

# EU Totalitarianism: Sanctions Are Only The Beginning

In 2014 and 2022, the EU initiated sanctions regimes against Russia. The lists of entities and individuals were originally supposed to target Russia's economic and political elites only. But since 2024, the list has been expanded to include "disinformation" and is being used to target journalists and academics even in EU and Schengen-state areas, like the German nationals Alina Lipp and Hüseyin Dogru, or my countrymen, Jacques Baud, and Nathalie Yamb. It's a dystopian reality but certainly not the first time something like this happens. To discuss the historical precedents I'm joined today again by Professor David Gibbs, a professor of history at Arizona State University. Links: For an interview with Professor Gibbs, see Sadiq S. Baht, "Trump-Zelenskyy spat — 'Under Trump 2.0, foreign policy will never be business as usual,'" TRT World, February 28, 2025, <https://www.trtworld.com/article/7d92bf6c71b3> Neutrality Studies substack: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com> (Opt in for Academic Section from your profile settings: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com/s/academic>) Goods Store: <https://neutralitystudies-shop.fourthwall.com> Timestamps: 00:00:00 Intro: EU Sanctions & The Return of McCarthyism 00:08:31 The Crucible: Witch Hunts and Ideological Shifts 00:17:53 Historical Origins: From the Philippines to J. Edgar Hoover 00:30:55 Mass Psychosis and The "Extra-Legal" Nature of Sanctions 00:43:00 Totalitarian Parallels: Soviet Union & The Fifth Column 00:47:38 The Vietnam Analogy: Losing Wars and Credibility Gaps 00:54:20 Political Instability and Anti-System Parties 01:00:04 Why is Japan Militarizing?

## #Pascal

In 2014 and 2022, the EU initiated sanctions regimes against Russia. The lists of entities and individuals were originally supposed to target Russia's economic and political elites only. But since 2024, the list has been expanded to include "disinformation" and is being used to target journalists and academics even in EU and Schengen area states, like the German nationals Alina Lipp and Hussein Dogru, or my countrymen Jacques Baud and Nathalie Jamb. It's a dystopian reality, but certainly not the first time something like this has happened. To discuss the historical precedents, I'm joined today again by Prof. David N. Gibbs, a professor of history at Arizona State University. David, welcome back.

## #David N. Gibbs

Thank you, thank you.

## #Pascal

Thank you for having me. Well, thank you for taking the time to do this, because you've actually looked at McCarthyism, and you have something to tell us about that and the parallels you're seeing between what happened in the United States in the '50s and '60s with the Red Scare, and where the European Union is today. Could you elaborate on that?

## **#David N. Gibbs**

Yes, I think what you have in McCarthyism is a kind of distinctively American variant of repression—of political repression. In America, we have very strong constitutional protections of civil liberties. The First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech and freedom of the press. The Fifth Amendment guarantees due process of law. And the Constitution has a particularly high status because it's a kind of revered document in American political culture, seen almost as mythical or even religious. Evangelical Christians look at it almost like the Bible. So it really has enormous influence. There have been some restrictions on the ability to throw people in prison just because others don't like their political views—that happens too in America—but it's relatively the exception.

I think McCarthyism, I would define broadly as a distinctive form of repression that involves intimidation and threats to your career or reputation, combined with mass surveillance. And this is its origin. I know you're in the Philippines now, so the origins of this are actually in the Philippines, in the American empire after the conquest in 1898. Well, before I discuss the deeper history, I just want to note that we're definitely seeing a resurgence of McCarthyism now, with a constant obsession with Russia—basically, Russian disinformation—and constantly accusing people of being Russian dupes or Russian agents, or agents of disinformation, damaging their reputation in a way that's almost impossible to refute. How do you prove that you're not a Russian agent? You can't do that.

So the enormous damage done to your reputation and credibility by merely accusing you of this—however falsely—is very effective, and it's being used widely both in Europe and in the United States. And again, one of America's distinctive contributions to world history is this new technique of McCarthyism: the use of intimidation and essentially forms of defamation as the main method through which disturbing or threatening viewpoints are dealt with. Again, one way of dealing with viewpoints you don't like is to refute them—show they're wrong, give evidence they're wrong—and you can argue back and forth. There's accountability there. But the whole idea of McCarthyism is to evade accountability and do it through subtle means that are essentially irrefutable and not susceptible to logic or evidence.

## **#Pascal**

So basic repression that then leads straight into, basically, the criminalization—although we need to be careful here, because the legal aspects of something being criminal and what's actually going on in the EU, and what McCarthyism is, are separate concepts. But just to make it clear, you're saying

that in the United States at the moment there's also a climate of repression, although probably—massive. Massive.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

Yeah. Well, I mean, I think there are two things. First of all, it must be said that Trump is using, shall we say, old-fashioned pre-McCarthyite techniques of repression—rounding people up and throwing them out of the country because you don't like their political views, or just don't like them generally. That's being done. That's completely unconstitutional. I'm amazed he's been getting away with it. You know, when the Fifth Amendment, by the way, says nobody shall be deprived of due process of law, it doesn't restrict that to citizens.

## **#Pascal**

Yeah, I mean, he establishes that in the way he interprets the Constitution. He says the Constitution only applies to U.S. citizens, period. So everybody else, he claims, is outside its protection. The Constitution doesn't say that. Do we already have a verdict on this from the Supreme Court? Because actually, these cases should be taken to the Supreme Court, right?

## **#David N. Gibbs**

It should be, yes. It tends to take a long time to wind its way through the court system. They should really expedite something like this, but they haven't—at least not fully. So at some point, I'm sure it'll be declared unconstitutional, but that could take some time. And that's one aspect. But another aspect, which I think is much more pure McCarthyism, is the way the Democrats are acting—accusing anybody, really. I mean, this is both parties, but mostly the Democrats—basically accusing anyone who dissents on any aspect of the Russia issue, you know, the "Russian threat" as they see it. Anybody who dissents on any aspect of U.S. aid to Ukraine is a Russian agent. And the Democrats have also used that, I think, against Donald Trump, ironically, and have constantly accused him of being a Russian agent.

