pasta and baby formula in heavy demand.

Sen. McConnell Rejects \$908B Coronavirus Relief Plan as Sen. Sanders Demands \$1,200 Stimulus Checks
Dec 11, 2020



On Capitol Hill, Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Thursday rejected a bipartisan framework on a pared-down, \$908 billion coronavirus relief bill, saying it doesn't provide enough liability protection for corporations whose workers or customers become infected with COVID-19.

Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders blasted Republican lawmakers for failing to provide for Americans in desperate need of assistance. Sanders has introduced an amendment to a spending bill that would provide a \$1,200 stimulus check to every working-class U.S. adult and an additional \$500 for each child. Congress must pass the spending bill by midnight tonight to avoid a federal government shutdown. Sanders spoke from the Senate floor Thursday.

Sen. Bernie Sanders: "At a time when so many American families are suffering, when so many people don't know how they're going to feed their kids or prevent being evicted from their homes or how they're going to pay for a doctor's visit, we cannot leave Washington and return to our families unless we address the economic suffering that so many other families are facing."

Morocco and Israel Normalize Ties as U.S. Recognizes Moroccan Claim on Occupied Western Sahara
Dec 11, 2020



Morocco and Israel have agreed to establish diplomatic relations as part of a U.S.-brokered deal. Morocco becomes the fourth Arab nation to establish ties with Israel since August. As part of the deal, the United States agreed to become the first country in the world to recognize Morocco's sovereignty over occupied Western Sahara — what many consider to be Africa's last colony. Morocco has occupied much of the resource-rich territory since 1975 in defiance of the United Nations and the international community. Thousands have been tortured, imprisoned, killed and disappeared while resisting the Moroccan occupation. After headlines, we'll get a response to the Morocco-Israel agreement from leading Palestinian and Sahwari figures.

Rights Groups Say Azerbaijan and Armenia Committed War Crimes in Nagorno-Karabakh

Dec 11, 2020



Azerbaijan's military held a massive parade in the capital Baku on Thursday, celebrating its victory over Armenian forces in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who backed Azerbaijan in the war, was on hand for the parade, which featured a display of Turkish armed drones. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International report both Azeri and Armenian troops committed war crimes during the six-week conflict — with evidence of extrajudicial executions, beheadings, torture and the desecration of the bodies of slain soldiers.

Biden Tells Civil Rights Leaders to Back Off Police Reform Campaigns Until After GA Election

Dec 11, 2020



In the United States, President-elect Joe Biden told civil rights leaders in a private conference call Tuesday that he would use his executive authority to undo many of President Trump's actions — but would not take executive action to implement a progressive agenda. In audio of the call leaked to The Intercept, Biden said using his executive powers to enact policies like a ban on assault rifles would be “way beyond the bounds” of his constitutional authority. Biden also asked civil rights leaders not to pursue campaigns to transform policing in the United States until after twin Senate runoff elections to be held in Georgia on January 5, which will determine the balance of power in the Senate.

President-elect Joe Biden: “They’ve already labeled us as being ‘defund the police.’ Anything we put forward in terms of the organizational structure to change policing, which I promise you will occur — promise you — just think to yourself and give me advice whether we should do that before January 5th, because that’s how they beat the living hell out of us across the country, saying that we’re talking about defunding the police. We’re not. We’re talking about holding them accountable.”

Biden Taps Obama Alums Susan Rice for Top Domestic Policy Role, Denis McDonough to Lead VA Dec 11, 2020



President-elect Biden has tapped Susan Rice to be director of the White House Domestic Policy Council. Rice served as U.S. ambassador to the U.N. and national security adviser under President Obama. Critics called out the pick over Rice's inexperience with domestic policy, as well as her role supporting U.S. military actions that caused devastation in Syria and Libya under Obama. The position does not require Senate confirmation.

In related news, Biden has picked another Obama administration alum, former White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough, to lead the Department of Veterans Affairs. Veterans groups expressed disappointment Biden did not pick a veteran to serve in the role. Jeremy Butler of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America told The Washington Post, "He's starting in a position of public deficit because of who he is not."

Report Finds VA Secretary Robert Wilkie Smeared House Aide Who Reported Sexual Assault Dec 11, 2020



A watchdog report has found current Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie and other senior leaders discredited and smeared a House aide who reported a sexual assault at work. Andrea Goldstein, who issued the complaint, said in a statement, "The millions of women and men who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence in the military recognized Secretary Wilkie's actions as horrifyingly familiar: refuse to take or enforce accountability, blame, shame and make the victim the problem."

106 House Republicans Back Lawsuit Seeking to Invalidate Votes in States That Biden Won Dec 11, 2020



A majority of House Republicans have backed Trump's last-ditch effort to overturn the election results by asking the Supreme Court to toss millions of votes in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin and Georgia — all states that voted for Biden — as part of a Texas-led lawsuit. One hundred six House Republicans signed on to a legal brief Thursday in support of the lawsuit.

