

Ukraine War End Game Begins, West Total Panic | Alex Christoforou

As the Ukraine front lines collapse, so does the fabric of the Collective West. The Epstein Class is losing its ability to hold the power structure together and it freaks them out—especially the European satellite states. Alex Christoforou of The Duran joins me today to discuss Europe's Ukraine-focused escalation, EU centralization and opposition, transatlantic elite networks, US power and multipolarity, Russia's future orientation toward BRICS and China, and the risks to free speech and independent media. Links: The Duran Locals: <https://theduran.locals.com> The Duran Substack: <https://theduran.substack.com> Neutrality Studies substack: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com> Merch: <https://neutralitystudies.com/shop> Donation: <https://neutralitystudies.com/donate> Timestamps: 00:00:00 Alex Christoforou and The Duran 00:03:10 Leipzig drone and Europe's war narrative 00:09:06 Skepticism, Iraq, Syria and Maidan 00:10:26 Greece, EU centralization and opposition 00:19:01 Iran war and Project Ukraine 00:22:23 Elite networks, Trump and European vassals 00:31:41 How the system brings leaders in line 00:34:26 US power, empire and multipolarity 00:42:13 Russia's future, Europe and free speech

#Pascal

Welcome back, everybody, to Neutrality Studies. Today, with a very special episode with one of my personal heroes, the one and only Alex Christoforou. Alex, welcome. Hey, Pascal, how are you doing? I wouldn't say hero.

#Alex Christoforou

No, you are, you are. Guy with the camera, guy with the camera that walks around.

#Pascal

Guy with the camera. Anyone, if you don't know Alex, I mean, you've been living under a rock, because Alex is doing one of the most important YouTube shows out there. Daily, daily news updates on his homepage, The Duran. And I am very happy and pleased to announce to all of you at the very beginning that The Duran now also exists in six other languages. Yes, The Duran in German, in French, in Spanish, in Portuguese, in Russian, and in Italian. And before we continue, if you are of a foreign language and you want to listen to Alex also in your language, then please go there and subscribe.

But if you don't—if you speak only English and you just want to subscribe in order to support them—please do not, because nothing kills a channel as beautifully as people who subscribe and never

listen to it. But especially if you're listening to this broadcast in German, French, or Spanish, and you would like to follow Alex, please, the links will be in the description box below. And the important thing that he does is that he does these daily updates of 30 to 45 minutes of what happened in the world. So, Alex, how long have you been doing this, and what got you started?

#Alex Christoforou

Doing The Duran was, I think we did our first videos in the middle to end of 2018, I think around that time. And we started with Russiagate. I think that was the big news story, and that's how we grew. We actually grew through our coverage of Russiagate. The impeachment, the perfect telephone call, Robert Mueller—all of that stuff was our first growth spurt, was through coverage of Russiagate and everything going on from 2018 to 2020, leading up to the elections. And then we got Biden, and I guess the rest is history, right? Project Ukraine, and here we are.

#Pascal

You actually coined a lot of phrases that I did start hearing in other places, Project Ukraine being one, but you have a couple I'm enjoying a lot, referring to people like anyone. I mean, people who listen to you, they would know who you refer to when you talk about the Green Goblin or the Goblin of Kiev by this time. I don't know why you changed that, but it is fascinating.

#Alex Christoforou

I don't know how the French came about. I'm trying to remember. How did the French come about? I think he was meeting with Macron or something.

#Pascal

Yeah. You have a very realist take, actually, at also what happens, what is happening on these daily occurrences. Of course, right now, as we speak on September the 3rd, you know, everybody's talking about the drone in Leipzig. And actually, we see, after a four-week break now, everybody's coming out with reasons why Russia needs to be opposed even further. How did you perceive this escalation of this constant drumbeat of war against Russia over, well, the last eight years?

#Alex Christoforou

You put out a really good post on X, Pascal, where I believe you're highlighting all of the tweets, the posts, the X posts from all of the globalist cool kids, all the EU cool kids, and they're all saying the same thing, right? With the whole drone thing: hybrid attacks. Now the narrative is that Russia wants to scare us from supporting Ukraine, but we won't let them. So we're going to make sure we get more money to Ukraine and more weapons. Right. That's the logic. And all of this stems from the drone that ended up at the airport in Leipzig.

#Alex Christoforou

The official story.