That was true all along. I mean, in 2016, when Hillary Clinton debated Donald Trump, she said, "You're a puppet of Putin." That's pure McCarthyism—100% McCarthyism. It's also obviously false, because most of what Trump has done has been very harmful to Russia. So the idea that he's a puppet of Putin is manifestly false, but the Democrats still cling to it. There's a very popular television show host—I think she's not really that well known in Europe or Asia, but she's widely viewed here—her name is Rachel Maddow. And she constantly talks, it seems almost 24 hours a day, about the Russian threat and whether Donald Trump is an agent of Russia. Again, that's McCarthyism. So you have McCarthyism going—it's everywhere now.

And evidently it's in Europe as well. And I'd like to say, I mean, at first I— In law, there's the idea of equipoise, that basically both sides—neither side—comes off looking very good here. Let's put it that

way. Both are committed to the use of repression, essentially non-democratic means to get their way. And that includes opponents of Trump who are using this McCarthyite cudgel as a way of structuring debate and blocking any real, serious, adult discussion of what's going on in Ukraine right now. Oh, you know, also, by the way—very important—that's happening widely with regard to the Middle East. Anybody who criticizes Israel faces major threats of being kicked out of school or losing their job. I mean, that's being done on a wide scale.

## **#Pascal**

But if you accuse Donald Trump of being a puppet of Netanyahu, then you're out of polite discourse, and you'll be called an anti-Semite—an anti-Semitism charge. It's quite amazing, you know, that when actual foreign leaders have influence—not control, but there clearly is influence, there clearly is a lobby—that one is exempt from McCarthyite accusations, right? The real McCarthyism is always about a boogeyman, about something that's clearly not going on.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

A boogeyman, that's right. The whole idea of McCarthyism is basically wild exaggerations or fabrications about a boogeyman. So clearly, Putin has been reduced to a boogeyman. And anti-Semitism is being used in the most frivolous and preposterous ways. Being Jewish in no way guarantees that you won't be accused of that. That's not a shield at all. A lot of the demonstrators on campus against Israel's policies in Gaza have been Jewish, and that hasn't protected them from retaliation.

## **#Pascal**

What fascinates me—in the negative sense, I really hate that this is happening—is that all of this is so well understood. I remember 20 years ago in my English classes in high school, we read this wonderful book called *\*The Crucible\**. I think it's by a guy named Miller, right? It's a very famous book written during McCarthyism, the first McCarthyism in the 1950s, about the witch hunts in Salem in the 1690s or thereabouts. This is so well documented and understood, and the processes are the same, and now it's repeating again. It's like 400 or 500 years of the same mechanisms—designating some groups of people as boogeymen and then as agents of Satan. The witches were agents of Satan, right? In the '50s, they were agents of the Soviets, and now they're agents of Putin. It works in the same psychological way, and even though we teach this stuff at universities and schools and so on, we're not getting out of it.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

What you're seeing is also an ideological switcheroo—or, as George Galloway put it, a kind of political cross-dressing—in which McCarthyism had been confined pretty much to the political right, mostly the Republican Party. And now it seems to be more common in the Democratic Party. Even

much of the activist left is falling into line here. I have friends who are basically lefty friends, and they condemn McCarthyism and talk about how horrible it is. And then they'll say, "Yeah, but Donald Trump clearly is working for Russia." They don't realize how—there was a group called the John Birch Society, which, after McCarthy fell from favor, was an extreme right-wing group funded, I think, by industrialist oil men in Texas. There was a lot of business support, but in the extreme ultra-right, it was considered fringe.

It was very conspiracy-minded and accused everybody of being a communist and an agent of Russia. So much of what the Democratic Party is saying today is almost exactly what the John Birch Society was saying in an earlier period during the Cold War. And they don't even realize how discrediting that is to them, and how strong the parallel is. Now we have a revival of what had been extreme right-wing conspiracy theorizing, now emerging on the political left—both in the Democratic Party and the activist left in the United States. I find that extraordinary. Astonishing, really. And it's happening in Europe too, including the mainstream left. The Socialist Party of France, I gather, is fully behind this. The Labour Party of Britain is completely behind this. The Social Democrats in Germany. So, am I wrong about that? You know the European situation better than I do, I think.

## **#Pascal**

No, no, you're right about that. Although I'd qualify it by saying that in Labour, it took quite a few purges to get to the point where they were supportive. I mean, you had the Corbynites, right? And they were completely exiled. But that purge was successful. And now Labour is firmly behind all of this anti-Russian and McCarthyite approach to controlling society. Because the whole point is, you need to keep your own society clean of these subversive counter-narratives to what's happening. And it seems to me that the more the war is being lost in Ukraine, the worse things get, and the more reality asserts itself, the harder the crackdown becomes. Do you see any parallels between this and McCarthyism?

## **#David N. Gibbs**

McCarthyism was different in that respect, in the sense that anti-communism was firmly in the saddle in the early '50s. I mean, Truman was extremely unpopular, but the anti-communist idea was completely hegemonic—and that was true in both parties. What you're seeing in Europe now is desperation, reflected in a number of things. First of all, I think anybody who looks carefully can see that Russia is going to win the war, and there's no way around that at this point. And I think people are figuring that out and getting desperate. But something else they're desperate about is the unpopularity of the major leaders of Europe, which is almost historically unprecedented.

I mean, in the most extreme case, Macron—who, according to a recent poll, is down to about 11%. Eleven percent of the French people support their president. That's incredible. Starmer is not far behind, and Scholz isn't far behind either. They're well on their way to being in Macron-land, which is universally despised by their own people. And I think that gives them a certain desperation. They'

re so heavily committed to this war that they feel they can't back out now. I mean, imagine—they've spent hundreds of billions of dollars on a war, they've lowered living standards, and in Germany they've begun deindustrializing the country in a way that's probably irreversible. And then you lose the war. How does that look? Not great. Not great.

And so I think now there's a certain desperation and a need to use heavy-handed methods—legally, and certainly profoundly undemocratic methods—because they don't know what else to do. At least that's the way it looks to me. In the case of the United States, I think the Democratic Party is still in a state of disbelief that Trump won. It's really amazing. Trump has been dominating American politics for a decade now—fully a decade—and the Democrats don't have a clue as to what went wrong. Not a clue. And they certainly don't think they did anything wrong. They haven't changed anything. You'd think that a failure like they experienced in 2016, and then again recently, would result in some housecleaning and a loss of confidence in the leadership.

