

Unbroken: EU Removes His Human Rights. But He Won't Give Up | Col. Jacques Baud

On December 15, the EU listed the former Swiss army colonel, Jacques Baud, on its Russia Sanctions list, barring him from even buying food. He isn't suffering because he committed any crime. On the contrary, his actions are perfectly legal; they are just not the kind of "behavior" the EU likes to see, so it uses a foreign policy tool (sanctions) to bar him from all and any activities of normal human life. But Col. Baud is unbroken. He is resisting the draconian measures and decided to pick up the fight against this regime extralegal injustice. Make no mistake: What is happening to Col. Baud could happen to anyone tomorrow. The sanctions are a regime of pure, arbitrary political persecution. Links: 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 Introduction 00:01:06 Personal Situation and EU Sanctions 00:13:58 Precedents and Collateral Damage 00:21:12 Legal Strategy and Rules-Based Order 00:34:42 Rule of Law vs. Rule by Law 00:41:55 Media Narratives and Propaganda 00:54:21 Systemic Weakness and Future Precedents 01:00:36 How to Support Jacques Baud

#Pascal

Hello everybody, this is Pascal Lottaz from Neutrality Studies, and today I'm again joined by my countryman Jacques Baud, a former Swiss intelligence officer and Swiss Army colonel. Jacques, welcome back.

#Jacques Baud

Thank you very much. Thank you for inviting me again. And thank you—I want to take this opportunity to thank you for everything you've done in support of my case: the interviews you've conducted, all the people who have shared their views on your channel. I think this is extremely useful. It's also been useful for me to better understand my case.

#Pascal

And I just need to say, because I didn't mention it in the introduction, you are currently sanctioned by the European Union, although you yourself are living in the European—actually, in the belly of the beast—in Belgium. And since December 15th, you've been under these draconian measures where all your money is frozen. You're not allowed to travel, you're not allowed to leave Belgium, you're

not allowed to buy food, you're not allowed to buy anything. Nobody's allowed to have transactions with you. It's a pretty insane situation, isn't it? Can you describe it for us a bit, for people who haven't heard about it—although I'm sure many of our listeners have heard of the case by now?

#Jacques Baud

I think by now, as you said, a lot of people know about it worldwide. But in any case, I was put under sanctions on the 15th of December, as you rightly said. I was not informed beforehand, so I was taken by surprise on that day. This is a political decision, not a judicial one, meaning that I've never been in front of a court. I have never breached any law, and I've never been accused of breaching any law. I had no opportunity to defend myself, to be represented by a lawyer, or to present my case. I haven't even been shown the case so far. So this is a unilateral decision—one that deprives me of my freedom of movement and, I would even say, my freedom of living, because as you rightly said, the sanctions have frozen my accounts in the EU, meaning that I cannot pay for anything.

I cannot pay my bills. I cannot buy food. I cannot buy, I don't know, gas for my car or whatever. Since the 15th of December, I've been living entirely on the generosity of my neighbors, on the solidarity of people here in Brussels. I've received a lot of offers of help—people wanting to support me within the European Union, in France, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, of course, and so on. But so far, I'm living on the generosity of people in my neighborhood. The EU, without any due process, has in fact removed my fundamental freedoms—including freedom of speech, by the way. This is quite odd because, as you probably know, I'm an expert on the rule of law for the UN.

#Pascal

You worked for the UN—several UN bodies—and you also served as an advisor to NATO.

#Jacques Baud

In the last 20 years of my life, I've worked for international institutions. I've worked for the UN, obviously, mainly in peacekeeping operations, but also on institutional reform. For instance, in Ukraine, I was there as an expert on reform of that institution. I've worked for the African Union in Nairobi, and my last position was as an advisor to NATO. I was responsible for the fight against the proliferation of small arms within NATO. And in that capacity, I also became, let's say, acquainted with the conflict in Ukraine, because that was precisely in 2014, when the conflict really started there. So this is my background.

Before that, I used to be a strategic analysis officer in Swiss intelligence. That was a long time ago. I was in charge of the Warsaw Pact—not just the Soviet Union, but also all the Eastern European countries. And this is, more or less, my background in a nutshell. I have extensive experience in conflict mediation, and that's important to understand because I've mediated several conflicts in

Africa where—well, precisely when you do mediation, you cannot be a party to the conflict. I mean, you have to understand the position of both sides, and you cannot, as a mediator, show that you favor party A or party B. You have to be impartial. Impartial means with no party.

