



## **Dr. Jill Stein on Israel's Crimes; PLUS: WashU Protest Arrest**

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**Glenn Greenwald (GG):** Doctor Jill Stein is one of the best known independent politicians in the United States. She has twice run for president as a Green Party candidate, both in 2012 and 2016, and is doing so again this year. She is a medical doctor, having graduated from Harvard University, and then she practised internal medicine for the next 25 years. Although Democrats who can never accept responsibility for their own losses blame her for the loss of Hillary Clinton in 2016 and frequently call her all kinds of names, including being a Russian asset, we consider her to be one of the most important and interesting independent voices in this country, especially when she is a presidential candidate, as she is this year, and we are delighted to welcome her to the show. Doctor Stein, good evening. It's great to see you. Thanks for coming on.

**Jill Stein (JS):** Great, Glenn is really wonderful to be with you. Great honour.

**GG:** Absolutely. So let's begin with the somewhat dramatic episode that happened to you this week. You are exercising your First Amendment right as an American citizen, by participating in a protest on Washington University's campus in Saint Louis and along with dozens of students who are participating in that protest as well against the Israeli war in Gaza and the US support for it, you ended up being arrested. Why did you end up getting arrested? What happened there?

**JS:** I had been at a campaign event at a public library just a couple blocks away. There were some wonderful students there from the encampment and just speaking in a really eloquent way about what they were doing. And on the way out from the library, another student from the university asked me to stop by, and I said, of course, we so support what the students are doing, who are really the moral fibre of America at the moment. And, when we arrived at the campus, the students who were at the encampment then asked us, would we please go and try to de-escalate the situation with the administration. So myself and two of the aldermen from Saint Louis, who were also there to support the encampment, went over to try to negotiate. It

wasn't really successful, I will say. And after that the students asked me to join the circle around the encampment to defend their constitutional rights to free speech and the right to protest on a subject of absolutely critical importance to the moral conscience of the nation, and our values and so on. So, as we were standing there, basically the police assaulted us with bicycles as a weapon. They did appear to specifically single me out and say, "to get her". And you can see in the footage, that they were, basically pushing me and my campaign colleagues around me and the students, they were pushing us over and were about to flip me backwards under my head and one of the cops at that point bent down and picked up one of my feet in an effort to, you know, come in for the final blow and jerk me into a backflip, basically, on the ground. And I, you know, in the effort to recover my balance, I wiggled out of his grip, and then he informed me that I had just assaulted him. Apparently, my foot may have made contact with him as he was trying to assault me. My foot made contact, and he told me that I was assaulting him and you know that I would be so charged. They eventually toppled me and all of us over, cuffed us face down on the ground, and then walked us over to the paddy wagon. We were processed, you know, and there were about 100 of us, actually. Everyone, eventually at the encampment, wound up at the jail. We were processed, which went on for like five hours. And at the end of that time, I was then separated from the group, because they hadn't said anything about this assault charge. I was then separated, and I was told to go in a different direction. And there was one other person there who was a professor, also in his 60s. I'm in my 70s. He was in his 60s. Not a particularly vigorous man. There's footage of his assault, as well, where a number of officers just lunged at him. He was just taking photographs. He wasn't even part of the circle around the encampment. He was just a bystander taking, you know, documenting what was going on. And they assaulted him, knocked him down on the ground, cuffed him, and then face down dragged him by his feet. And he was quite injured and beaten up. And the two of us were the ones that were being booked, I guess, for assault charges. Although it's hard to say because it's not on my yellow slip. But we were separated. We had our mugshots and our fingerprints and urine sample, medical admission. It looked like we were being admitted to the jail. And then when all that processing was done, they said, Okay, now go out that door. And that door was an exit. So sure enough, we were being turned loose. Paper doesn't say anything about assault charges, but it does appear as though I'm going to be charged with assault for having been assaulted with a bicycle by these riot police who were creating a riot.

**GG:** Well, I've long said that I consider you to be a very physically imposing and intimidating figure, especially when it comes to confronting armed agents of the state like these police officers. So I'm sure they were quite petrified for their safety. Well, let me ask you, of the major candidates, meaning the people who are recognisable, the people who have a demonstrated ability to run a serious campaign, you are the only Jewish candidate of the presidential candidates in the 2024 race. I know that you're familiar with what is being said about what's happening at these protests and these encampments, namely, that it's driven by bigotry and hate speech and extreme violence toward an attempt to intimidate Jews and Jews who are on campus. Did you see any of that there as a well-known Jewish political figure yourself?