But nothing like that happened. There was no soul-searching about what we did wrong—nothing like that. Instead, it's a boogeyman: it's all Putin's fault. Putin engineered the whole thing, and that's why we have this problem now. So I think there's a certain desperation among the Democrats and much of the political establishment, which still hasn't reconciled itself to the idea that there's no going back to what it was like pre-Trump. Trump has transformed American politics—mostly in an ugly way, but transformed it all the same. And I think, in that desperation, you get this—it's amazing, highly educated people talking like this—but that's exactly what's happening. They're saying it's all due to Putin. That's why. I hear that all the time. Really?

## **#Pascal**

Because—I mean, in Japan, you know, where I am, it's not that big a topic, right? These discussions about what's driving the war. So I'm not that exposed to this kind of faculty talk, let's say. But how do we make sense of that? Because there are important arguments from some analysts—most importantly, probably Brian Berletic—who say, look, this is all part of how the United States as a system works. It's the uniparty. You have different flavors of the same direction, or different lanes of the same direction, but it's still the same direction, and it's a direction geared toward maintaining constant warfare, for one reason or another. And it's warfare where things are going. At the moment, it could be that the war is being expanded from Ukraine into Europe.

So gearing up Europe and making Europe ready—massaging it in—that the war is inevitable with Russia. And if you listen to the Europeans, that's what it sounds like from their mouths. They're actually saying, "We must get ready." Some NATO commander the other day said, you know, preemptive strikes against Russia should now be considered defensive in nature. It's getting insane. It's like the drumbeats, and the people in Brussels are still cheering this on. They're saying, "Yes, that's what we need to do. We need to get ready." And the Germans now speak about

\*Kriegstüchtigkeit\*—being ready for war, being able, the ability to wage war. This would have been unthinkable even just four years ago, because it's so reminiscent of the darkest times of Germany in the last century, right? I think also—yeah, I'm sorry, go ahead.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

I was going to say that I do remember—I mean, I've been around for a while. I remember during the Cold War and even during the '90s, we Americans, those of us who could read foreign languages, would try to get our hands on European newspapers. I'd read French, I'd read \*Le Monde\*, I'd read the British press. It was much better than the American press because they reported all sorts of things you wouldn't see in the U.S. media. It was much more critical of U.S. policy and covered a wider range of issues. I remember during the reign of the Shah in the '70s, if you wanted to read about how unpopular the Shah was, about how he used torture against his own people, you had to read \*Le Monde\*, because that's where it was being reported. Not true anymore. The European press is terrible now—at least as bad, if not worse, than the American press.

## **#Pascal**

The European press is now downstream from the New York Times. I mean, they get the New York Times every morning and then write what those articles say. It's all downstream—Switzerland, etc., and so on. It's very well integrated now. But one of the things I remember about McCarthyism, and one of the main themes of this novel—and the play, it's actually a stage play—\*The Crucible\*, is that it's essentially a mass psychosis. Of course, there are no witches, right? Of course, there are no people who do sorcery or are connected to the devil. But once everybody starts believing it, you start hanging people, right? Literally doing the witch hunts. So it's a mass psychosis that then spreads and spreads and spreads. Did we see that in McCarthyism? And at what point did that run itself out?

## **#David N. Gibbs**

Well, a little bit. I mean, if you don't mind, I'll go into a little bit of history here. The story really begins in the Philippines, with U.S. colonialism—the conquest of the Philippines. And, you know, after mass pacification, I think we killed about 200,000 Filipinos in the process by the early 20th century. The United States, consistent with its democratic traditions—or what it thought were its democratic traditions—began allowing some degree of political organization and activity by the Filipinos themselves, I guess in preparation for a distant, eventual independence, which I think came in 1946.

## **#Pascal**

And at the same time—I'm sorry, do you want to add something? Well, I mean, it's just great.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

Yeah, no, that's true. There was a tremendously anti-immigrant element here, especially toward Asians, based on racial—racist—considerations. But in any case, at the same time as you had this move toward political openness in the Philippines, U.S. Army intelligence began a mass surveillance project. It was the brainchild of an obscure figure named Ralph Van Deman, who was a mid-ranking officer and later achieved the rank of major general. He later became a major advisor to McCarthyism in the United States. But he was a very talented figure. I don't like to make value judgments, as I usually try not to, but I'll do so here: he was one of those people who used all of his talents to make the world a worse place.

What he did was establish a series of—well, you know, they didn't have computers in those days—so he used index cards, like the ones libraries were starting to use to catalog books. He began compiling surveillance information about the Filipino elite, with "elite" defined very broadly—basically anyone who had a secondary school education. He started gathering whatever compromising information he could about them, in terms of their sex lives or financial activities, and then began blackmailing them. In doing so, he would ask for other names, other incriminating information about their friends, thus expanding the list.

And he had a huge list—thousands and thousands of names. He just went on and on. It became a kind of cancerous thing, in that different factions of U.S. military intelligence didn't like each other and started keeping tabs on one another, using the same techniques against each other. Basically, when he went back to the United States, the bottom line was that, if you looked at it superficially, it seemed like the U.S. was democratizing the country. But behind the scenes, Army intelligence was pulling the strings, you might say, through intimidation and blackmail. And that's the origin of modern McCarthyism right there. He went back—I'm sorry, did you want to add something to that?

## **#Pascal**

No, it's just fascinating, right? If you want to pretend to have a democracy but still call the shots, then I guess this is what you have to do. You need to make sure the people who aren't on board are somewhere else—tucked away on a list.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

Exactly. You have to have the pretense of democracy—or at least the forms of democracy—but make sure people say the right thing. And they'd better say the right thing if you have information on them. Um, so it also indicates that you can't really have an empire and a democracy at the same time. Because Ralph Van Damon went home to the United States, and then he became a bitterly reactionary figure—anti-leftist, anti-communist, and so on. He began compiling information on



leftists in the United States. He came back, I believe, shortly before World War I, and after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, the Justice Department, at the direction of President Wilson, began rounding up radicals of all sorts, basically.

Not just communists, but anybody who was a radical. Eugene V. Debs, head of the Socialist Party, was a major public figure. He received about a million votes in the last election. He was arrested for no reason other than that he opposed the war and was put in prison for two and a half years. He actually ran for president in 1920 from his prison cell and won a million votes from there. The person really in charge of this was a 24-year-old named J. Edgar Hoover, who was put in charge of the Bureau of Investigation—later the Federal Bureau of Investigation—and basically supercharged it.