#Alex Christoforou

And this is coming from German investigators. This is coming from outlets like Euronews, which is very EU-friendly. The official story is that a drone bounced off of the wing of a parked Antonov plane, a Ukrainian cargo plane that was going to ship weapons to Ukraine in order to continue the war. And this drone hit the plane. It landed. It bounced off the plane. It was somewhere near the Antonov. And the bus driver, four hours later, managed to step on it. Those are the words that Euronews actually uses. The bus driver stepped on it. And it didn't have its explosives. Its explosives, its warhead, kind of detached from the actual drone and was at another location. And so this is what the whole big fuss, the whole big outrage is about in Europe, that Russia is engaging in some sort of big sabotage hybrid war against Europe because of this drone that did not detonate, that was stepped on by a bus driver. They've tied in certain passports, or a passport, a Russian passport, somehow is tied into this situation.

#Pascal

It makes no sense. When you do a sabotage attempt, you always make sure that you tie your own passport to it. You have to have a passport.

#Alex Christoforou

Exactly. You have to have a passport. And so, you know, this is what they're using as their excuse to get more money to Ukraine. That's reason number one. So you got to get more money to Ukraine because we're not going to allow Russia to intimidate us. I believe a part of this is also about helping Merz, or trying to help Merz, to fight off the AfD by presenting Merz as this chancellor who is under siege from Russian hybrid attacks. And so the German people have to rally around the flag and rally around Merz and support Merz as he takes on the Russians. The AfD doesn't want to take on the Russians. The CDU and Merz do want to take on the Russians. And look at this drone sitting in Leipzig. Let's vote for Merz. So I think a part of it has to do with that because, once again, as you highlighted, Pascal Lottaz, all of the messaging from the EU bureaucrats, the Brussels bureaucrats, was, "We support Merz."

Right. So they always have to say that we support Merz. Okay, poor Merz with the drone that a bus driver stepped on. My God, the outrage. And another part of this is to try and convince the United States to escalate with Russia, because the greatest fear for the Europeans, for the vassals in Europe, the absolute greatest number one fear is that they will stop being vassals. They're afraid of that. They like being vassals. They want the U.S. in Europe. They want the U.S. engaged in the conflict with Ukraine. They want the U.S. to even fight for Ukraine, to fight Russia in this conflict.

They want the United States engaged. It's the NATO mantra, you know, keep America in. And the EU, the globalist elite, it's very important for them to keep America engaged and in.

#Pascal

Hey, just a very quick note. The best way to support this channel is by signing up for my free Substack. You can also help with a paid subscription there, or you can get some of our new merch on neutralitystudies.com. Links below. See you there. Yeah, and it's also extremely self-serving because of the rhetoric that you build up and, of course, the constant drumbeat of war. I mean, what this story reminds me of is the submarine scare in Sweden in the 1980s, you know, the sightings of the submarines, and that kept Sweden very much engaged. You know, Ola Thunander wrote about this, and it has all been investigated. The first one, the first sighting, was real. Everything beyond that was basically manufactured scaremongering. This kind of strategy has a lot and a lot of benefits for the transatlantic war alliance, in my view.

It's just also extremely dishonest, but it does get a little bit dumber, it seems to me. Yes. At least the submarine stuff was still very easy to hide. But this thing, it seems the approach is trying to scaremonger and, as you say, keep the Americans in. Although the Americans, I don't think, have an intention to leave. That's also one of these things. It's a way to keep the Europeans willing to remain a spearhead or maybe tag team and take over from the Ukrainians once the last Ukrainian has been killed. What got you so skeptical about...? I mean, what gave you your skepticism? Because this is the healthiest thing in the world to have, and a lot of people lack it. And you developed it, and you're actually helping others with your program to remain skeptical toward official narratives. How did you develop that?

#Alex Christoforou

I got very skeptical with Iraq. That was the first thing that really irked me. Syria, that one also got me very skeptical about what's happening. And then the Maidan coup. I think those three events pretty much led me to doubt all of the narratives, most of the narratives, that are coming out of our leaders. And the crisis, and I will say the crisis in Cyprus and Greece.

#Pascal

Yeah, you were there, right? I mean, you're often in Cyprus and in Greece. I mean, what happened to Greece, the way that Greece as a country is basically sacrificed on the altar of some—not neoconservatives, but neo-economic principles—is absolutely insane. What do you make out of that? Or how do you understand that episode today?