State Dept. Watchdog Steps Down After Pompeo Blasts Report About Wife's Travel

Dec 11, 2020



State Department Inspector General Matthew Klimow stepped down Thursday after Mike Pompeo lashed out at a report in which the watchdog found Pompeo's wife did not secure proper approval or documentation for trips she took with her husband as part of official State Department business. The investigation, however, cleared Susan Pompeo of violating federal ethics rules.

SCOTUS Rules Muslim Men Who Were Placed on No-Fly List by FBI Can Sue Dec 11, 2020



The Supreme Court ruled unanimously Thursday that three Muslim men who were placed on a no-fly list can sue government officials for damages. The plaintiffs say the FBI placed them on the no-fly list as retaliation for refusing to spy on their

communities, which prevented them from making trips to Pakistan, Afghanistan and Yemen, harming their reputations and jobs.

Acting Head of ICE Resigns After Less Than 5 Months on the Job

Dec 11, 2020



The latest acting head of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Tony Pham, is stepping down after less than five months in the role. During his tenure, Pham oversaw the installation of billboards on Pennsylvania highways with the faces of immigrants who, according to ICE, “pose a public safety threat.”

U.S. Executes Brandon Bernard After Widespread Calls for Clemency Dec 11, 2020



In Indiana, officials at the federal prison in Terre Haute injected 40-year-old condemned prisoner Brandon Bernard with a lethal dose of pentobarbital Thursday evening. The execution — on International Human Rights Day — came after the Supreme Court declined to intervene to halt the ninth execution of a federal prisoner this year. The Trump administration plans to kill four more prisoners before Joe Biden’s inauguration. [Click here to see our coverage of Brandon Bernard’s case and Trump’s lame-duck executions, the first time in 130 years.](#)

2020-12-11 Palestinian Official Hanan Ashrawi: Trump's Morocco-Israel Deal Legitimizes Land Theft & Occupation



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In a deal brokered by the Trump administration, Morocco and Israel have agreed to establish diplomatic relations. The United States has also agreed to recognize Morocco's sovereignty over occupied Western Sahara, the first country in the world to do so. Morocco has occupied much of the resource-rich territory since 1975 in defiance of the United Nations and the international community. Thousands of indigenous Sahrawis have been tortured, imprisoned, killed and disappeared while resisting the Moroccan occupation. Morocco is the fourth Arab nation to establish ties with Israel since August, part of a diplomatic push by the outgoing Trump administration to shore up international support for Israel. Palestinian diplomat and scholar Hanan Ashrawi says this latest agreement is legitimizing land theft. "This is part of a whole pattern of behavior, a process whereby the Trump administration has been acting as the errand boy for Israel in order to try to get as many victories, as many benefits, as many privileges for Israel," she says.

Transcript

This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form.

AMY GOODMAN: Morocco and Israel have agreed to establish diplomatic relations as part of a U.S.-brokered deal. Morocco is the fourth Arab nation to establish ties with Israel since August. As part of the deal, the United States agreed to become the first country in the world to recognize Morocco's sovereignty over occupied Western Sahara — what many consider to be Africa's last colony. It's due to open a consulate in the occupied city of Dakhla, where there are few, if any, U.S. citizens.

Morocco has occupied much of the resource-rich territory since 1975 in defiance of the United Nations and the international community. Thousands of Sahrawis have been tortured, imprisoned, killed and disappeared while resisting the Moroccan occupation. Following Morocco's invasion in 1975, about half of the Sahrawi population fled to neighboring Algeria, where they have lived for the past 45 years in refugee camps in the middle of the desert.

The deals come less than a month after a nearly three-decade-old ceasefire ended in Western Sahara. In November, the Moroccan military broke into a no-go buffer zone in southern Western Sahara to attack Sahrawi civilians blocking off a Morocco-built road and exchanged fire with the Polisario Front, the Sahrawi liberation movement seeking independence. Morocco has since intensified its repression in occupied Western Sahara, raiding and laying siege to the homes of pro-independence activists and journalists, arresting dozens of people and cracking down on protests.

Human rights groups criticized the U.S.-Morocco-Israel deal, which was announced on International Human Rights Day. In Washington, Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont said, quote, "After losing his own bid for re-election, President Trump cannot by 'proclamation' negate international law or the rights of the people of Western Sahara. They are entitled to what they have long been promised — a free and fair vote on self-determination." In 1991, the United Nations promised Sahrawis a referendum on self-determination as part of a ceasefire deal, but Morocco has blocked the referendum from happening.

Bassam al-Salhi of the Palestine Liberation Organization also condemned Morocco for joining Bahrain, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates in establishing ties with Israel despite the ongoing occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. He said the deal is unacceptable and warned it will embolden, quote, "Israel's belligerence and its denial of the Palestinian people's rights."