The person who was helping him was Ralph Van Deman, who basically turned over his whole system of using index cards to compile information. People were organizing them elaborately. This was easy for J. Edgar Hoover because, in high school, he'd worked at the Library of Congress, which was indexing its books, so he understood the idea. He began compiling, and you started getting what you might call extra-constitutional arrests. All these arrests were unconstitutional—later declared unconstitutional. You can't arrest people based on speech; that's illegal under the First Amendment to the Constitution. But they did it anyway, and later it was declared unconstitutional.

J. Edgar Hoover was painstakingly compiling files on everybody. He began doing this obsessively, particularly focusing on people's sexual lives. He was very likely a closeted homosexual who hated homosexuality almost as much as he hated communism and socialism. He loved collecting information about people's private lives—not only men, but also women. There was a general strike in Seattle that was quite radical in character. The way he broke it was by blackmailing the wife of the person leading it; she was having an affair. He told her, "I'll destroy your reputation unless you give me all the information I want," and he used that to break the strike. Intimidation was how it was done.

And that became really—Joseph McCarthy was almost a secondary figure in this. It was J. Edgar Hoover and Ralph Van Deman who were really at the heart of what became McCarthyism. In any case, when World War II was over, the FBI had grown into this enormous organization fighting German spies, and J. Edgar Hoover was very reluctant to let go of the tremendous number of agents and the funding he'd gotten. So he eagerly climbed aboard the anti-communist effort. He began compiling information on communists and then turned on them. Presidents were terrified of him, by the way, because it was widely believed that he had damaging information on every president, and so they didn't want to interfere with his activities.

## **#Pascal**

It wasn't Epstein who invented the idea of keeping lists of dirt on people. Sorry, that's just a side note.

## #David N. Gibbs

Well, Epstein—one of the reasons I think people are suspicious of him—let me say, I don't know very much about Epstein. I have no idea whether he worked for intelligence or not. But one reason people suspect he might have been connected to Mossad, the CIA, MI6, or maybe all three—who knows—is that he seemed to operate the way intelligence officers often do. Basically, you provide attractive women—in this case, girls, underage girls—have famous people sleep with them, then photograph them doing it so you can blackmail them afterward. That's a classic intelligence technique.

But in any case, the American left was very powerful after World War II. This was really the only time the left had real power. And I think one of the reasons you had the Cold War—not the only one, but one of them—was that it provided an excuse and justification to smash and destroy the left, which they did. The Communist Party was very popular. There were other parties, too. And the whole idea was basically that J. Edgar Hoover helped destroy them. He did it through the classic method: he acquired information on them, got them fired from their jobs for any kind of leftist activity. And, of course, it metastasized. As it metastasized, he began using it not only against leftists.

But people he didn't like in the administration—in the Truman administration—he began claiming it was filled with communists. He started intimidating Dean Acheson, one of the architects of the Cold War and of anti-communist policy. And then along came Joseph McCarthy. McCarthy was elected senator from Wisconsin in 1946. He had no significant legislative record and no real interest in anti-communism, actually. The way it began was that in 1950 he was facing re-election and didn't have much of a record. So he met with a group of friends who were professors at Georgetown University, a very conservative Catholic university.

And I attended Georgetown, by the way, so I remember it was very, very right-wing. It was a bit creepy, actually. He was having dinner with his friends at Georgetown and said, "I don't really have an issue. What could be an issue?" And they suggested anti-communism. Basically, they said, "You know, the government's filled with communists." And, you know, there were spies—there were Soviet spies—but they'd all been cleaned out, prosecuted, and so on. By 1950, there was nobody left. So he began saying, "You know, the major institutions—the State Department—is filled with communists."

Then the Army was filled with communists. The CIA privately considered saying there were all sorts of communists, and so on. And he—you know, major architects of the Cold War were accused of being communists, as I said. And he went around denouncing them. He made it all up. In private, he admitted he made it all up. He began staging events, saying, "I have in my hand a list of communists in the State Department." He kept changing the number of communists randomly; he just forgot what the real number was. Biographies of him note that he was known to just randomly make things up constantly, but it had the effect of mass intimidation.

It affected not only government, but also academia, which was purged. Hollywood was purged of scriptwriters. Journalism was purged. There were purges going on all over the place, and it transformed American politics. You look at the 1950s—it was a quiet decade where people were afraid to say anything. It was a boring decade in a lot of ways because dissent was almost illegal. It wasn't illegal technically, but if you had dissented, you could be called a communist. Right. And you'd lose your job, you'd lose your reputation—that was the end of that. But it's worth noting, there was a very interesting TV series in the 1950s, the original \*Twilight Zone\* with Rod Serling.

And it's interesting because Rod Serling was someone who really wanted to make TV a launching point for serious discussions about issues like war and peace. He'd seen heavy combat in the Pacific. He was very anti-war, very concerned about nuclear war, and worried about the lynching of Black people in the South. But he couldn't discuss these things—because of the repression, you couldn't talk seriously about anything; you had to keep your mouth shut. So what he did instead was very clever. If you watch it, it's very clever. He told stories about aliens from outer space, monsters, ghosts, and goblins, and it was always a metaphor for serious political issues. Often, McCarthyism was being discussed in this context.

## **#Pascal**

Is that the guy with the signature line, "Good night, and good luck"?

## **#David N. Gibbs**

No, that's Murrow. He was a journalist. No, Serling was somebody else. But it's worth watching as a kind of documentation of culture in an era of repression—which is what the 1950s was.

## **#Pascal**

Yeah, you know, the thing that strikes me is that we see these patterns time and again. So if we take that one as a pattern, then what we're seeing in Europe right now is probably only the beginning. It's probably an early stage, because the Putinists are currently few and far between in civil society, right? And you've got to take them out—Jagbo and Yam and so on—for basically anything. It has nothing to do with Putin, especially Nathalie Yam. She's African, you know, an anti-neocolonialist. We've got others like that. But now, take this—you weaponize it, you use it against these people, and you ride the mass-hysteria wave while you foster it.

And then the next stage would be to say, like, oh, we've got more of them than we thought. They're also within the administration, they're also within the military. We need to do the purges, right? So it grows, it spreads, it metastasizes. And in a sense, you know, even the French Revolution, at the end, started cracking down on its own people—on its own children, right? It's kind of the way these things go. I still don't know if I should think of it as a mass psychosis or as a tool of power and dominance. Probably it's both at the same time. I'd say it's both.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

I think one of the problems we have in Europe—and in the United States as well, actually—is that there was a tremendous need to use propaganda to sell the war. The problem is, I think the elites began to believe their own propaganda. I think that's what's going on here. That's what I'm seeing. It does seem to have almost a kind of religious zeal among people who really ought to know better. I do think the next shoe to drop could be if we have a recession. Things could get very ugly in the streets, especially in a place like France, which has a long tradition of street riots against policies that are bad for living standards.