#Alex Christoforou

I look at it as, in 2008, '9, '10, Greece decided—the leadership in Greece, I don't want to say Greece—the leadership in Greece decided to take the bad loans of the German banks and put them onto the people in order to save the bankers. That was it. I mean, obviously, there's a lot more to it, and it's a lot more complicated, and there was a lot of moving pieces and parts and a lot of politics involved. But to me, the basic message from all of that was, look, the German banks got in trouble in Greece, and they had to get bailed out. And how do you bail them out? You put it onto the people. The banks are more important than the people. And the political leadership made that decision, not the Greek people—the political leadership. If it was me, I would have said, you know what? The banks, well, that's their problem. They shouldn't have made those loans. They shouldn't have. Yeah. I mean, what can you say?

#Pascal

But the way then in which, you know, it's not just Brussels, it's not just the EU, but it is the entire way in which Europe as a continent today works in these concentric circles, right? With the EU being one center, but NATO another one, coincidentally right next to each other and all. Do you think that the way that European integration went about has a future, the way it is built at the moment?

#Alex Christoforou

Yeah, I think it does have a future. It has a bad future for us, a good future for them. I think the only trajectory that Europe can realistically follow at this point in time is one of more centralization. I wish it was the opposite. But the goal of Ursula at this point in time is to centralize as much as possible. And Ukraine helps her achieve that. The pandemic helped her achieve that. The Russia scare is going to help her achieve that. The AI, digital wallet, all of these things will help her achieve the centralization, the additional centralization of Europe. You have to have weak member states, and you have to have a strong Brussels. I think that's the only trajectory that they could possibly follow at this point in time.

I would have liked to have seen a Europe that had strong member states and a weak center, a center that was just basically coordinating things, not so much imposing its policy and its will onto the member states, but was just kind of acting as a conduit between the member states. Each member state had its own foreign policy, its own economic policy. Everything was under the rule of the member states and their government. But the euro, the euro currency, meant that centralization had to happen. And this is where we're heading towards. They're now moving. The next step is to move away from unanimous voting. Yeah, that's the next step. And that's going to happen. And what that means is that all the member states pretty much have no say in anything that's going to be happening going forward. The minute you remove the unanimous voting part, every country has to vote in order to approve something. Why be in this union, especially if you're a small- to medium-sized country?

#Pascal

I mean, the whole thing still has for it going that it is a huge common market, right? Which everyone has an interest in being on, even the ones that are not members yet, like the Serbs, are saying, like, we need to—I mean, we need to somehow access, right?

#Pascal

And things like free movement and so on are all a nice thing, but they come at this, as it is now, exorbitant cost, which basically means no more self-determination over even just whether or not you want the stupid caps attached to your bottle. I can't have it because this one's only sold inside Switzerland.

#Alex Christoforou

Thank you, Ursula.

#Pascal

The Swiss, most of the caps are also attached, actually, because we want to sell our stuff to the EU, of course. But do you... At some point, we would expect some kind of counter-movement, and I think the AfD and also Marine Le Pen and so on are counter-movements against this. But the dynamic of it is now that the, as you call them usually, the cool kids, they're trying to further the scaremongering and so on to continue with the centralization anyhow. How do you see the opposition, actually, to this trend?

#Alex Christoforou

Look, I think the opposition always starts out hopeful. People are positive, and people are hopeful that the opposition will actually change things. But what usually happens is, if they do win, if they're allowed to win—remember, in Romania, we had some funny business going on with the European Union—but if they are allowed to punch through, usually the EU finds a way to either get them in line or to, over time, remove them. For example, what they did to Orbán. They squeezed Hungary, and eventually they actually got the vote against Orbán because they squeezed the Hungarian economy. They prevented funds from arriving to Hungary. They made things difficult on Orbán, and they ended up getting the outcome, the votes that they wanted. They put out scandal after scandal, and so they got rid of Orbán. And now you see what they're doing in Hungary. They're never going to let another Orbán get through ever again.

#Pascal

And the moment you have a leader in there who you like, you don't care at all whether they use autocratic methods or not, or forbid the whole opposition and close newspapers and whatnot. It's actually quite interesting to see how they are treating Georgia versus Armenia, right? Armenia is way more dictatorial than what's happening in Georgia. But the narrative gets also built around this. This is something that really surprises me. Why is it that they're so wedded to this liberal democratic jargon when what they are doing and implementing has nothing to do with it anymore?

#Alex Christoforou

Well, it's their religion. To me, I look at it as not even an ideology. I look at it as a religion for them. And it's about power. It's about power. It's about money. But more than anything, it's about the powerful elite class ruling over everybody else. And to me, that's what the European Union represents today. That's what it is. I mean, if you look at the whole structure of the EU, you look at the positioning of the EU next to NATO, they live and work, reside in this Waldorf complex, this Waldorf Garden, where they're completely out of touch with everything that is going on in Europe. And they come up with ridiculous, stupid policies like the bottle cap policy, or like supporting Project Ukraine, like cutting off energy from Russia and destroying Germany's economy, like 21 sanctions packages.