We're joined right now by Hanan Ashrawi, the longtime Palestinian diplomat and scholar. She recently resigned her position as executive committee member of the Palestine Liberation Organization. She was the first woman to hold a seat in the highest executive body in Palestine. She's joining us right now from the West Bank.

We welcome you to *Democracy Now!* It's great to have you with us. If you can start off by talking about the Morocco-Israel part of this deal? Hanan Ashrawi, it's great to have you with us.

HANAN ASHRAWI: Thank you. It's good to be with you, Amy. I can't hear you.

AMY GOODMAN: So, if you can start off by talking about Morocco's recognition of Israel, and what this means for the Palestinians?

HANAN ASHRAWI: Well, this is part of a whole pattern of behavior, a process whereby the U.S. — the Trump administration — I don't want to say "the U.S." — has been acting as the errand boy for Israel in order to try to get as many victories, as many benefits, as many privileges for Israel. And right now it's rushing like mad in a race against time before they leave office, in order to reposition Israel, to normalize relations with the Arab world and to deliver Palestine to Israel and to legalize or legitimize the occupation of Palestine and the land theft of Palestine and the escalation — and, sorry, annexation of land, as well as the building of settlements and so on.

So, this pattern, in many ways, utilized very — not just illegal, but cruel means. I said it's between bribery and blackmail. And it uses the weak spots in different countries and the needs of different countries in order to supply them on behalf of Israel and extract concessions for Israel. Now, look at the UAE. Look at Bahrain, who's also normalized with Israel and is in trouble. Look at now Morocco. Now, the instability in many different countries — look at Sudan, of course, which is another tragic case — was exploited, and the weakness of and the needs of certain regimes and rulers were also exploited, in order to extract these privileges and so on for Israel and reposition it as a major power in the region and to give it a free hand and to enable it to be part of what they call the Sunni moderate bloc in facing Iran and the Shia.

Now, with Morocco, it's different from the issue of Sudan and the Gulf countries, because Sudan, of course, needed to be removed off the terrorist list and needed the blockade to be lifted. Morocco wanted the U.S. to recognize and accept its control and its annexation — control over and annexation of the Western Sahara. And different countries in the world, the U.N. and so on, do not recognize Moroccan control or annexation of the Western Sahara. Neither did the U.S. This is a change in U.S. policy, and it's a violation of U.N. resolutions that granted the Sahrawis, the Western Sahara, self-determination — in the same way as the Palestinians are every year told that they have the right to self-determination. But with the implementation, we never get it. So this has created, again, a situation of *quid pro quo*, where the U.S. exploits the weakness or the avarice of other countries in order to bring them to normalize with Israel and in order to break Arab ranks, to destroy the Arab Peace Initiative, to violate successive Arab resolutions and to place Israel in the heart of the region as a major economic, military, security power.

Now, Morocco, grantedly — there's an [article](#) in *The New York Times*, I think, today — has been cooperating secretly — the Moroccan regime; I don't want to say the people, because the Moroccan people are among the

most supportive of the Palestinian cause, and they're extremely patriotic and extremely — they identify with Palestine. So, they're very unhappy with what's happening. They're very unhappy with the normalization with Israel. And they know that normalizing with Israel means normalizing the occupation, means normalizing lawlessness. It means that they are giving Israel a free hand to continue with its policies against Palestine.

And we are seeing how, in these last days of the Trump administration, Israel has escalated and intensified its settlement activities, its home demolition of the Palestinian people, its superimposing and apartheid system now totally on the West Bank, in particular, and its illegal annexation of Jerusalem, and creating rings of settlements to isolate Jerusalem and to fragment the West Bank, knowing that it has the blessings of this U.S. administration and knowing full well that destroys any chances of peace, in the same way as it destroys the chance of having a viable, territorially contiguous Palestinian state.

AMY GOODMAN: So, what exactly does it mean, Hanan Ashrawi, to have Bahrain, Sudan, the United Arab Emirates and Morocco recognize Israel? How does that change things on the ground for Gaza and the West Bank?

HANAN ASHRAWI: It just emboldens Israel even further. It's not a question of recognition or making peace, as the Trump administration claims. There was no war. I mean, they don't share borders with Israel. They've never had a war with Israel, neither Morocco nor the Emirates nor Bahrain nor Sudan. So, in a sense, what they're doing is looking for anyplace where they can make peace or where they can have agreements and normalization, as they say, in order to say they made peace, and you see the Palestinian question is not central and is not a prerequisite to peace, and the Arab Peace Initiative is no longer applicable, and that Israel can have all the fruits of what is called peace and normalization without having to pay its dues in terms of compliance with international law.