And so, if there's a downturn in the economy, I would expect politics to move from the parliaments to the streets very quickly, right? Especially when you have people who have no public credibility. I should add, by the way, that in general there's always been a lot of popular resentment in Europe against the European Commission as a basically, fundamentally undemocratic institution. It's always been undemocratic. And here it is, you know, cracking down on people as if they were witches. I suspect, in due course, this could cause a lot of social disorder.

## **#Pascal**

This is probably one of the few points where I don't completely understand that charge, because the Commission is elected in the same way any government in a parliamentary democracy is elected. It's chosen by the people who get elected to parliament. So the parliamentarians then choose the head of the government, right? And that's very common in Europe. So that's basically the only point where I'd say the charge of not being elected is maybe a bit overblown. Although it's true they didn't stand for a popular election, that's just not how Europe works.

And it doesn't make it less democratic, I think. But of course, the problem is that these people are then cracking down very, very hard on individuals and making these dystopian kinds of policies. And actually, what we're seeing is a power grab by the European Union—power taken away from the member states and put into the hands of Brussels, without due process, by people who were put there through parliamentarians who have the support of, like, about 30–35 percent of Europeans who even bother to vote in EU elections. So there is definitely a deficit, definitely... um, but please—

## **#David N. Gibbs**

Well, what I'm seeing is basically that, you know, they may very well be. Thank you for correcting me. The European tradition is different on this, I understand. Nevertheless, my sense is that on the political fringes you're getting a kind of populist resentment. I mean, they had it in Britain—Brexit in Britain. There's a populist resentment for a number of reasons. One is just nationalism, but also it's seen as an instrument of neoliberalism, which it is. And I think now it's also an instrument of war. So you have people like Meritz openly talking about how we have to lower living standards.

It's going to come from living standards. You have Macron talking about how we have to raise the retirement age. And these things are not popular. They've never been popular, and they shouldn't be popular. Why would people consent to having their living standards lowered? So I think they're really playing with fire here, and I think there's a realization of that. I think that's why you're seeing a certain desperation on their part, resorting to these extraordinary measures we're talking about today. That's how I would see it.

## **#Pascal**

How about the parallels to this extra-legal nature of what's happening? Because in the EU, these sanctions are clearly—even by the European Commission—not framed as legal measures. They're not framed as punishments. The EU says on its homepage, where it explains the sanctions, that these are not punitive; they're meant as a tool of education to correct the behavior of the sanctioned people. So that's why it's not a legal action. It's an educational—no, what's the word?—a disciplinary action, because these people didn't do anything illegal. They didn't. Everything they do is perfectly fine, fair and square, but it now results in something that is a severe punishment while not being framed as such.

That's why I think these cases have to be thrown out by the European Court of Justice. But of course, you invert the logic, right? It's not "innocent until proven guilty"—it's "guilty until they manage to prove their innocence." And proving innocence is extremely difficult, because as soon as the Commission alters one word in the little description in that stupid database, the case has to start anew. The European Court of Justice will consider it a new reason for the sanction. So, I mean, you just create this very, very horrible bureaucratic monster that then cracks down on individuals. Do we have parallels to that in McCarthyism?

## **#David N. Gibbs**

Well, I was going to say that what you're describing there—the bizarre kind of situation you're talking about—would be difficult to do in the United States. The American situation would be different. The reason is, once again, the Fifth Amendment gives robust protections against that sort of thing. It would be very difficult. Not impossible—it's been done—but much more difficult to do in the American context, given the strong reverence for the Constitution in the United States. A much more typical way it would happen here, I'd guess, would be something like this: there'd be a massive public campaign to denounce those people as agents of Putin. You'd start seeing stories in the press about rumors of a secret bank account where they're supposedly getting money from Putin—without any proof, of course.

And that's how it would be done. The reputations would be destroyed. There would also be efforts to have the intelligence services work with Internet companies to remove or restrict them on social media. That's been done as well in this country. In other words, the government can't itself remove things from the Internet, but it can pressure and work closely with Internet companies, advise them

what to do, and then they'll do it for them. The constitutionality of that is open to question, but I don't think the courts have yet blocked it, because it's not the government that's doing it—it's the private sector. So I think there are roundabout ways they would do it in the United States, but the sort of extreme heavy-handedness you're describing is unlikely to happen here.

## **#Pascal**

Okay. I mean, that's really one of the huge benefits of the U.S. Constitution—that some of the fundamentals are actually written into it. The problem then, of course, in the U.S. case is always, who does it apply to, right? I mean, the entire problem with... well, slavery was only abolished after the Civil War, in '64, right? So you had this whole stretch of time when it was believed that, oh no, no, this group doesn't actually belong to those the Constitution applies to. It's a question of applicability. For the Europeans, that's not the issue. It's that there are no such fundamental legal or constitutional safeguards. There's the jargon about it, but the people who are using the jargon are now the ones doing the cracking down. It's really quite extraordinary to me.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

Well, again, I think what you're getting in Europe is a very clear case where the national security threat they're facing from Russia is so extreme, the imminence of war so clear, that they say, "We can't have fifth columnists—and we have fifth columnists here. We have to take extraordinary measures. Extraordinary times require extraordinary measures." I suppose that's how they would justify it to themselves. To some extent, I think that's probably how they justify it publicly, too.

## **#Pascal**

Probably, but I mean, if you look at the concrete cases—Nathalie Jamp or Hussein Dogru—Hussein Dogru, it's very clear. He's sanctioned for his advocacy of the Palestinian cause, and Nathalie Jamp for French anti-neocolonialism. And it's utterly clear that the people who put them there must very consciously understand that what they're doing is just finding an excuse to punish people. So the people doing it are probably not under this mass psychosis, but the general public that then goes like, "Actually, not bad."