**JS:** To the contrary, I'm constantly hearing expressions of community, love and appreciation, especially for being a Jewish voice. And, you know, Jewish voices are certainly in the leadership now of these encampments, of these protests, of the demand to end the genocide in Gaza committed by the apartheid state of Israel. I don't hear or see any anti-Jewish sentiment. I hear lots of really pro Jewish support and gratitude for what I consider to be a basic Jewish value, which is that genocide is unacceptable. That was certainly what I was taught, growing up within the Jewish community outside of Chicago after the Holocaust. I was growing up shortly after the Holocaust. My parents were the children of refugees from pogroms in Eastern Europe. My grandfather's name was Israel. We were very mindful that genocide is really kind of an existential just crisis, really. It's a crisis of civilization. And, you know, to people growing up in the wake of the Holocaust, it was really difficult to come to terms with. And one of the ways that our community came to terms with it was by resolving that it would never happen again, not to anybody; didn't matter who. But genocide is the responsibility not only of the perpetrators, but also of the bystanders. And I just grew up with that in my bones. And there was no way that I could stand by. And I feel like I have felt so much gratitude from the Muslim community in particular, and from students who are up in arms about this. I feel so much gratitude from them. To me, the problem is that the Zionist community is trying to hide behind Judaism. And Zionism is not Judaism. And to say that being against genocide is anti-Semitic is the biggest anti-Semitic slur of all, because that essentially says that it's okay with Jews for genocide to happen.

**GG:** And if you look at things like the Nuremberg trials and the principles that were established after World War two, they were very much not about the idea that one particular group is particularly vulnerable to these kinds of evil acts. It was about the nature of humanity being such that any nation, any group of people at any time could perpetrate atrocities of this kind. It was a responsibility to enforce these principles universally against any group, including, they said, the nations that were present and acting as the perpetrators of justice at the Nuremberg trials. We do have some video of your arrest today. I just want to quickly show it so that people can see it with their own eyes, what you've described. Let's go ahead and put that up.

**GG:** So for people who aren't watching, you can see there the bicycle being held there by the police officers. Doctor Stein standing with students being pushed back with that bicycle. It looks to me like the police officers are very much in physical control of the situation. The idea that they're being endangered or assaulted, seems to be quite visibly false. But yeah, that definitely illustrates more or less exactly what you were describing. All right. Let me ask you, this is not a new thing for you. You have been a long time critic of the treatment by the Israelis of the Palestinians. It is not new that the Israelis are bombing Gaza. They have done so many, many times over the past several decades, first when they were occupying it, now when they're blockading it. On the scope of things that you have seen, moral atrocities and war in the like, both in terms of the Israeli treatment of the Palestinians and then more broadly, modern day war, in the, say the 21st century, where do you rank the current destruction of Gaza by the Israelis on that list?

**JS:** I think it is the most horrifying thing that we have witnessed. This is a genocide that's being livestreamed. I feel like as a medical doctor, I feel like I am on a death watch right now for 2 million people. And this is extremely uncomfortable. It's actually intolerable. I don't think I could stand to witness this without fighting it with every fibre of my being. I also feel this as a mother, you know, as a mother, as a parent, as an uncle or an aunt, it's just intolerable to witness the torture and murder of children on an industrial scale. So it's both the fact that this is live streamed in real time, as well as the intensity of the onslaught here. And that's been documented time and again that the degree of the violence, the intensity of the violence, the intensity of the bombing, the fact that some eight times the number of bombs dropped on Iraq in six years, so that full volume of bombing has – the volume of bombs dropped on Iraq has been exceeded eightfold in the first 100 days. This is just unbelievably monstrous what's taking place. The elimination of hospitals, the assault on hospitals, the mass graves of hundreds of innocent civilians, patients, doctors and nurses are there by the hundreds in mass graves in at least two of the hospitals that have been destroyed. And pretty much all of the hospitals have been destroyed. The ambulances, the ambulance drivers, the universities have been flattened, the schools. I mean, what's going on now, it's almost beyond comparison from anything I have ever seen or heard. The survival of an entire people, their culture is being erased, flattened, pulverised. It's a monstrous event that's taking place. And I think it really challenges us, you know, what is our moral fibre here? What is our moral core? Because what happens in Gaza – they are normalising the torture and murder of children. They are normalising the violation of international law. They are normalising the abolition of human rights. So to sit by and let this happen in Gaza is basically to say that this is okay for the future of the world.