So, this, of course, does weaken the Palestinian position. The U.S. administration has taken several unilateral and illegal steps in order to bash the Palestinians into submission, and it failed. And it says, you know, now it's very clear that they have fragmented the Arab position. They have created and enhanced fault lines within the region. They are supporting a sort of artificial polarization. And they are creating further rifts between the people and their leadership. And they are supporting more autocratic or despotic regimes. And we think that Trump and Trump administration has been acting like one, and outside the law, so to speak. So, now, of course, the Palestinians know that this weakens their hand. They know that this, in many ways, undermines the Arab unanimous support for the Palestinian cause. The regimes themselves may have taken such self-serving and illegal positions, but the people, the Arab people as a whole, remain committed and remain supportive of the Palestinian cause.

Now, Israel feels that it is not only above the law, that it can do whatever it wants, but it has partners in crimes. First it was the American administration that entered into collusion or complicity with the U.S. administration and with Israel — with Israel. Now it is bringing, dragging Arab countries or Arab leaders in order to do the same. And it went so far as the Emiratis have been signing agreements with the settlers and with the settler business groups. And we keep reminding people settlements are illegal. They are a war crime, according to their own statute and the ICC. And anybody who cooperates or supports or aids and abets a war crime can be held accountable, as well. But they're moving so fast, and they're creating situations that are so volatile, I think, that they will introduce more instability in the region.

It is an abnormal situation. It is a result of specific needs, was the need for Netanyahu to be able to get reelected. It was the need for Trump to say he's a peacemaker before November. Now it's a question of fulfilling requirements in order to appeal to his constituency, whether it is the extreme-right-wing Zionist evangelicals or whether it is the pro-Israel lobby or whether it is his funders, like Sheldon Adelson and others. This has become a pattern that is very disruptive, that is illegal in many ways, and that has placed the U.S. outside the realm of peacemaking or recognition of and adherence to international law and U.N. resolutions.

AMY GOODMAN: Hanan Ashrawi, can you address why you stepped down from the PLO leadership? Explain your decision.

HANAN ASHRAWI: OK. Well, I did issue a statement, and I did speak out, but it's a question of actually fulfilling not just a promise, but a pledge. It is practicing what you preach, in many ways, in the sense that I believe it is time for the PLO to be reformed, for the institutions to be rejuvenated, for the democratic process to take place, to have elections and to elect new leadership, particularly young men and women, and to reform the system and, of course, to respect our institutions and their role.

There have been several instances and issues, which I don't want to discuss, I mean, right now, but I did discuss them with the president, that I felt have weakened and undermined the standing of the PLO and our decision-making, and continued the rift, which was not in our benefit, and it had weakened the Palestinian position internationally and in terms of standing up to Israeli violations.

So, there's a long list of things, but I feel it's time. And I've been trying to leave for some time now. And I wanted to practice what we call the graceful exit, in order to make room for others. And perhaps this will trigger others or trigger more reform or trigger the meeting of the institutions of the PLO in order to elect a new leadership. And we do need elections and a genuine revitalization of the system and an exercise of democracy.

AMY GOODMAN: Finally, can you address the issue of the pandemic, COVID-19, in the Occupied Territories? You tested positive for COVID. You have Saeb Erekat, the chief PLO negotiator, who died of COVID. Can you talk about the situation and how you recovered?

HANAN ASHRAWI: Certainly. It's really drastic. It's extremely dangerous. We have lockdowns every weekend, but that's not enough. There is no movement between different districts and so on, but the situation is rapidly threatening to get out of control. And actually, we don't know [inaudible] still has any vaccine or medicine.

But the thing is, we are under occupation. We do not control our borders, our crossing points, entrance and exit. Israel controls everything. And as such, in many cases, people who come in or go out and so on are subject to Israeli control and what Israel does and says, and therefore we were unable to control our borders, and the workers who go to Israel or Palestinians from Israel who come to visit families and have social occasions, because we are one people, the indigenous Palestinians in Israel — we call them the '48 Palestinians. So it has created a situation where there is really no control.

And we don't have a health system, despite the fact that we have very qualified doctors and a minister of health that has been working extremely hard to try to control it. It did at first. It acted quickly. It controlled the situation. And then, with the second wave, it became worse. And now we're going through the third wave, where every day we have more than 2,000 cases and we have deaths by the scores, which, given the number of people we have, is a very high ratio. And we don't have enough health facilities, the hospitals, and even the swabs, the needed treatment, medicine. So —

AMY GOODMAN: So, let me ask you, then — the prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, says he will be the very first person to get a COVID vaccine, to be injected with one. What will happen to the Palestinians? What kind of access will you have?

HANAN ASHRAWI: What kind of what? Sorry.

AMY GOODMAN: Access to vaccines will you have?