And we see that in Switzerland too, where people are now discussing whether our most outspoken publicist—his name is Roger Köppel, he runs the \*Weltwoche\* magazine—might be at risk of being sanctioned by the EU. Last week, that was actually discussed. And you see these comments by other journalists in Switzerland and Germany who say, you know, "Well, it would serve him right, because he's such a Putin apologist." It becomes discourse, right? It becomes sayable, it becomes discussable, and therefore it's kind of real in the social world.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

That's where you get the McCarthyism coming in, because it's intimidation. It's instructive, shall we say. And people think, if they did it to Jacques Baud, what's to stop them from doing it to me, right? And if you value your career—if you value the paycheck you get from your career, especially if you have a family—that may be very compelling. The journalist from \*Weltwoche\*, I guess, the one you mentioned, probably doesn't want to lose his job, which I assume is a possibility under the circumstances.

## **#Pascal**

Luckily, he's one of the owners—I mean, he's the owner of the entire magazine. So he has some sort of protection, and he's outspoken. He's like Switzerland's... imagine him a bit like Switzerland's—what's his name—Stimo Hirsch? No, the U.S... ah, Tucker Carlson. He's like the Swiss Tucker Carlson, that type of personality. So he certainly won't shut up. It just makes his point that the EU is a draconian monster. He's also a former parliamentarian in Switzerland. But the point still is, it all flows into each other, doesn't it? This punishment regime and then the kind of semi-public acceptability of it—even if just 20 or 30 percent think this is fine and 70 percent reject it—you still have a public discourse about it, and therefore it becomes part of how society works. And I don't know, there are references also to the Soviet Union, where the repressive mechanisms were very clearly understood, weren't they?

## **#David N. Gibbs**

Well, they were. Obviously, a lot of what you're describing is very totalitarian, what's going on here. I think one of the things that has been useful from the standpoint of European and American elites is that what they've done in Ukraine—the whole Ukraine war—just in purely technical terms, has been, from the Western standpoint, incompetent. They started a war they couldn't win. Now they're losing it, and they don't know what to do. They're incompetent—except for one thing: they've run the propaganda campaign extremely well, I have to say. That was done with great confidence, very, very well. And the public has mostly been brought on board with this, as you've noted. And clearly, if there's this terrible national security threat—totally unprovoked by the West, of course—then you can't have fifth columnists, people who are threats to national security.

And so it creates this sort of paranoia—this internal paranoia, this obsession with traitors and so on—that you're seeing now. One other thing I'd mention, by the way, in addition to the EU, is George Galloway, of course, who's something of a gadfly. He was on the extreme left of the Labour Party, was kicked out of the Labour Party, and now he's just kind of... he's an anti-war figure, very much an anti-war figure, with supporters on both the left and the right. And, you know, he was basically detained at Gatwick Airport, and I believe he's fled the country because he's worried about being arrested or just not being allowed to travel. So you're getting a very similar treatment of George Galloway outside the EU as well.

## **#Pascal**

No, I mean, just to make it clear, we're at the point where people need to think about leaving the European Union and the UK. I mean, Europe at this point—if you're a serious dissenting voice—is not safe for you anymore. So people are thinking about this actively, and I'm glad I'm living in Japan because it gives me... it doesn't give me perfect protection, but it makes planning for contingencies a little bit more creative. I have a little bit more leeway, and actually Japan is not as on board with all of this as the others are—as the Europeans are. But seriously, we are at that point. And now the other side might say, "Oh, you're exaggerating. Come on, we're a democracy and everything is fine." It's like, no, no, my friends, it's not fine. This is not fine. The very people who tell us that everything is fine and that they're protecting us—they're doing so by cracking down.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

A big question I have is, basically, at some point within the next few months it'll be obvious that Russia's winning the war. At some point, Ukraine will start to crack—the army will start to crack. I'm surprised they've held up as long as they have, and they've certainly been fighting very tenaciously, more so than I would have expected. But at some point, if you have this massive advantage in artillery and drones, as Russia clearly does, eventually the other army is going to crack. I mean, eventually the Confederacy cracked in the United States, the Wehrmacht cracked in Germany—it happens. I think that's coming.

And when that happens, I think the European elites and the American elites will have a lot of explaining to do to their populations. That's going to be very awkward for them. Again, this could get very ugly if there's a recession—things could get very ugly indeed. People will start asking, "Gee, I thought we were winning the war. I thought Putin was about to be overthrown. I thought the Russian economy was about to implode." And when all of that proves false and people realize they've been lied to, I suspect it's going to get very interesting. I think that's exactly what the European elites are afraid of, and that's why they're lashing out.

## **#Pascal**

Yeah, but you're already seeing how this externalization of all that incompetence is happening—with the talk about how China saved Russia, how everybody under the sun, including the North Koreans, supposedly saved Russia. And then, vice versa, of course, how the resolve of Ukraine was undermined by not giving them enough, by not doing enough, by having too many Putin apologists who block further aid. And that's why we're losing. I mean, in a sense, it's as natural as war itself—that on the home front, they crack down on these dissenting voices. In a way, it's very logical that this is happening.

## **#David N. Gibbs**



Well, you know, everything you said is true, but there could be some limits to it. The model I'm thinking of is Vietnam. I'm just old enough to remember Vietnam, and what I remember is that pretty much everybody in the United States supported the war. Everybody believed the lies until it was clearly being lost. Then Daniel Ellsberg got the Pentagon Papers, which showed everything was based on a pack of lies. And you had a real collapse of public confidence in the government—in all its institutions. Not just the presidents, Johnson and Nixon, but the presidency itself, the CIA, the FBI, the military—all of them suffered a collapse of public confidence.

The “credibility gap,” it was called—it even had a name. And a whole generation of foreign policymakers couldn't get jobs. They were despised by the public; nobody wanted to talk to them. Some of them, like Robert McNamara, elaborately apologized—effusively apologized. And I'm wondering if something like that could happen here with the Ukraine war—that this could be such a colossal disaster. Once it's clear that it's not playing out the way the elites said it would, people could start realizing, “I've been lied to, just like we were lied to in Vietnam.” And that could lead to a collapse of public confidence in institutions, which are already very weak, as I said.

And again, Vietnam took place, fortunately for the elites, at a time when the economy was growing rapidly. That's not happening now, and so that cushion won't be there. I'm just wondering if we could be in for some political instability in Europe. In the United States, we already have political instability. I suspect that in the United States we're on the verge of some kind of violence. There are a lot of guns here, including a lot of automatic weapons—people shouldn't ever forget that detail. So things could get violent here in a way they wouldn't in Europe. But in Europe, they could nevertheless have mass street demonstrations, as France has had repeatedly. I don't know—maybe I'm reading too much into it. The scenario I'm presenting—what's your take on it?