But for them, they don't care because it doesn't affect them. And there's no way that people are going to vote their way out of this. I mean, going back to your question about the opposition, I mean, I'm hopeful. I think a lot of people are hopeful. But, you know, we were hopeful about Meloni as well. People were saying, "Oh, she's going to shake things up." It took Ursula 24 hours to turn Meloni into an uber-globalist, a warmonger uber-globalist. So, I mean, I'm hopeful. I'm hopeful. Le Pen, sure, let's hope. But it's very different as they're campaigning, and it's going to be very different if they do manage to get into power.

#Pascal

How do you think that the global situation now influences that? Because we can clearly see how the European globalists have an interest in having Russia as the significant other, right? At least until now, enough to use all the rhetoric, but not enough to actually go to war. I mean, for four and a half years, they kept the war inside Ukraine and salami-slicing themselves into Russia, right? Quite successfully, actually, salami-slicing inside. But things like the Iran war—it seems that in the Iran war, there actually seems to be some disagreement with Washington of how far this should go. Maybe because it slices away from Project Ukraine. Because the United States at this point is also at an insane point where people over there even think about opening a third front against China, which is just mind-boggling. But all of that's going on at the same time. How do you think it will impact the cool kids in Brussels?

#Alex Christoforou

Well, I mean, I think you summed it up perfectly. They're upset with Iran, not because the United States is going after Iran, because there's a war with Iran, but they're upset because it pulls away all of the resources and money that otherwise would have gone to Project Ukraine. It also pulls away a lot of the media attention that would have gone to Project Ukraine. And this is what they don't like. The Europeans want the United States fully and completely engaged in Europe, right? That's what they want. Iran, for them, is a major distraction in every way—in money, in weapons, in media. So they don't like it. They don't like it at all. They want the U.S. to take on Ukraine. That's what they want. That's their number one priority. That's all they care about. That's all they talk about.

#Pascal

It's very interesting, isn't it, that even at a moment when Europe is at its most vassalized in 500 years, they still have a Eurocentric worldview, right? It's like, yeah, we are the vassals, but everything still turns around us, and let's keep it that way. It's kind of bizarre.

#Alex Christoforou

Yeah, that's true. Once again, it's about power. It's about power, and it's about being this elitist Euro-European bureaucrat, your type of royalty. That's the way they see themselves. And the United States provides the money. It provides the status. It provides the protection. I mean, without the United States, the Baltic countries would not be able to go around the world and lecture countries. They wouldn't be able to lecture China. They wouldn't be able to mock Russia if they didn't have the United States behind them. I don't think the U.S. really cares about the Baltic states, but that's a whole other topic. But they feel as if they've got the U.S. as their master, but also as the country that will fight for them, that will support them, that will fund them, that will keep their economy going. I mean, a lot of countries in Europe depend on the U.S. for their economy. I mean, all the military bases, it's all American funding.

#Pascal

I mean, I constantly think about or ponder about how to best make sense. What kind of framing is the one that gives most explanatory power to what's going on? And one thing is also, of course, that all of these elites in Europe are transatlanticists, right? BlackRock mercs, as you usually call them. I mean, these people know that whatever happens, they have jobs over there and whatnot, and the jobs within the network are actually much better than what they can get. Again, Kaja Kallas would be nowhere if it wasn't for the EU and all of these networks, so that they actually, I would believe, look at themselves as a team.

Whether the Americans agree with that or not is another question, but they look at it as if we're all together. And I wonder if that is a typically European problem, or if it is something more general, because we have other examples in history, you know. We would never ever have had a Georgian

nationalist lecturing the world about communism had it not been for the Soviet Union and Mr. Stalin going from Tbilisi to Moscow, right? So we have other examples in history, but do you think it's a particularly European thing?

#Alex Christoforou

I think it's not completely a European thing, but I think it is the ideology of the European elite, I believe. And I do think this ideology has become something more. It's morphed into almost a religious doctrine. And so, you know, if you have the likes of Kaja Kallas, you're going to demand 100% from her to be serving you, serving the empire, 100% subservience. That's what you demand. She's going to give it because it's what you said. She's not going to give 99%. She'll give 100%, knowing that whatever happens, whatever happens, she will be taken care of.