HANAN ASHRAWI: Yeah, well, the president has been talking to many different countries. And every time he addresses a leader of a country, like Russia and other places, he does ask for the vaccine. And the Ministry of Health has been in touch with the pharmaceutical companies that are producing, manufacturing this vaccine. So, we have to get it ourselves, and we have to pay for it. But at the same time, we're addressing other countries to be able to help in terms of acquiring the necessary vaccines. We don't expect to get them soon. We don't have the means to buy enough for the whole population. So, I think there will be several countries that have volunteered to help, to assist, but it means we'll have to wait a while to be able to get it. And the fact that it is becoming more prevalent, it is spreading quite rapidly.

I was talking to the minister of health, Dr. Mai. She's quite a hard-working, excellent health practitioner. And she told me that they're desperately trying to get enough, and she's in touch with many different sources. And we hope, through the WHO and others, there will be help. But they're worried that if we do not get it quickly, the hospitals and the ICU facilities will not be enough to take care of them. We do have good and qualified health service providers, and we trust them, but at the same time we don't know if they can cope with the scope of the spread of the COVID-19 in Palestine.

AMY GOODMAN: Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, I want to thank you for being with us, Palestinian diplomat, scholar, recently resigned her position as executive committee member of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the first woman to hold a seat in the highest executive body in Palestine, also served as the official spokesperson of the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace process. She herself had COVID and now has recovered.

When we come back, we go from the Israel-Morocco alliance to the U.S.-Morocco alliance, to the U.S. acknowledging — to the U.S. recognizing the sovereignty of Morocco over Western Sahara, the first country in the world to do so. Stay with us.

2020-12 – 11 U.S. Recognizes Morocco's Occupation of Western Sahara in Latest Betrayal of Sahrawi People



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Guests [Stephen Zunes](#)

professor of politics and international studies at the University of San Francisco, where he serves as coordinator of the program in Middle Eastern Studies.

- [Mouloud Said](#)
representative of the Polisario Front in Washington.
 - [Nazha El-Khalidi](#)
Sahrawi journalist and activist.
-

Links ["Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution"](#)

- ["The East Timor Model Offers a Way out for Western Sahara and Morocco"](#)
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Image Credit: Diego Radames / SOPA Images / Sipa USA

We continue to examine the U.S.-brokered deal between Morocco and Israel to normalize relations. As part of the deal, the U.S. will become the first country in the world to recognize Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara, which Morocco has occupied since 1975 in defiance of the international community. We convene a roundtable to discuss developments: Mouloud Said, a representative of the Polisario Front in Washington; Stephen Zunes, professor of politics and international studies at the University of San Francisco; and Sahrawi journalist and activist Nazha El-Khalidi.

Transcript

This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form.

AMY GOODMAN: This is *Democracy Now! The Quarantine Report*. I'm Amy Goodman.

Morocco and Israel have agreed to establish diplomatic relations as part of a U.S.-brokered deal, Morocco the fourth Arab nation to establish ties with Israel since August. As part of the deal, the United States agreed to become the first country in the world to recognize Morocco's sovereignty over occupied Western Sahara — what many consider to be Africa's last colony. It's due to open a consulate in the occupied city of Dakhla, where there are few, if any, U.S. citizens. Morocco has occupied much of the resource-rich territory since 1975 in defiance of the United Nations and the international community. Thousands of Sahrawis have been tortured, imprisoned, killed and disappeared while resisting the Moroccan occupation. Following Morocco's invasion in 1975, about half the Sahrawi population fled to neighboring Algeria, where they've lived for the past 45 years in refugee camps in the middle of the desert. The deal comes less than a month after a nearly three-decade-old ceasefire ended in Western Sahara.

Joining us from Spain is Mouloud Said, a representative in Washington of the Polisario Front, the Sahrawi liberation movement seeking independence. Also with us, in the United States, Stephen Zunes, professor of politics and international studies at the University of San Francisco, the co-author of *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*.

We welcome you both to *Democracy Now!* Stephen Zunes, if you can make that link between Morocco recognizing Israel and the U.S., in exchange, it seems, officially accepting Morocco's annexation of the occupied Western Sahara?

STEPHEN ZUNES: It was clearly a *quid pro quo*. Though the United States has been, in effect, supporting Morocco's occupation for many years, just as it has been supporting Israel's occupation for many years, Trump, in both cases, has gone well beyond what previous administrations of both parties have done, and violated long-standing international legal norms — in the case of Palestine, recognizing Jerusalem as solely Israel's capital, moving the U.S. Embassy there, and recognizing Israel's illegal annexation of Syria's Golan Heights.