And that's exactly my professional experience. I've mediated in different conflicts. In that capacity, I was able to help, or even free, hostages just by talking to the parties, in a very similar way to what the ICRC does on several occasions. You don't take a position; you just analyze, you understand the position of both parties, and that helps you solve the issue. And that's exactly the same position I have with any other conflict—it may be in Palestine, Venezuela, or Ukraine. I have absolutely no party. I never said, in any way, that I was in favor of the victory of party A or party B, or the defeat of party A or party B. This is not my mantra.

I mean, I'm an analyst, and I try to understand how both parties think in a conflict. That's the whole idea. So it's important to understand that, in order to see how the sanctions work. In fact, the text of the sanctions says that I'm a mouthpiece for Russia, and I can't understand that, because I never tried to be. I've refused or declined invitations from Russian media to appear on their channels. It may happen that some of my interviews were picked up by Russian media and used—that's possible—but I've never agreed to be directly interviewed by them, precisely to avoid having my work misunderstood as propaganda.

And if you read my books, for instance—because I've written several books about conflicts, particularly the one in Ukraine—you'll see that I avoid any language usually associated with propaganda, such as "Banderite" or "Ukrainian Nazi," or things like that. I explain the distinction between Nazi and neo-Nazi. I don't use the word "Nazi" to describe, for example, ultranationalists. I never did that, and I explain why I don't and why I don't want to. So I've made every effort not to be a propagandist. And that probably says something about the sanctions, because despite all the efforts to be neutral and impartial, you're still considered a propagandist.

#Pascal

And that's something. That's just one layer. The other layer, though, is that even if you did that—even if you did propaganda, even if you repeated it—it still wouldn't break a law in the European Union. That would still be legal. It would still be covered by freedom of expression. And actually, that's exactly why you're being sanctioned and why they're not sending the police to arrest you—because you didn't break any laws. The European Union even says sanctions are not punishment. They say so. Sanctions are an extralegal mechanism to destroy somebody's life. And they're extralegal because they're not illegal—they're actually within the competence of the EU Council—but they circumvent all the legal protections you usually have. That's why they tell you you have to go to the European court to get them lifted. At best, you can get them back, but they took them away, even circumventing the legal protections you should have in Belgium.

#Jacques Baud

Sorry to interrupt you. You're absolutely right about that. I fully agree. And you've explained it, by the way, extremely well in some of the previous videos you've done. That's very interesting. But there's an additional sublayer, if you want, to that. Because, as you know, the decision on the sanctions was taken by the Council of Foreign Ministers of the EU. In essence, these sanctions are, in fact, a foreign policy measure. Yes. But I'm living within the EU. Yes. And here you see the contradiction. It's very interesting, because we're moving toward a situation not very far from what you had in the U.S. just after 9/11 with the Patriot Act, for instance, which blurs the line between foreign policy or foreign action and domestic action in the security area.

And here we are in a very similar situation, although I have no security—fundamentally, no, not a single law regarding security. But the EU is using foreign policy tools to sanction someone who is inside the EU. That's quite unique, as far as I know. There are other cases of people who have been sanctioned, also for issues related to freedom of speech, freedom of the press, or things like that. I'm not aware of all the cases. My understanding—and I may be wrong on that—is that most of them live outside the EU. Meaning that, of course, this is still, as you rightly said, an issue of freedom of speech and freedom of opinion and all that.

Basically, it's the same human rights issue. But in addition to that, I have a problem—and that's an institutional problem within the EU—that they use foreign policy measures to address domestic policy issues. And that's a new layer to it. I understand there are some explanations for using the sanctions. But again, these sanctions are meant to target people who live outside the EU. I mean, I think in the list I'm on—the list from the 15th of December—there are about 60 entities or persons. I think I'm the only one who lives in the EU. Most of them are outside the EU.