We see it with Annalena Baerbock, a professor at Columbia, a General Assembly President of the United Nations. She was a disaster, an absolute disaster as a foreign secretary, as a foreign minister. But she was 100% loyal to empire, 100% loyal to the globalists, to the point where she was even saying at events and conferences that, "I don't really care what the German people vote for. We're going to support Ukraine." That's loyalty. That's loyalty. That's what they want to hear. That's what they like. I mean, I remember leaders like—who was it in Austria? Sebastian Kurz?

#Pascal

Was it in Austria?

#Alex Christoforou

Yeah, he was part of the group. I mean, he was very globalist in his mindset, in his governing, but he wasn't 100% loyal. Every now and again, he would cause a ruckus. He would disagree. He would stray away from the official EU line, and they couldn't have it. They couldn't have it. So they had to get the scandal going with the Ukrainian model, whatever they cooked up, and they had that meeting somewhere in the Balearics, and whatever. They got rid of him and his party. That's simple. It wasn't that he wasn't committed to the EU or even a buddy with all the globalists, but he wasn't 100% loyal. What they like, they like the Macrons. They like the Merz. They like the Baerbocks. They like the Kallases. These are the people they want. And that's, I think, the prevailing mindset, ideology, religion that we now have in Europe, in the halls of Brussels.

#Pascal

I had a couple of people on my channel who went in very similar directions. And one of them, Nell Bonilla, she's really brilliant. And she made also this point that, look, this is what she calls the bunker state, where everything is then subsumed to security. But also these transnational elite networks that actually form very organically among themselves. And it's like, you know, they then tick in

exactly the same way, because anyone who doesn't goes out or is being kicked out or whatnot, and what you have left is just a homogeneous group that works in the same way.

And it is a transatlantic phenomenon because if you look at the Epstein files, the ones you don't find there, it's like, you don't find Africans, you don't really find a lot of Asians, no Japanese names in there, a couple of Saudis, whatnot, but that's about it. So it seems to be something civilizational, maybe even, because Iran, Russia, and so on, you know, we see now these blocs forming, and it seems this is just the one bloc over here that's actually really large.

#Alex Christoforou

Yeah, I mean, you know, I think it's one of the reasons why they hate Trump. It's not that Trump isn't for destroying Russia. He is. It's not that Trump doesn't want to defeat Putin. He does. It's not that Trump would not attack Iran. He will. He has. It's not that Trump doesn't want to give weapons to Ukraine. Believe me, if the United States was able to produce the Patriot missiles and had the missiles to send to Ukraine or to sell to Ukraine, they absolutely would. They just don't have it, and they can't produce it. But if they had it, they would. A thousand percent, Trump would do it. And if Trump was able to figure out a way to defeat Putin, he would absolutely be on board. But for the Europeans, it's not enough. They still hate Trump. And the reason they hate Trump is because Trump is not one of the group. He's not one of the gang.

He supports everything that—or he's told to support all the policies that the globalists have, and eventually he does support it, maybe in different ways. "I'm not going to give weapons. I'll sell weapons." But at the end of the day, it's weapons going to Ukraine, right? And Biden was—they like the Bidens. They like the Obamas because Trump also mocks them. Every now and again, he'll mock Macron. Every now and again, he'll talk about how he gets along with Putin, which they absolutely despise, or how he gets along with Xi Jinping, which they absolutely hate to hear from Trump. They like the Bidens. Biden saw them as peers. Trump sees them as vassals. They hate this because Trump exposes the fact that they are vassals, and they know they're vassals, and they're proud to be vassals, but they don't want someone telling the world that they're vassals. Biden was buddying around with them, and that's what they like.

#Pascal

But they're still happier playing along than trying to oppose it. I mean, Daddy Trump, one thing, the other one, the school kids sitting around the desk, and the only one who looks slightly pissed because she understood what was being done to her was Meloni. The others, Mr. Stubb, even with a MAGA cap. That's fascinating to me, that that kind of internal dynamic is even possible, because I don't think that 50 years ago, this kind of exposé of how power works would have been possible.

#Alex Christoforou

Yeah, I mean, they've understood that they don't have a choice. You know, we're going to have to kiss up to this man that we despise. We'll kiss up to him. So Stubb is going to sit there and smile, you know, take his notes. But believe me, just like the globalists are no different than the neocons, the first chance that they get to destroy Trump, they'll do it. They have no problem with that. They're fine with it. So I think that's the way they look at it. He's there. We opposed him in 2016, all of us—globalists, neocons, whatever, the Lindsey Grahams. All of us opposed him in 2016. It didn't work.