In the case of Morocco, it's even worse, because it's not just talking about recognizing an illegal annexation of a portion of a country, but an annexation of an entire country. And in the case of Western Sahara, remember, Western Sahara, the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, has been recognized by over 80 nations around the world and is a full member of the African Union. **In a sense, Trump is now recognizing the takeover of one African nation by another. Again, this is unprecedented, since the signing of the United Nations Charter, for the United States — or any nation, really — to recognize such a brazen violation of international legal norms.**

AMY GOODMAN: I wanted to go to Madrid, Spain, to get the response of Mouloud Said. You represent the Polisario Front in Washington, D.C., though you're in Spain right now. Can you talk about what this means, the Trump administration doing something that has not been done by any country in the world, recognizing the annexation of Western Sahara? What does this mean for the Sahrawi people?

MOULOUD SAID: Good morning, Amy, and thank you for having me.

The Sahrawi government condemns and regrets this decision taken by President Trump, which breaks away from all the previous administration policies. But this decision is not going to change the facts that the Sahrawi Republic is a full member of the African Union, that Morocco occupies part of this territory. And it's not going to change the nature of the conflict. This decision, it was done without advancing any legal argument, because they will not find it anywhere. And Western Sahara is not just a piece of real estate that President Trump can give; it's a territory that belongs to its people and a full-fledged member of a continental organization. Like was very well said by Professor Zunes, this is the first time that a country is trying to ignore another member state, as if the African Union did not exist, as if the Sahrawi Republic was not a member of the African Union. And so, this is really something that we condemn this position, but it's not going to change on anything the situation, because the Sahrawi people are going to continue with their struggle. We are not going to stop. And this is — you said this is the first power that recognizes; it's the first power that violates international law, bluntly, in the Western Sahara. And since it's a violation of international law, it is not going to have any effect on the issue.

By the way, already the European Union came up with a statement disassociating itself from this decision, and the United Nations. And I want to take this opportunity to thank the senators that acted so promptly, and members of Congress, in particular Senator Jim Inhofe; Senator Patrick Leahy; and Eliot — Congressman Eliot Engel, the chairman of the international relations committee; Congresswoman Betty McCollum; and others, that disassociated themselves, and some of them even condemned this kind of decision.

AMY GOODMAN: I wanted to go right now inside occupied Western Sahara to Laayoune to speak with Nazha El-Khalidi, who is inside her home, where many are in their homes, but police have laid siege to the area. And, Nazha, I wanted to welcome you to *Democracy Now!* You're a journalist, as well, with Équipe Média.

You've been arrested by the Moroccans. Can you respond to the Trump administration recognizing Morocco's sovereignty over your territory and what this means for you? What is the situation inside?

NAZHA EL-KHALIDI: Thank you very much, Amy Goodman. And thanks to *Democracy Now!* for talking to us and give to the Sahrawi activists from the occupied territory of Western Sahara the opportunity to share their stories and to share testimonies of victims.

Regarding the situation in the occupied territory, there is a major crackdown on the Sahrawi rights, on the Sahrawi — on the freedom of speech, on the freedom of movement, on the freedom of assembly. Especially after Morocco violated the ceasefire and the wars start again, Morocco started a wave of arrests against Sahrawi activists in the occupied territory, the oppression and the repression against the Sahrawi peaceful movements raising day by day, and Morocco keep arresting people. Now there are dozens of Sahrawi activists who are behind bars in Moroccan prisons. The people in Western Sahara are not allowed to express themselves. There are no press agencies on the ground that can document the violations against Sahrawi human beings in here. Morocco is continue closing the territory on front of the international observers, international activists and international journalists. So, we determine and we describe Western Sahara as a black hole, as it was described by RSF reports two years ago and by international organizations. It's completely closed, and we are suffering in silence.

Regarding the Donald Trump recognition, we believe that this will not erase our legitimate right to freedom and independence. Sahrawi people is continue struggling. And we are not surprised, since we have been betrayed by the international community for over 30 years, where we were waiting for a peaceful solution from the United Nations, that we have been promised by the United Nations. There is a mission to organize a fair referendum and to offer the opportunity to Sahrawi people to vote and to determine their own future by themselves. So we are not surprised by, like, the recognition from Trump. And I think the status of Western Sahara is already determined by international law, so not by a tweet of a president who is already on his way out. So, the international law is clear and is set out in successive United Nations Security Council resolutions that were authored by the U.S. itself, and that Western Sahara's status will be determined by a referendum.

We hope the incoming Biden administration will return the U.S. to a nation that respects long-standing international law and that will use its influence to encourage the meaningful — the United Nations-led peace talks on Western Sahara that have been neglected. We hope that the new U.S. administration will resolve the long-standing conflict in Western Sahara and help deliver what the Sahrawi people have long been promised by the United Nations, which is a promise to give them a simple right, which is the vote for our freedom. So, the Donald Trump recognition will not stop the Sahrawi struggle and will not end the Sahrawi beliefs in achieving legal rights and fighting for legal rights, which is independence and establish their state on their land.