**GG:** Obviously as a independent candidate outside the two party system, as a Green Party candidate, one of the foundations of your campaign is that you critique the bipartisanship of both political parties and the way in which they agree on things and impose destructive things in the world. One of the apparent differences, or the claim differences between the two parties, is that Democrats have increasingly embraced theories of censorship when it comes to things like online expression. They've worked with the security state to impose a censorship regime on the internet, whereas conservatives and Republicans were saying how profoundly opposed they were to this kind of suppression of free political speech. Since October 7th, what we've seen is not a debate, but essentially a union between those two groups, yet again, to essentially insist that criticism of Israel should be deemed hate speech, that it should be deemed to be inherently violent. There's now a concerted effort to shut down these political protests, including ones that are entirely peaceful. What do you make of this kind of unity between Democrats and Republicans when it comes to questions regarding Israel and even attacks on our free speech rights in the name of shielding it?

**JS:** Yeah, absolutely. I mean, unfortunately, this is an example of where Democrats and Republicans converge basically on an agenda of war and Wall Street, you know, and they both share the agenda of bailing out Wall Street whenever it needs it. The Democratic and Republican consensus, after the crooks crashed Wall Street in 2008, you know, they were quick to bail them out to the tune of trillions of dollars, even while the American public was

screaming, don't do it. You know, so Wall Street got bailed out. And everyday people got thrown out, losing their homes by the millions. You know, appropriations for Ukraine or for Israel, they're a dime a dozen. And the Republicans may grandstand, based on, usually not compelling issues, like, they wanted to militarise the border before they provided the funding for Ukraine. But on basic issues, unfortunately, there's widespread agreement here, and they're both very much in the pocket. Joe Biden appointed a former member of the Raytheon board of directors to be the Secretary of Defence. So, you know, they're both really, joined at the hip with the war industry, the war profiteers and with Wall Street. So the differences between them, I think, are pretty shallow and superficial. Unfortunately, they're all pretty much taking their marching orders from AIPAC and the war profiteers and ignoring the overwhelming consensus of the American people that they want an immediate ceasefire and a negotiated solution.

**GG:** Just a couple questions more with the time we have left. There was just a recent poll out this week from one of the more credible polling agencies that says that 70% of Americans think that the economy is going poorly. And a similar percentage, 66%, disapprove of Biden's handling of the economy. Now, it is very consistent with polling that we've seen for over a year now. Now, if you listen to liberal pundits, the sort of loyalists of the Democratic Party, they will insist that the data shows that the economy actually is doing quite well. And there are actual metrics and data that you can point to that suggests that there's been an improvement in the economy since the Covid pandemic and the like and they basically, in this kind of very now characteristic democratic way, are almost saying that the people in the country are stupid, that they don't realise how good they have it, and they're kind of malcontents. Why do you think that even though you can point to some data that suggests that some things have improved, that so many Americans, that such a widespread basis, believe the economy is going so poorly for them?

**JS:** Well, I think there's a lot of data to show that if you're not in the upper 10% or so, if you're not heavily invested in the stock market, the economy really is pretty devastating for most working people. Most working people are living with incredible insecurity right now. You know, if they make ends meet, it's generally by going into debt. So we know 63% of Americans are living paycheque to paycheque. We know that half of all renters are severely economically stressed trying to keep a roof over their heads, paying more than 30% of their income just to pay their rent, which doesn't leave much money to pay their student debt, which is also just really devastating to 44 million Americans. 100 million Americans who are in medical debt. 87 million Americans who are either underinsured or not insured at all. Child poverty rates have doubled. Homelessness is at a record high. And if you poll young people, people under 25, 50% of young people say that they are hopeless about the future. One quarter of young people say that they have considered harming themselves because of this fact, within the last two weeks of the poll, which is an absolutely terrifying metric about the state of our society. So things are not going well once you get beyond sort of the upper crust. So there may be these macroeconomic indicators that are okay, because the upper crust is doing so well, but the vast majority of people are pretty desperate now and only becoming more so while Congress appropriates almost \$100 billion, at the drop of the hat in order to