#Pascal

Sorry, yes. There's one, actually—the case before mine—and his name is Hussein Dogru. He's a German citizen living in Germany who was sanctioned in late 2024 or early 2025 under the same sanctions regime. The EU actually has three sanctions regimes, but this one is the Russia sanctions regime. And he's been under sanctions in Germany for over a year now. The outrageous thing is that on the sanctions list, his nationality is listed as Turkish. But he told me in an interview, "No, I'm not Turkish. I don't have Turkish nationality. I'm German, and German only." Yet they still list him as Turkish.

#Jacques Baud

That's an interesting point, because in my case—again, I can't judge his case—but that points to decision-making that's quite fuzzy. In my case, I'm not sure people realize, I don't consider myself the main target of my own sanction. I think—again, I don't know exactly what the process is—but according to some information I have, I was put on the sanctions list by the French government. My personal interpretation—and again, that's just my interpretation, I have no real proof—is that the

real target of the French government was actually Xavier Moreau, a French citizen living in Russia, who also works with RT and similar outlets. So he's probably the real target of the French government.

But that would be the first time the French government targets its own citizens. And personally—again, that's just my interpretation—I may be wrong on that. But my interpretation is that the French government didn't want to show they were targeting a French citizen. They wanted to broaden the scope a little, and therefore they took me as... I mean, I consider myself collateral damage in this, even though, in fact, I'm more impacted than Xavier Moreau because he's living in Moscow. But I still think that—again, with all reservations, because I don't know for sure—that's my personal interpretation. The next question is that, according to my lawyers, the French government most probably—well, certainly—talked to the Swiss government beforehand, and the Swiss government didn't react to it. And that raises another question, but...

#Pascal

Oh, it's a horrific situation. I could never have imagined that Switzerland would just do nothing about one of its own citizens. But there we are. You know, I collected over 350 signatures within three or four days—from academics, journalists, former diplomats—and sent them to our foreign ministry. And until now, all I've gotten is an automatic response: "We received your communication," and nothing since December 19 or 20, or something like that. I mean, official Switzerland does nothing. And the European Union is the one that officially takes away even the most fundamental human rights. My interpretation is that it's actually a process of testing how far one can go, because they've now sanctioned EU citizens, they've sanctioned Russian citizens in Russia, they've sanctioned EU citizens in Russia, they've sanctioned Swiss citizens in Switzerland, and now they've sanctioned a Swiss citizen in the EU. It's like a probing exercise to see what can happen.

#Jacques Baud

That might be the case. Again, I mean, the process you describe points toward that. Personally, I have no real opinion about it—it might be that, or not. I don't know. The thing is, we see more and more that, you know, as I told you, I'm an expert on the rule of law. And when you talk about the rule of law, the expression itself is telling—it's the rule of law. But here we're in a case that's not ruled by law; it's ruled by policy. You can see that in modern states, since the 18th century, we've tended to have governance defined by law and the rule of law. And now we're in a situation where policy supersedes the law. In fact, it's interesting that we have several such cases these days. I don't want to expand on the case of Mr. Maduro, but we're exactly in the same situation—policy supersedes law, and international law in that case.

And that, I think, is a very dangerous situation—not just a situation, but a trend, in fact. Because we see more and more that we tend to make decisions, first of all, without paying attention to facts. And since we make bad decisions, we then need to protect those bad decisions by telling people they'

re spreading propaganda if they oppose them. It's a vicious circle we're engaging in. And we've seen that... fundamentally, it's a very old thing. In my book **Governing by Fake News**, I mention all the cases we've had since the end of World War II, basically. But this situation has, I would say, accelerated to some extent after 9/11, when we had the feeling that security should supersede any kind of law. You have the case of Guantanamo and all these other cases where, in fact, the law is disregarded in order to favor policy.

#Pascal

Sorry, yes. No, no, you're absolutely right. I just wanted to point out that another guest on my show once made a very important observation—that the United States has been moving, and it seems the EU is now following, from a model of the rule of law, in which there's an equal law for everybody, to rule by law, in which you wield the law as a hammer against those you don't like, but not against the ones you do. You do it extremely selectively. And in a sense, what the EU is doing with the sanctions is exactly one of those moments. It makes the whole situation worse because there's no defined process when somebody's being sanctioned, right? Again, because it's not illegal—what you're doing is not illegal. Therefore, they get to pick and choose whoever they want to target. And what makes it even worse is that they can use anything as a justification.