It made him stronger. So let's be sweet to him, at least. Let's just go with it. We're going to have to deal with him either way. And the result is no different than Biden at the end of the day. And I think that's how they view it. At the end of the day, they are getting what they generally want out of the U.S., with the exception of the weapons, because once again, the U.S. just doesn't have them. It's not that they don't want to give them. They don't have them.

#Pascal

And that's the other very important thing, is that as we're in 2026, it's just a different world from 1976. The United States can't produce things anymore. I mean, the system has been hollowed out. And this is why we talk about the decline of the unipolar moment and the rise of multipolarity. But before we go there, one more thing: what do you think it is that enables this system to always make sure that things fall in line? I mean, Trump said all the right things in his inauguration. I will never forget how he said, like, "This administration will not only be remembered for the wars we ended, but also for the wars we never got into." And of course, he did the opposite. But I believe he believed that at that moment. How is it? How does the system manage to get everybody in line, even the Melonis and so on, eventually?

#Alex Christoforou

What did Putin once say in an interview? The men in the black suits, eventually they find you, they sit you down, and they tell you how it's going to be. I believe that Trump, or any president that comes in, they'll say one thing. Eventually, they will sit that president down and they will tell him what the deal is.

#Pascal

And then he's going to have a choice to make, right?

#Alex Christoforou

Do I actually want to go up against this massive, powerful machine? Or do I just want to go along with it and, you know, I'll be fine when my term is over. I'll have my book deals. I'll be sitting on the board of Netflix. You know, whatever. I'll be rewarded on the other end.

#Pascal

But the machine must be—I mean, the machine is really very, very convincing. I mean, even Mr. Zelensky, elected on a peace ticket and scared to death back in February 2022, willing to go to a peace agreement with the Russians, and even he got turned around and perfectly put in line, right? But this is actually, to him, personally very dangerous. I mean, at this point, it wouldn't be weird if the Russians at some point said, like, okay, go on and out with it. But the system has a way of keeping even people like him in line.

#Alex Christoforou

They have tools, as Ursula said. Right. That's what she said about Meloni. Meloni was acting up as she was preparing to take over in Italy, and she was saying all of this nonsense about a sovereign Italy and about Italy being in charge of its own destiny and its own direction and confronting the EU globalists and the technocrats, aligning with Orbán. These are all the crazy stuff that Meloni was saying. And what did Ursula say in an interview when she was asked about the possibility of a Giorgia Meloni leading Italy? She said, "We have tools."

We have tools. She said, that's the thing. They have tools. And Ursula's maybe, like, at an upper, upper manager level. I don't think she's at the top, top level, but, you know, she's given the tools that she needs in order to take a Meloni and bring her in line. And they have a lot of tools. They have a lot. They even use their tools with the BRICS countries. They use their tools with BRICS countries as well. And we saw at Shanghai, we saw at the SCO, many BRICS countries falter.

#Pascal

Which one? How powerful, though, do you think that this group still is? Because on the one hand, the United States still is, well, the most militarized country on Earth, I would say, if you factor in everything, and the Europeans are fully on line. So it is still the largest war alliance, NATO and Europeans in general. But again, they're losing their industrial base. What do you think does this do now to the global system, actually?

#Alex Christoforou

Look, it's still very—the United States is a very powerful country. I believe the United States would be even more powerful if it actually worked for its people and disengaged from empire. I think it would benefit the American people a whole lot more. Everyone would be a lot happier in the United States if it disengaged from empire. But that's not going to happen. It's an empire. It's addicted to being an empire. And it still is a very powerful country. It is the superpower still. You know, China is there with it, and it's a peer rival. But the United States is still very, very, very strong, and it has advantages in certain things that China does not have.

For example, the media space and the information war. No one even comes close to U.S. dominance in that area, not even China. Inside of China, they control everything. But outside of China, they're not even close to where the U.S. is when it comes to controlling the information space. So the U.S. still can exert a lot of control and a lot of leverage over many countries. The dollar system is still there, but they're not going to give that up. Bessent at Treasury is making moves. There's a lot of talk about things that he might be cooking up with regards to the U.S. debt, with stablecoins connected to Treasuries.