AMY GOODMAN: Finally, I wanted to ask Steve Zunes about this latest [report](#) in Reuters that talks about the U.S. planning to sell — negotiating the sale of at least four sophisticated large aerial drones to Morocco — not clear whether it is related to this, though it's coming at the same time. And you have the longtime supporter of Israel, the outgoing congressman, head of the House Foreign Relations Committee, Eliot Engel, while applauding the relationship between Jerusalem and Rabat, warned the Trump administration against casting aside legitimate, multilateral avenues of conflict resolution, doing something no other country in the world has done. Professor Zunes, you have 30 seconds.

STEPHEN ZUNES: The drone sale was of concern, because it's illegal for the United States to support — to provide invading armies with this kind of sophisticated equipment. But now that Western Sahara is recognized as part of Morocco, suddenly it's an internal conflict. And so, this paves the way for this kind of equipment, which could be used in counterinsurgency situations.

In terms of Engel, it's important that someone who is so strongly for Israel is willing to break with the administration on this point. The question is what Biden is going to do, because Biden could reverse the annexation — recognition of the annexation with a stroke of a pen. But he'd be under a lot of pressure because then Morocco could use this as an excuse to nullify their recognition of Israel. So, Biden is going to

be in a lot of pressure by pro-Israel groups not to rescind Trump's order. So, it's good that you have somebody like Engel who is challenging Trump's decision.

AMY GOODMAN: And finally, Mouloud Said, the status of the ceasefire between Morocco and the Polisario?

MOULOUD SAID: Since the Moroccans invaded — I mean, crossed the buffer zone — and this was stated by the president of the Sahrawi Republic, Mr. Brahim Ghali — we'd say that the ceasefire was over, and therefore we are back to square one, to the situation in which we found ourselves in 1991. So right now there is the war going on from the south of Western Sahara to the north, from Guerguerat to Mahbes. So, the ceasefire is not anymore. It's over. Now it's just a war that will continue until the final liberation of the remaining part of the territory. And it's sad that this decision by Mr. Trump comes on the day of the international — the day that everybody was celebrating the human rights, the anniversary of the Human Rights Declaration.

AMY GOODMAN: Mouloud Said, I want to thank you for being with us, representative of the Polisario Front in Washington, D.C. Professor Stephen Zunes from the University of San Francisco. And, Sahrawi journalist Nazha El-Khalidi, thank you so much for being with us from occupied Laayoune.

Coming up, we look at Joe Biden's pick to head the Pentagon, a retired general. What does this mean? Stay with us.

2020-12-11 Andrew Bacevich on Why Retired General and Raytheon Official Lloyd Austin Should Not Head Pentagon



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Joe Biden's nominee for defense secretary, retired four-star Army General Lloyd Austin, would make history as the first African American to lead the Pentagon if confirmed by the Senate. But Austin can only be confirmed if he secures a waiver from Congress due to laws designed to preserve the civilian control of the military, and several leading Democratic senators have indicated they would oppose granting a waiver. Andrew Bacevich, president and co-founder of the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, says he shares those concerns. "The general is not a civilian, and it seems to me if we're serious about civilian control of the military — and we should be as citizens — that we ought to have a bona fide civilian in charge of the Pentagon," he says.

Transcript

This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form.

AMY GOODMAN: We turn to look at President-elect Joe Biden's nominee for defense secretary: retired four-star Army General Lloyd Austin. If confirmed, he would make history as the first Black defense secretary. General Austin can only be confirmed if first a waiver is secured from Congress, due to laws designed to preserve the civilian control of the military. Several Democratic senators, including Richard Blumenthal, Tammy Duckworth, Jon Tester and Elizabeth Warren, have indicated they would oppose granting a waiver to Austin. Three years ago, 17 Democratic senators voted against giving a waiver to General James Mattis when he was nominated by President Trump. Now there's speculation some Democrats may vote against the waiver for Austin, but for his confirmation, while some Republicans may do the opposite. This comes as General Austin also faces scrutiny for his ties to weapons manufacturer Raytheon, whose board he sits on.

For more on Lloyd Austin's nomination, we go to Walpole, Massachusetts, where we're joined by Andrew Bacevich, president and co-founder of the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft and a retired colonel and Vietnam War vet. Professor Bacevich is professor emeritus of international relations and history at Boston University.

It's great to have you back. Why don't you talk about your concerns about the general being the defense secretary?

ANDREW BACEVICH: Well, the general is not a civilian. And it seems to me, if we're serious about civilian control of the military — and we should be as citizens — that we ought to have a *bona fide* civilian in charge of the Pentagon.

AMY GOODMAN: So, this goes back to 1947? Explain the law passed by Congress.

ANDREW BACEVICH: So, that was the National Security Act of 1947, which created the modern national security establishment, unified the armed forces, created institutions that we're familiar with, such as the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and created the position of defense secretary. This was under Harry Truman's administration. Truman himself was acutely sensitive to the importance of maintaining civilian control, and therefore, the creation of this reform, in establishing the position of defense secretary, he was emphatic, the law is explicit, that it will be filled by a civilian.