And I don't know what your lawyers told you—maybe you can tell us how you're planning to appeal that—but since this is ultimately a political decision, Sandra Hofer, who I talk to on my channel, told me that the European Court of Justice will only look at whether the accusation in the sanctions database is factual or not. If they find that it's factual, then the sanctions stand, even if what you did isn't illegal. But if you can prove that it's not factual, they'll strike it down. Then the EU can simply change the definition and accuse you of something else, and you're back on the list. We've had cases against Russians where the ECJ said, "No, no, this isn't true—take them down." They did, and then immediately put them back on with a different accusation. Are your lawyers working on this problem?

#Jacques Baud

Yes, absolutely. We're aware of that. I don't want to discuss the specifics because that's part of the strategy we'll use to fight the case. But in essence, you're absolutely right, and my lawyers are fully aware of it. They're experienced and have already dealt with issues related to sanctions, especially the Russian ones, which have their own particularities. Everyone I've talked to understands that. The thing is, what you just said earlier doesn't really resonate with most people, but it's the reality—and I know you're aware of that. We've transitioned from an international law-based order to a rules-based order. Yes.

And that's exactly the difference. Because law is law. It's written. Law is given and defined—defined is clear. I mean, you have text. It might be complex, it might be difficult, but you have something. Rules, however, are not written. They can be interpretations of law, they can be policies, things like

that. And if we just talk about Switzerland, for instance, I was surprised to see that if you read the reports on our national security policy—those we have annually, both on the security of Switzerland, the report of strategic intelligence, and the report on security policy—we don't mention a law-based international order at all.

For about ten years now, the documents have shifted to referring to an international rules-based order. And in the case of Switzerland—again, I can't speak for other countries—but in Switzerland, I'm not aware of any public debate on this question. No. I mean, the change from an international law-based order, and compliance with it, to a rules-based one—this discussion has never taken place. I worked for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for several years before I was sent abroad on various missions, although I remained a member of the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by the way.

But nevertheless, I never heard about any debate on this, even within the ministry—meaning that we've shifted an essential part of our foreign policy without any real public knowledge. It's a silent change of policy that nobody really noticed. And today, the term "rules-based"—I mean, "rules-based order," "international rules-based order"—is accepted. So we are, and I think this is an evolution we've seen everywhere. The U.S. was the one that promoted this shift in policies, and today it's everywhere. If you look at public documents or similar materials in various ministries around Europe, you'll see that now it's a "rules-based order." And that's exactly the point in my case—it's not a case defined by law; it's defined by rules. Period. Yeah, exactly.

#Pascal

And the rules are made arbitrarily—that's the point. As they go, as they make them up, they just pull them out of their noses. Exactly. The question really is, what do we do about this? Because the European Union has now managed to create a process where, under the Lisbon Treaty, it is within its legal rights to establish a regime that allows it to circumvent even the most basic human rights protections of the member states. That's what's so horrible about it. And you're one of the first—not the first, but one of the first—cases in point, and one where it becomes very glaring, very obvious, that this is now a regime.

#Jacques Baud

We have—I mean, as a Swiss, I have a small advantage in the sense that, as of today, Switzerland is not a member of the EU. As you may know, there are discussions about having some treaties to get access, to get closer cooperation with the EU. But interestingly enough, my case now in Switzerland has become a case in point for people who oppose any further development in the relationship between Switzerland and the EU. So I mean, I have a slight advantage compared to those who are already in countries that belong to the EU, because now we have people in Switzerland reacting to that, understanding the danger of being closer to the EU. And that's something the government is probably starting to become aware of today.

And that may prompt the government to take action, because this has a disastrous effect on Swiss public opinion. But nevertheless, you're completely right. These are fundamental issues, and we've seen a progressive shift in policies that give more weight to the idea of "right" or "law." And this is something that, as of today, nobody really notices, because everybody understands that Russia is bad—everybody understands that. But we may find another case, and a good example might be Denmark with Greenland. When you start to understand that, where do you stand then? And what is your position? Because these are cases where, today, we have a kind of unanimity about what's wrong or bad—but we have a very strange situation, by the way, regarding the conflict in Ukraine.