There's all kinds of theories out there about how Bessent and how the U.S. will find a way to keep the dollar as the dominant reserve currency going forward for the next hundred years. But saying that, to look at the United States as an empire in decline, yes, but is it an empire that has been defeated? No. And it doesn't want to. It's not going to be defeated easily, even though I believe for the American people, it would be a blessing for the American people to have their government actually work for them and for their interests instead of spending God knows how many trillions in all of these ridiculous adventures which are not working out for them.

#Pascal

What I find so fascinating is that, you know, nobody actually wants to defeat the United States. The Russians don't want to defeat them. The Chinese don't want to. The Chinese just want development and to keep developing. The Russians, they actually have been looking desperately for the last 25 years for a constructive relationship.

#Alex Christoforou

It's like,

#Pascal

You're constantly being refused with your flowers there, and then constantly, like, slapped the flowers out of your hand. But there is this very strange kind of everybody's-against-us mentality in this bloc, isn't there? I wonder if that is real, because I think some of the leadership and so on are under that impression. But reality to me seems to speak a different language.

#Alex Christoforou

Yeah, I think if everything was in a perfect world, let's say, for the Chinese, for the Russians, for all of these big, powerful countries, for the BRICS countries, for India, in a perfect world, they would be partnered with the United States and they would be working together with one another. That's the ideal scenario. That's what they would like to have happen. And some of the countries, they can't let go of this ideal scenario, and they chase after it. But what we're seeing time and time again is that the current leadership of the United States, whether you're looking at the Bush era, the Clinton, the

Bush, the Obama, but even more so the Biden and the Trump, especially the Biden and the Trump, it's agreement-incapable. And I think countries are realizing this.

I think Russia has finally, finally realized this, or they're getting close to finally realizing this. I think China is kind of 50-50. Some days, it seems as if they've understood that you just can't get to an agreement with this administration. Other days, it seems like they're chasing after the U.S. to figure out a way to work together and manage this complicated world. It's going to be tough to figure out a way to get the U.S. to be a trusted partner in this global system that we have. I don't even know if it's possible, because how do you take empire and turn it into a country that says, "Okay, we're no longer an empire. Forget the 850 military bases. We're ready to work with you, China, Russia, India. What do we need to do?"

#Pascal

What do we need to do to keep the world safe and to keep things moving along? I wonder if that is possible from the institutional setup of the United States, because this agreement incapability is what got the United States the entire North American continent, right? This is what they did with the indigenous populations: make agreement, break it, war. Make agreement, break it, war, until you have everything. And then you go to Hawaii, you go to the Philippines. There, it then started changing. But I wonder if it's an institutional thing, that the United States will necessarily, even when it has the Jack Matlocks of the world and the George Kennans of the world working for them, in the end, 20 years later, it will all be broken promises. But I don't know whether that is a useful way of framing it.

#Alex Christoforou

Yeah, I think all of the leaders would like to see the U.S. cooperating with their countries to provide safety and stability. I think they're still imagining a time of Kennedy, I guess. For them, they're still thinking about a U.S. in the age of Camelot. And I think this is going to take a long, long time to move past this. Right. I mean, you know, and you have flickers of hope. There was hope. I remember when Clinton was elected. There was hope when Obama was elected. That was his mantra. That was his campaign: hope and change, right? Yes, we can. So, I mean, there's always—I remember when Obama was elected, everyone was excited all around the world. People were saying, "This is it. Finally, we're going to have a U.S. that's ready to work together with everybody to make this world what it should be." We just got more wars. It was more wars. Yeah. So, yeah.

#Pascal

Yeah, it's depressing then also to hear the other side, of course, saying that, look, if it wasn't the United States, it would be the others. And then all the others are saying, like, no, this is just not how we deal with things. Do you think that the way this is going actually is going to empower pretty soon, you know, Vladimir Putin—whatever happens, the man is in his 70s, and there will be a

succession within the next five years. And the way it goes right now, it seems to be that the Karaganovs of Russia are getting more support for their kind of approach that they would prescribe. Do you think that we are going to see that kind of shift, that the Europeans are going to lose their, you know, kind of protector in the Kremlin?

#Alex Christoforou

Yeah, I don't think it's going to be as hard-line as that. Yeah, yeah, maybe even a step down from a harder-line Medvedev, say a Lavrov level. But no doubt the successor—and Putin himself, but also the person that will succeed Putin—is going to continue down the path of BRICS, down the path of Eurasia, cooperating with China, deepening the alliance with China. We can call it an alliance. They don't like to call it an alliance, but for all intents and purposes, that's what it is. That's the important part of BRICS, is Russia and China, that cooperation. I mean, that's the foundation of Eurasia. Russia has all of the resources, a lot of the military. China is the superpower with the manufacturing, the technology. I think Russia will continue down that path, and it's going to be better off for it.