conduct more war, which is impoverishing us 50% of our congressional budget. In fact, more of that is being spent on the endless war machine, which is doing nothing but creating failed states, mass refugee migrations, continuing terrorist threats, and not making the world a safer place, in fact, making the world a much more dangerous place. So what's wrong with this picture? What's wrong with this picture is that our electoral system, our democracy has pretty much been sold to the highest bidder. And this is what's driving policy, while we have Congress voting in pretty much lockstep to continue funding this stuff, while the needs of the American people are just desperately met. So fortunately, a lot of people are saying enough is enough, and it's really time to stand up. They're going to be three pro-war, pro-genocide, anti-worker campaigns on the ballot. That is RFK, Biden and Trump. And our campaign is the only anti-war, anti-genocide, pro-worker campaign that is on track to be on the ballot across the country. It is likely to be a four way race if the vote is split four ways, in fact, it can be won with as little as 26%. Recently we've been running 8%, in the most recent poll in Wisconsin and 22%, among people 30 and under. Bernie Sanders percolated along at 2 to 3% until he broke through in 2016, in the primary. So I'd say, you know, hold on to your hats, we don't know what's happening, what the outcome of this election will be. But the American people are in an uprising now for very good reason, in spite of the propaganda of the Democrats to just tell you to sit down, be good little boys and girls and be happy with your very screwed over life as it is.

**GG:** Yeah, I mean, there's no question there's massive evidence of systemic discontent with both political parties. And there's a huge opening, I think, more so than ever before. Just one or two questions left. You mentioned a couple of times the war in Ukraine. You know the argument against pulling out or ceasing to fund it; the Republicans and Democrats just united to send another \$60 billion to Ukraine. They got Mike Johnson to just switch completely the view that he had claimed for years he believed in, not just on that, but on warrantless eavesdropping and the like. So we're sending another \$60 billion to fuel that war to keep it continuing. The argument, of course, is that if we don't, the Russians will just overrun Ukraine, that the Ukrainians would lose their country, that Russia would annex it and take it over, and that we can't allow that to happen. What's your response to that critique?

**JS:** Well, that is a mythology, you know, and experts in the region, John Mearsheimer and people like that who know the region, are pretty clear, as the evidence is clear, that Russia actually cannot afford to expand as an empire. It can't take that on. Russia is defending its border, which the US has done as well, when Russia put nuclear missiles in Cuba. We had launched the nuclear bombs into the air. We were not going to allow our border to be threatened by nuclear missiles. And with the expansion of NATO eastward, there are nuclear compatible missiles now on Russia's border, Russia did not want to see that happening along the very extensive Ukrainian border as well. Russia was very clear from the outset what it wanted was neutrality, explicit neutrality for Ukraine after the war was begun, you know, and Russia has been offering to basically make a deal and hold to a deal, before the war in an effort to avoid it. This war was predicted. It was understood to be an inevitable consequence of violating the promise that was made to Gorbachev. You know, whenever it was, the...