## **#Pascal**

No, it's just that we're all trying to make sense of this. And of course, looking to history and to these cases makes good sense. As historians, we know that each case works out differently, but there are certain parallels to others. The thing I'm worried about is that something like Vietnam—in the sense that the Vietnam War led internally to a kind of mea culpa moment and the realization that there was a lie—I think that presupposes that not enough people were involved in it at the beginning and could say, “Oh my God, I was lied to. I believed the wrong thing.”

But just think about Corona, and how the buy-in to Corona—and the buy-in to this entire narrative that the vaccine is safe and effective—once it was over, is now leading to a long period, which I believe will continue, of just ignoring it. It's like we don't talk about it anymore. We just ignore it, including in the European Union, where there's still this question: what happened with those WhatsApp messages of von der Leyen? What was the whole corruption process involved in procuring all these doses of things that still need tons and tons of... Well, there's also the issue of the lab leak.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

That's a very sensitive topic.

## **#Pascal**

And all of that is currently being ignored because there was so much buy-in to the entire narrative. In my view, the Europeans—at least a large part of the public—I'd say well above 50%, maybe around 60 or 65%, have bought into this and have also, in a way, emotionally supported the approach. So actually doing a mea culpa would mean that many people would have to do it, which, in my view, will instead lead to, you know, "We can talk about this." Just like in Germany—I had this interesting discussion the other day—the Germans were able to do a mea culpa on the Holocaust.

They never did it for the 27 million dead Soviets. Right. And Warsaw—you know, the mea culpa, like Willy Brandt in Warsaw—was directed toward the Poles, not toward the Soviets. So this entire guilt is so large, and there was so much buy-in, that the best we can expect is decades of silence about it. At worst, it will, of course, lead to the next crackdown. It's just like the film—how losing the First World War made the Germans buy into militarization again in the '30s.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

Sure, sure. Well, I think one of the positives, I would say, is that, again, when I was younger—basically, if you didn't get into the New York Times or the major networks, you had no outlet. You couldn't speak to people. Whereas now, there are shows like this, for example, that people can watch, and people are getting an alternative view. That option just didn't exist, let's say, 30-plus years ago. And it does exist now. I think that's very significant. I have very mixed feelings about the guy, but Tucker Carlson, obviously—you know—can have people like George Galloway on. And, you know, you'll hear alternative platforms.

He has enormous, enormous viewership. And he has some dodgy people on too, I would say, but nevertheless. So I think that's a difference here. And I—by the way, during Vietnam, one other thing was that they did try to use McCarthyism during Vietnam. If you basically said that the Viet Cong represented the will of the people of Vietnam to some extent—and there's evidence for this—people would try to call you a communist. It didn't really work anymore, that was the point. I remember George McGovern, who was the Democratic nominee for president in 1972, very well. He was accused of being an agent of North Vietnam. It didn't really work that well.

I mean, he lost the presidency anyway, but he had a platform. People—the lies of the McCarthy period have been so discredited, so extreme, that they just didn't work anymore. And I'm just wondering, if people keep telling lies, eventually they do catch up with you. And again, maybe that's too optimistic. I'm trying to swear off wishful thinking, because it hasn't gone well in the past when I've done that. But my view of history is that lying will only get you so far. Eventually, when the truth

is staring you in the face—like, for example, if Russia flat-out wins the war they weren't supposed to win—that could be very discrediting.

## **#Pascal**

No, no, you're absolutely right. And I'm also very much opposed to nihilism or pure pessimism, saying everything will end up in a nuclear holocaust anyway. I mean, that's not helpful. It's a possibility, but it's not a helpful way of thinking. So rather, you know, we have all these instances—we're not the first ones to go through this. This has happened at other times. And then the question is, what kind of dynamics are we going through? I mean, I think also of Romania, right?

The point is, like Ceausescu—he thought he was popular until basically a day before they shot him. You could see the shock on his face when suddenly the masses in Bucharest were booing instead of applauding. He had to be flown out by helicopter. So these things tend to generate bubbles within their elite circles, and they can pop. The question is, are we close to a popping moment, or is the bubble just going to enlarge itself and engulf even more people, keeping it going?

## **#David N. Gibbs**

Well, my guess is it's going to pop. I just don't see how it can keep going. The problem is, you do have elections—at least at some level, you have elections. And what you're seeing—I'm not a big fan of any of these parties—but you're seeing the rise of right-wing parties: the AfD in Germany is now equal to the Christian Democrats, the National Front in France, the Reform Party in Britain, and of course Donald Trump in the United States. These, I think, are reactions to a public perception that they've been lied to by the existing political establishment. The anti-system parties—that's what they are. That's what this is: anti-system politics. And I think this is only likely to grow. I don't see this abating at all. Quite the contrary.

## **#Pascal**

Yeah. No, the question then is, are the forces that are working—and I'm not talking about people in a shadowy little room, I'm talking about the sociological mechanisms—are they able to co-opt these parties and kind of change them into regime parties? I mean, just like the Greens. The Greens in Germany used to be anti-war, and they were... And you can see how there are people in Germany who will tell you that the AfD, on the national level, has already been basically co-opted into this mainstream way when it comes to the war.

On the subnational, local level, you still find very strong anti-war figures. But on the national level, people told me that the AfD is already kind of on board with being acceptable to the establishment. At the end of the day, that's also, sociologically, what parties need to become—they need to be able to join a coalition in order to govern, right? So that's what would naturally happen. Well, they have to accede to the elite structure to some extent just to govern—that's what it comes down to.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

And the elite structure—it's like the permanent government, the secret state, whatever you want to call it. It's there. One of the figures I really had high hopes for, and thought was very talented, was Sahra Wagenknecht. I'm very surprised she hasn't done better at the polls than she has. I think she missed getting into the Bundestag by one-tenth of one percent. I thought that was tragic.

## **#Pascal**

Yeah, I mean, she still says they need a recount of the votes, and the sitting committee is denying that because they're saying it all takes time, you know, and they need time to review. So probably she had the votes. But even so, if she did, it was by a narrow margin—around 5%, right? But then again, it's a new party that split off from an old one that wasn't much more popular than what she was. So it was a significant gain. The problem is, of course, that on the left not everybody agrees. I mean, not everybody agrees with the leftist policies she has. So it's kind of a niche, but a very important anti-war niche, and that unfortunately didn't make it into the Bundestag. But that's the nature of the anti-war people, right? They're segmented, fractured into different parties, and so on. Yeah, clearly.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

That's a problem. That's a real problem. I was hoping they would coalesce under her, but that hasn't happened on a large scale. I had some hopes that George Galloway could do something similar in Britain. But again, it's very hard to break through the fact that he doesn't really have an organized party behind him. So you don't really have a good anti-war voice at the political level in Europe, or in the United States. Neither party fits that bill.