There have been two exceptions. The first occurred in 1951. This is during the Korean War, great military crisis. General Marshall, George Marshall, became defense secretary. The waiver allowing him to do that was approved. And then, the second time, as you just mentioned, was just recently with the appointment of General Mattis to serve as defense secretary by Donald Trump during the Trump presidency.

AMY GOODMAN: And talk about what civilian control means. I mean, for a lot of people, they may just say, "So, it's the Pentagon. Why wouldn't you have a general?"

ANDREW BACEVICH: Yeah, you know, just yesterday, I reread General — President, excuse me, President Eisenhower's famous farewell address. This was the speech where he warned about the influence of the military-industrial complex. And there's a phrase he uses — he's addressing his fellow citizens — about the imperative of being watchful over the military to ensure that liberty and security may prosper together.

And as I've thought about that, it seems to me that military professionals have a rather specific understanding of what liberty and security mean and what they require, and that we ordinary citizens actually have a different understanding — doesn't mean that ours is necessarily right. But I think the point is that we need civilian control, in the form of a genuinely civilian defense secretary, for the defense secretary, in a sense, to serve as our agent to try to ensure that the military's understanding of liberty and security aligns with our understanding of liberty and security.

And that's why I would — I've got nothing against Austin. I think he's probably a good guy, a patriot, served honorably. But I have serious doubts that he has that appreciation for what liberty and security mean in the larger sense. And that's why I think his appointment is a bad idea.

AMY GOODMAN: You've also expressed concern about, well, what General/President Eisenhower talked about, that military-industrial complex. But you said that he jumped on the military-industrial gravy train too soon.

ANDREW BACEVICH: Well, you know, in a way, it's hard to criticize Austin for this, because so many of them do it. I mean, you know, the three stars, the four stars, as soon as they retire, they start cashing in. And we've got these defense contractors, for whatever reason, this — you know, welcome the retired generals and admirals to their boards. And that's what Austin did. He's only been retired for, I think — what? Four years? He's made a ton of money. The money comes from defense contractors.

I find that all ethically very troubling, even though I have to acknowledge that what he did was not legally wrong, and, frankly, what he did is what so many of the rest of them do. But it is indicative of this incestuous relationship between defense contractors and senior members of the officer corps. And we ought to be uncomfortable with that, even though we've come to accept it as, you know, I guess, the way things are.

AMY GOODMAN: I wanted to switch gears a bit and ask you about the Costs of War project at Boston University, that came out with this new [study](#) that shows that the number of Afghan civilians killed in airstrikes led by the U.S. and allies have risen by 330% since 2017.

ANDREW BACEVICH: Right.

AMY GOODMAN: We also just reported on, what, 2019 alone, about 700 people were killed by airstrikes carried out by the Trump administration. And just yesterday, the report out of Jalalabad, the television journalist Malalai Maiwand was assassinated with her driver as they were on the road. What is happening in eastern Afghanistan?

ANDREW BACEVICH: Well, I think there's been a bit of a charade going on —

AMY GOODMAN: I don't mean eastern, but all of Afghanistan.

ANDREW BACEVICH: Yes. I think there's been a bit of a charade going on — it really precedes Trump but continues under Trump — that the so-called endless wars are coming to an end. And the evidence for that is that the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan and in other theaters of war has been going down. And when the number of troops go down, U.S. casualties go down, and the American public simply tunes out.

Well, what has gotten less attention, but that Costs of War report invites us to pay attention to, is that as troop levels go down, reliance on air power goes up. Reliance on air power goes up even in a time of precision munitions, you're going to end up killing more civilians. And that is, in fact, what has happened. And it ought to be exceedingly troubling, except for the fact, as I suggested, the American public's attention to wars involving the United States is determined by the number of U.S. troops that are being killed or being wounded. And right now in Afghanistan that number is very small.

AMY GOODMAN: Ten seconds. Do you expect Biden to be different when it comes to Afghanistan?

ANDREW BACEVICH: No. I think he is going to take office and say, "I will end endless wars," and he will maintain so-called counter terrorism capabilities, small number of troops, continue to use air power, so the endless wars in places like Afghanistan will continue. I think that he'll be putting his reform program at home in jeopardy if he doesn't bring these wars to an end.

AMY GOODMAN: Andrew Bacevich, I want to thank you for being with us, president and co-founder of the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, retired colonel and Vietnam War veteran.

That does it for our broadcast. Special thanks to María Carrión. *Democracy Now!* produced with Renée Feltz, Mike Burke, Deena Guzder, Libby Rainey, Nermeen Shaikh, María Taracena, Carla Wills. I'm Amy Goodman. Wear a mask. Stay safe.