**GG:** After the fall of the Berlin Wall in the late 1980s.

**JS:** Exactly, that the reunification of Germany was dependent on the guarantee that NATO would not be expanding further to the east. And that began to be violated shortly after the agreement was made. And especially under Clinton, NATO began to march to the east, and it was clear that this war was in the offing. But all that needed to be done was to abide by that promise that was made at that time to Gorbachev. So this was an absolutely avoidable war. Russia simply wanted to defend its border. It's been invaded across that Ukrainian border many times over the course of history. And most recently, they lost 27 million people. They are touchy about their border. It would have required absolutely nothing, from the US, there would have been no loss of power or status or anything to simply have respected the Minsk Accords, which were negotiated on that basis or simply the request for neutrality for Ukraine. This would have been an easy win here. But for very just wrongheaded reasons, you know, the US has an explicit military policy known as full spectrum dominance, that we will not allow competitors to emerge in any region of the world and we will suppress those competitors and the US has been quite insistent on suppressing any further development of Russia and the potential for Russia to emerge as a regional power, we didn't want to see that. So we've been bleeding Ukraine in order to bleed Russia. And this is just a disaster for the people of Ukraine. And it's really shameful. Russia is not a threat here. It's not a threat. Unfortunately to end the war now because a lot of territory has been taken, as was predicted, as Barack Obama himself acknowledged, this wasn't an area to begin a fight because Russia has every reason to defend its borders here, and we do not. This is not our territory. So, this was predictable. It's going to be more difficult to negotiate a solution right now. But Russia has continued to negotiate, even after the war. And there will be more concessions at this stage of the game. But what are we going to do? Bleed Ukraine to death?! And we've got two wars now and potentially a third, if the warmongers get their way. They're warmongering against China as well. This is nuts. This endangers us all. There are nuclear threats here, the potential for this to explode into a nuclear conflict. And likewise, there is also, in the Middle East with Netanyahu trying to drag us into a wider war with Iran and attacking the Iranian embassy. And Iran is networked with Russia. So this could all get very complicated and potentially nuclear, at the drop of the hat. It's very important for us to say, this is over. This is not advancing security for the people of Ukraine. It's really a horrible, terrible, costly mistake that the US bullied its way into this war to start with. Yes, it was illegal and criminal for Putin to launch the attack on Ukraine. And that is absolutely war crimes that are being committed here on both sides, of course. But this was absolutely avoidable. Russia wanted to prevent this war and the US insisted on forcing it forward. And when there was an opportunity to negotiate and there was a treaty which was ready to be signed, the US disrupted it in order to keep the war going, we need to stop. Enough is enough enough. Ukrainians have died.

**GG:** Yeah, as sensitive and touchy as you said about how the Russians are with that part of the border, they get even touchier when they hear German leaders vowing to pursue the glories of victory over the Russian army until the end, and then sending German tanks eastward through Europe into Ukraine, right up to the Russian border, as the Germans have been doing. Last question: There are a lot of things Democrats are not very good at. One of

the things they're particularly poor at is accepting responsibility for their own defeats. They, in 2000 to this day, blame that 2000 loss not on themselves but on Ralph Nader. In 2016 they blame, to this day, that loss on a variety of people, WikiLeaks, The New York Times, Russia, but especially you. And, you know, the argument, which is that your candidacy, however eloquent you may be and however noble your platform might be, that the only actual effect of it is that you are stealing votes that the Democrats are entitled to, and that they apparently think they own. And because of your candidacy, a bunch of people who would vote for Biden are going to vote for you instead and therefore jeopardise Biden's ability to beat Donald Trump. What is your answer to that?

**JS:** No one owns your vote. No one is entitled to your vote. Politicians need to earn your vote. And anyone who tries to intimidate you, or to extort your vote based on the notion that they own it, doesn't deserve even consideration of your vote, if they are trying to prevent you from doing what you need to do and you want to do. Your vote is not meaningful unless it expresses what you want to do. And silence is not a political strategy. Let me point out that starting with Ralph Nader, you know, he put Medicare for all called single payer at the time on the map, on the political map. In our campaign, we put free public higher education and abolishing student debt on the map. We put reparations on the map and ranked choice voting a way to make this issue and this question of vote splitting absolutely a moot problem entirely. So Greens have made a very powerful impact on the political agenda. The Democrats adopt that agenda, but they don't actually fulfil that agenda. And here we are, you know, continuing to go down the tubes. So I'd say it's important to stand up and fight back against anyone who is trying to silence your political agency because power concedes nothing without a demand. It never has, and it never will. We now need to stand up for what we need, not simply against who we hate the most, which is kind of how our system works right now. We need to stand up for what we need and support a candidate who's actually going to deliver that. Otherwise, we are not going to move forward and we are continuing to basically go over a cliff right now. We're on a trajectory which is extremely dangerous. And I think people are more ready than ever to stand up and fight for what it is that we need. Our lives depend, our world depends, I think, on our changing course right now. And a lot of people know that and are ready to act on it.

**GG:** Well, I'd be willing to bet a lot of money that there are a lot of people who may not agree with every last one of your positions and platforms, but who are so happy that there are people who are willing to try and expand our discourse and our debate beyond this kind of dreary, bipartisan consensus that keeps us all imprisoned in this kind of jail cell that is so suffocating and so limiting. I'm so happy that you're doing what you're doing. I think it takes a lot of courage. I think you are having a very positive effect on our country's politics. And I hope and I'm sure that you will continue. And as you do, we will continue to report on it and hope to have you back on the show. We really appreciate your taking the time to be with us.

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