I think we're going to see a very powerful, better-off Russia by finally ditching Europe or having Europe ditch them. Unfortunately, what we're going to see in Europe is decades of humiliation and decades of trouble. I think Europe is going to be the big loser out of all of this. I even believe that the United States will come out of this okay. I mean, the U.S. is a big country. As you said, there are very smart, talented people in the United States. Eventually, it will find its way. When the dust settles and we get through this big change that we're going through, I think Europe is the big, big loser in all of this. And that's what's going to show in the next five or ten years.

#Pascal

I mean, the most dangerous thing is that actually Europe becomes the mega-Ukraine for the people who are working on this. That's a huge danger. But maybe just to wrap up also, what do you think will happen to us? Because what we are doing here, this podcasting and so on, depends actually on the First Amendment in the United States and the powers that be not cracking down on the information space, which, for all the good and bad, is still, you know, relatively open, relatively possible to say things. Yes, the Europeans are also working on sanctions and so on. Jacques Baud, Nathalie Yamb, Hüseyin Doğru. This is very dangerous to us personally. But on the other hand, if the crackdown against, like, media outlets, freedom of the media, came and YouTube was forced to change its policies, we would be kicked off overnight. Do you think that the open media system and social media system has a future, or is it also seriously in danger?

#Alex Christoforou

No, I think it has a future, and I think we owe that future to the First Amendment and to the United States and to the Constitution of the U.S., which goes back to what we've been saying in this podcast. This is why so many people around the world still hold out hope for the U.S. playing an

important position in this multipolar world that we are going to be entering. I mean, I don't see anything reversing this trend. I do think that at the end, multipolarity will be where we end up. It's going to be very bumpy. It's going to be very, very shaky and rocky, but eventually that is where we will be. And as long as the U.S. remains a key player, a powerful key player, and gets sensible, pragmatic leadership in government—it's had it in the past, can have it again—then I think we should be fine.

All of us in this space. But there's concern, once again, on the European side of things. The Europeans are going down a very dark path. There's increasing authoritarianism in Europe. They're on a very big power trip, all of these unelected officials. They're in a bubble. A lot of them are delusional. Europe is going to be a very scary place, I think, going forward. But, you know, I still believe in the First Amendment. I believe in freedom of speech and what the U.S. has given us with the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and all of these great things that the U.S. has given to the world, which is one of the reasons why they do dominate the information space, is because it is built on this foundation.

And it shouldn't be abused, just like the dollar should not have been abused. We said this many times on the Duran. The USD, fine, as reserve currency, no problem. No problem. And everyone was fine with it. But the minute you started abusing it with sanctions and now tariffs is when everything falls apart. Our hope was that when Trump came in the second term, our hope was that Trump would have said, "Sanctions are over. I declare today that the U.S. dollar is politically agnostic. It's not about sanctions. It's not about any of these things. It is the reserve currency, and it's not going to get involved in any of the geopolitics that are going on." That would have been the thing for Trump to say. Instead, he took sanctions and he turned them into another tool: tariffs. Tariffs are fine as long as they are clear.

#Alex Christoforou

And they're not used as a weapon. If Trump had said 5% tariffs across the board, I'm not picking on countries, I think everyone would have been fine with that. I don't think anyone would have complained.

#Pascal

Tariffs are a defensive tool for an economy. Once you start using them offensively, you're an idiot. Okay, fine. And you can do that only so long, and they've been overstressing that tool for way too long, just like the others. But, you know, channels like yours, Alex, help us to, you know, get very critical commentary to what's happening. And maybe this is also the point to just point out again: if you've been listening to this podcast in any other language than English, you might really want to go and subscribe to The Duran in Deutsch, in Français, in Español, in Italian, in Portuguese, or Russian.

Russian. So we have them. If you're listening to this in English and you just want to support, please do not subscribe, because it will kill the channels, actually, if you subscribe but then you don't listen. But if you're listening in another language, please do go. Alex, and also your colleague, Alexander Mercouris, you're doing fantastic work. Alex, is there something else that you would like to tell us, or is there another place where people should go and subscribe to you?

#Alex Christoforou

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#Pascal

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#Alex Christoforou

Very true.

#Pascal

Very true.

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Everybody, like and subscribe. Go to Substack as well. And I hope to talk to you again soon. Thank you so much. Absolutely.

#Alex Christoforou

Thank you. Thank you, Pascal.