But this is another question. In any case, there's a kind of consensus that Russia is bad, and therefore everybody says, well, if you say something that sounds even slightly in favor of Russia, then you're pro-Russian, period. But now think about it: if you say something that's in favor of the U. S. toward Denmark, or something like that, how would you be treated? And you see, we'll have more cases like this. I mean, I don't know how long the conflict in Ukraine will last—we'll see—but there might be something after that. And after that, people who are today in the mainstream might suddenly find themselves out of the mainstream for some reason. And then they can be attacked by the same rules.

#Pascal

Of course, that's why we don't want an arbitrary system of punishment—we want a systematic one, so we know how to structure society. It's quite simple. I want to ask you, though, and this goes deep into your expertise. Sanctions are a measure—a so-called measure—of, what's the word I'm looking for, a sovereign right, right? Within the EU, or in every country in the world—although the EU is not a country—it has rights under the treaty. It has the right to restrict business on its territory, which is basically what it does. And the U.S. does the same when it imposes sanctions.

But under international law, these are considered coercive measures. And if I'm not mistaken, the UN Charter says that only the Security Council has the right to take coercive measures, because they're considered, well, semi-acts of war, or they're considered international violence. And only the Security Council is supposed to do those. Now, the U.S. has been using sanctions forever. The EU has been using sanctions for a long time too. But other countries don't do that very much. I mean, are sanctions themselves under international law—unilateral sanctions from states—how are they regarded?

#Jacques Baud

That's very interesting. And we're in a kind of gray zone here, because obviously the U.S. has created a precedent with unilateral sanctions. Institutionally, as you rightly said, the U.N. Security Council is the only one, in theory, that should be allowed to impose sanctions against a member of the United Nations. For some reason—if you look at the Charter, for instance—there are many justifications for that. The one I usually use is that the U.N. Charter states you cannot interfere in

the domestic affairs of countries. And sanctions are essentially a way to influence the domestic affairs of countries, meaning that since the U.N. established the rules, it was also entitled to breach them, if I put it extremely simply.

This is a very simplified view of that. That's the reason why the UN Security Council has this ability. The U.S., because it's more powerful—but that's the law of the strongest, period. The U.S. has done that. The EU does it. But if you look at Switzerland, for instance—it's very interesting—if you look at the sanctions taken against Russia, I published that in my book, by the way. If you look at the number of sanctions, obviously the U.S. has the most against Russia. But the second, and that's as of early December last year, the second country that sanctions Russia the most is Switzerland, before the EU. So it's not that Switzerland is just taking over EU sanctions.

I mean, they probably do some, but they even sanction more. So they have their own sanctions. Yeah. And that's a very interesting point, because Switzerland obviously is not a superpower, right? It may do that partly because it fears reactions from its powerful neighbors. Obviously, Switzerland is enclosed within the European Union, so it may also face consequences if it's not proactive on some policies. That was certainly the case with the U.S. And the issue of sanctions is not new. This was already discussed in the '80s with those African leaders or dictators or whoever. And Switzerland, at the very beginning, was very reluctant to impose sanctions or to sanction people, their belongings, or things like that.

But of course, there was pressure from the U.S., which said, "Well, if you don't take measures against this country, we'll block the functioning of some Swiss banks in the U.S." So here we are. The problem with this situation is that, again, we've shifted from international law to something that's more like a mafia-style form of international relations—based on the use of force, coercion, and basically blackmail. And that's extremely concerning, but it's not exactly new. It's becoming more and more apparent, but this has been going on for about thirty years.

#Pascal

When I talked to our compatriot, Natalie Yumb—she's Swiss, but when the sanctions were imposed, she was actually in an African country—she told me she's not able to go back to Switzerland because, well, it's like an island now, and it's forbidden for sanctioned people to fly over EU territory. She said that, as someone who's been an activist for the African cause—she's half Cameroonian—these are the same kinds of measures that have been used against African activists for the past seventy years.