I think, honestly, Donald Trump is a very strange figure. On the one hand, he's incredibly belligerent. What he's doing in Venezuela—blowing up boats and killing people randomly in the Caribbean—is incredible. His continued support for Israel, no matter what it does, is there. But I sense that he really was inclined to want to wind down the Ukraine war. He's just under so much pressure from the establishment. The problem with Trump is that, for all his bravado, he's actually not very tough—that's my sense of things. And he responds to pressure.

## **#Pascal**

Yeah, I mean, at this point he strikes me as a classic bully—but a classic bully who's against world war. I think that's the kind of war he doesn't want. He's not against killing the little people; it's just the intimidation tactics, right? The problem isn't killing, it's "no world war." The sad part is that, in the current circumstances, that's not even bad. It's like, you know, it could be worse.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

I'll ask you about Japan, if you don't mind. My question is, you know, my understanding is that the new prime minister—what's her name, Takeishi?—she's a hardline militarist, an admirer of Margaret Thatcher as well, and she's raising military spending. The obvious question is: Japan is an archipelago, a series of islands. Russia and China—well, it's very hard to invade islands, right? In military history, there's something called the "stopping power of water," meaning it's very difficult to invade by sea. So Japan basically has nothing to worry about, even in theory. Why are they spending money on military expansion?

## **#Pascal**

Yes and no. I mean, I've said this on other people's shows too, but you must never underestimate how afraid the Japanese are of missiles—North Korean missiles. The Japanese are really, really scared of them. Really scared. You know, to the point where in 2015, I was here doing my PhD, and the North Koreans launched their first missile test across the Japanese archipelago. Oh yeah, and that was such a huge thing. It was huge—so huge that my university sent us an email saying something like, "It's been announced that North Korea will test a missile. In the event the missile breaks apart above Japan, debris might fall on Tokyo. If you find missile debris, don't touch it—alert the authorities." This is insane, right?

It's an insane level of fear, but that's just how scared even ordinary citizens in Japan are of North Korean missiles. It's not so much about China, but North Korea. And militarists can use that, although I'd say the fear itself is quite real. You can see it reflected in how they're investing in high-end missile and anti-missile systems. And now, when you look at how those systems have failed in places like Israel, Ukraine, or Iran, right?—this insecurity only deepens. So in a sense, it makes the Japanese feel vulnerable not to invasion, but to mass destruction. I mean, Tokyo—boom—blown up, right? Fifteen million dead in an instant. That's the kind of fear they have.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

It seems irrational, though, because they're also spending a lot of money on things like aircraft carriers and so on. And, you know, that's why they do nothing about the missile problem. I mean, the missile problem is probably insoluble.

## **#Pascal**

Yeah, I mean, then there's the downstream stuff, of course—other things like the sea lanes of communication, the islands. Japan needs to invest in that, but they actually try to do it on various levels, including, and I think that's good, through the coast guard, because the coast guard is a policing force, not a military one. They have different ways of trying to deal with their vulnerable sea lanes.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

So much of what this involves, basically, is a series of hypotheticals—what-if scenarios. And it's all about, basically, this could happen, that could happen. Hypothetically, I suppose anything could happen. Aliens from outer space could attack us—you know, it's always possible.

## **#Pascal**

But you find, you know, I mean, Hiroshima and Nagasaki—those were the bombs, right? They eradicated cities and burned themselves into the collective memory. And the sea lanes of communication—actually, the Americans again—when Perry came to Japan in 1853 with the Black Ships, in the popular narrative it's like, oh, he threatened Tokyo, that he would bomb the city or Yokohama and so on, right? No, no, no. He threatened to sink ships. And Japanese trade had to be done, internal trade, via the sea lanes. So threatening the sea lanes was like threatening, you know, starvation. And that's what cracked Japan open. And, you know, the people I studied, they say so. And they advise the prime ministers. So this is a little bit like...

## **#David N. Gibbs**

Richard Cheney, during the war on terror, coined the term "the 1% doctrine." He said that if there's a 1% chance a country might attack us, we should treat it like 100% and prepare accordingly. He was ridiculed for that, but you could say that's exactly what everyone's doing. You could say that's what Japan is doing. What if they shut down the sea lanes of communication? Well, what are the odds of that? Not that high—but let's treat it like it's a certainty and prepare accordingly. It's remarkable how this only applies to military threats. I mean, one example is, if you look at, say, the COVID pandemic in my country, the United States, it killed 1.2 million people.

That's about as many people as have been killed in all the wars America's fought, in its entire history. And for some reason, people didn't see that as the same as a military threat. And, well, how much are we spending to prevent future pandemics? You know, a tiny, tiny percentage of what we're spending on the military. In other words, there are all sorts of threats out there, and the military is only one. So you take hypothetical threats, elevate them into near certainties, create a boogeyman, throw massive amounts of money at it, and then ignore all these other serious threats—like pandemics or climate change. It's kind of a curious situation.

## **#Pascal**

Yeah, and in the process, you, of course, wreck the very thing you're trying to protect—which brings us back to the European Union, which is currently wrecking its own values and democratic systems under the guise of trying to save them.

## **#David N. Gibbs**

They're doing that, and they're also wrecking their economies—especially Germany—and far more effectively than the Russians are. They're doing it themselves with all these sanctions. I mean, deindustrialization in Germany because they lack the fuel to remain an industrial power. That's a serious problem, but they're doing it to themselves.

**#Pascal**

Yep, they're doing it themselves. David, thank you. This was a very interesting discussion, and thanks for all the parallels we could try to develop here. For people who want to read more from you, where should they go? On my website—it's at [dgibbs.arizona.edu](http://dgibbs.arizona.edu). I'll put it in the description of the video below. Anything to add? No.

**#David N. Gibbs**

Well, that's about it. I think that was a good conversation. Thank you.

**#Pascal**

Prof. David N. Gibbs, thank you very much for your time today.

**#David N. Gibbs**

Thank you.