

Absolutely Crazy: A letter to President Trump and the World

June 3, 2025

Guest Contributor: Alan Clements, Democratic Voice of Burma

Prologue: A World on the Brink

Mr. President,

On May 25, Russia unleashed its deadliest assault on Ukraine, launching nearly 370 missiles and drones across the country, killing at least 12 in Kyiv alone, as reported by The New York Times. Just days ago, on June 1, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy authorized a staggering counteroffensive, deploying 117 drones to strike Russian strategic aviation across multiple regions, destroying over 40 units of military equipment in an operation dubbed “Spiderweb.”

This audacious attack, meticulously planned over 18 months, targeted Russia’s capacity to wage war but has escalated tensions to a perilous edge, bringing us one step closer to a kinetic war that could dwarf the devastation of World Wars I and II combined.

This barrage, compounded by Ukraine’s retaliatory strikes, has deepened the carnage of a war that, since Russia’s invasion in 2022, has claimed an estimated 1,000,000 Ukrainian and Russian lives, with millions displaced. The cycle of vengeance—missiles answered by drones, destruction met with destruction—propels humanity toward an abyss. This compounds the toll of the past century’s wars—hundreds of conflicts claiming over 100 million lives. When you called Vladimir Putin “absolutely crazy” for these attacks, you spoke truth.

But I must ask—why does your outrage stop at Ukraine’s borders? If Putin’s slaughter of civilians is madness, what of Zelenskyy’s escalation, however strategic, that risks global catastrophe? If slaughtering civilians is madness in Kyiv, what is it in Rafah, Gaza City, or Khan Younis, where American-forged bombs have erased entire communities?

Your words carry weight, Mr. President. When you speak, the world listens. But when you remain silent, that silence becomes a weapon. It seeps into policy, resounds in drone strikes, and endorses destruction. It declares, with chilling clarity: some lives matter. Others do not.

That, Mr. President, is what is truly absolutely crazy.

The double standard of outrage

You condemned Russia's war crimes. You have urged ceasefires in Ukraine, engaging directly with Putin and Zelenskyy to halt the bloodshed. Yet Zelenskyy's latest drone assault, while a tactical triumph, defies the spirit of peace talks, signaling a refusal to yield that mirrors Putin's intransigence. Where is your voice to call both leaders to account—not just for their actions, but for the shared delusion that violence can end violence? Where is your voice against the devastation unleashed by Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu, whose campaign has buried over 15,000 children beneath Gaza's sand and rubble?

Where is your compassion for the 260,000 children in Gaza—over half the population under 18—who now pray not for dreams, but for release from suffering?

Putin's assault on civilians is unjustified, as you rightly said. Zelenskyy's drone strikes, though aimed at military targets, fan the flames of a war that threatens to engulf us all. Netanyahu's use of 2,000-pound bombs on refugee camps, hospitals, and ambulances—funded by American taxpayers—is not merely unjustified. It is a moral catastrophe. And it unfolds under your gaze.

As a former Buddhist monk, a witness to war's exiles, and a father, I speak not from politics, but from humanity's heart. I cannot unsee the images: tiny limbs protruding from shattered concrete, a child's doll stained with blood, the hollow eyes of survivors who envy the dead. I cannot ignore the specter of drones—Ukrainian, Russian, or otherwise—carrying humanity toward annihilation.

This is not policy. It is spiritual desolation.

The illusion of selective morality

We are enthralled by a theater of selective morality. We decry missiles when they fall on European cities, yet tolerate them when they pulverize Middle Eastern lives under the guise of security. We applaud Ukraine's defiance, yet shrink from the reality that each drone strike, however justified, tightens the noose around our collective future. We have crafted a hierarchy of human worth, and this delusion fuels genocide—televised, normalized, and streamed into every home like an unrelenting tragedy.

I invoke the memory of Israel's Yitzhak Rabin, who, despite a bloodstained past, turned toward peace. He said: "You don't make peace with friends. You make peace with enemies."

Mr. President, you understand transformation. You have pivoted, disrupted, reshaped. Your calls for a Ukraine ceasefire show a glimpse of this vision. What if you condemned not one tyrant, but tyranny itself? What if you declared—not as a politician, but as a human being—that the era of war is over? What if you proclaimed, “Enough is Enough,” not merely as a plea for peace, but as a clarion call to end war, violence, and vengeance forever? That all bombs, no matter who drops them, are an affront to our shared humanity?

The children are not collateral

The children of Gaza are not threats. The children of Ukraine, fleeing Russian missiles, or of Russia, caught in Ukraine’s counterstrikes, are not pawns in a geopolitical game. They are barefoot dreamers, their lungs choked with ash, their futures erased by policy. Their cries are not lesser. Their lives are not expendable. When you ignore them, Mr. President, you are not neutral—you are complicit.

I write not in anger, but in grief—and in hope. I believe you can rise above the fray, as you have begun to do in Ukraine, to forge a legacy that transcends borders.

Imagine this, Mr. President:

You call for a global ceasefire. You demand the dismantling of the arms trade. You redirect billions from weapons to food, homes, schools, music, and healing. You transform arsenals into gardens, missiles into bridges. You stand before the world and declare that the cycle of vengeance—exemplified by Zelenskyy’s drones, Putin’s missiles, and Netanyahu’s bombs—must end, lest we all perish.

Do this, and you will not merely be remembered—you will be revered. History will not demand your campaign; it will rise to honor you. The Nobel Peace Prize will not be a gesture—it will be the world’s acknowledgment of your call to conscience, a beacon for humanity’s awakening.

But this is not about accolades. It is about children.

The Dhamma’s call to awakening

I end with six words from the Dhamma, the ancient path of awakening:

Tanhā: The thirst for more, even at the cost of ruin.

Lobha: The greed that builds empires on graves.

Mohā: The delusion that whispers, “This is inevitable.”

We name them.

And now, three more:

Ahimsā: The courage to harm none.

Mettā: The blessing of boundless love.

Karunā: The sacred ache that compels us to heal.

We invoke them.

Mr. President, the path is clear. If you dare to speak—not for selective outrage, but for the end of all war—if you seize this moment, as Zelenskyy’s drones and Putin’s missiles push us toward oblivion, to demand an end to violence and vengeance—you will not just shift policy. You will reshape history.

Why delay?

The world awaits.

And so do the children.

P.S. A Plea for Myanmar, my spiritual home

Mr. President, the madness of selective outrage extends to Myanmar, where my heart resides. Since the 2021 coup, 21,000 political prisoners languish in jails, 10,000 civilians have been killed, 20 million people—nearly half the population—need acute humanitarian aid, and 100,000 homes have been destroyed.

The entire democratically elected leadership, including President Win Myint and State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, remains imprisoned, while weapons from Putin and Xi Jinping fuel this carnage.

That, too, is absolutely crazy. As you navigate the Ukraine crisis, I implore you to extend your call for peace to Myanmar. Speak out for the immediate release of its political prisoners and a ceasefire to end this suffering. Let your voice be a beacon for justice in my spiritual home. Thank you, sir.