So she said, we're not strangers to this kind of treatment, but now it's being extended to people inside the EU, people inside Switzerland. So it's like the colonial process coming back home. And that's what makes it so scary—this foreign policy being turned inward. Wouldn't we need to, I mean...

obviously, we can't do that. But once we're done with this and once we've learned the lessons, wouldn't we have to conclude that sanctions, in general, are an unlawful way of interacting with other people?

#Jacques Baud

And I cannot talk about Mrs. Yumb's case because I don't know the details, first of all. I also can't really talk about those activists who were sanctioned before. To be honest, I wasn't aware of the sanctions against them. But again, it's not that they don't exist—it's simply that I wasn't aware of them. That's why I don't want to talk about things I don't know. What's obviously strange is that people who haven't broken any law can be put on a sanctions list by EU member countries that aren't even their own. I could understand if you sanctioned people from your own country.

I mean, if they breach the law, if they're a threat to your own security, then you can probably also target people outside your country because they pose a threat to your security—terrorists, for instance. I can understand that. The problem here is that we're talking about a country. Because if Mrs. Yumb, as in my case, was put on a sanctions list, this didn't come from Switzerland; it came from an EU country. So that country—let's say it was France, for example—was it actually threatened physically? I mean, were these individuals real security threats? You can document a terrorist or something like that, but someone who just advocates a position?

And again, in my case, I'm not advocating any cause. I don't consider myself an activist. But still, freedom of speech applies to everyone equally. The thing is, if you're not a direct threat to a country, how can a foreign country accuse you? I mean, we're talking about France—it could just as well be the U.S. The U.S. could decide I'm a terrorist, or decide I'm an activist, or decide I can't speak, or decide... You see, I even smiled when it happened to Thierry Breton, but it's the same kind of case. The U.S. applies sanctions on people and entities all over the world—it can be companies, it can be whoever.

We don't even need to document that. Because at the end of the day, in my case it's obvious—but for all those who are on a sanctions list, they can be put on it just like that. I mean, nobody needs to prove anything. Take the case of Maduro, for instance. The rationale for attacking him was that he was the head of a drug cartel. And today we've learned that this cartel doesn't exist, and the Department of Justice has dropped the accusation. So we're dealing with something that, as you said before, is totally arbitrary. We can define the threat however we want. We don't even have to show that it really exists. It's even worse.

#Pascal

I mean, it doesn't even legally need to be a threat. If they want, they can put your name on the list, accusing you of being an over-60-year-old Swiss man in Brussels. And that would stand. That would stand. You'd still be on the list. I mean, because it's apparently just as illegal to be over 60 in

Brussels as it is to analyze the Russian and Ukrainian positions. I'm not even kidding. It sounds ridiculous, but that's what it is—it's pure arbitrary punishment for Russia.

#Jacques Baud

I don't like your face. You're going to be punished. Absolutely. Absolutely. But the thing is, you know, I think—of course, this is something I could live without, sanctions, to be honest. But if we look at it critically and with some distance, everybody who has some knowledge of the case understands that, regardless of how you think about whoever—Russia, Ukraine, whoever—everybody understands that it's unjustified. I mean, there have been a couple of Swiss journalists who found it justified.

#Pascal

Did you read that awful article in the Swiss Officers' Association?

#Jacques Baud

I've read that article. But again, it's so poorly documented that I'm not sure the guy gained anything from it. It's the same with the European Union, by the way. In the end, since everybody understands that it's unjustified, a lot of people who've followed my interviews on various channels have asked, "How can we punish someone for something he never said? And even if he did say it, it still wouldn't be illegal."

#Pascal

I mean, it's just... what it creates is a space where people start debating whether or not you deserve it—because you're a traitor, or you work for the Russians. They start this, you know, this lynch-mob mentality that it actually feeds.

#Jacques Baud

It's true. But in addition to that, I mean, this has two aspects. There's a very interesting short video made by the Université Populaire Protestante. David Nadeau, a guy living in the south of France, made a very nice, very short video about my case. Apparently, he's been following me—I didn't know him, but apparently he is. And he said, well, the problem here is that Jacques Baud never said what he's accused of. But we allege—well, we don't even allege, we just allege he said something. So it's not even something that happened. It's an allegation about something, about an intention. They're attributing intentions to me.

So it's not just that you didn't say what you said, but that they interpret what you said in a way you never meant. So we're dealing with something that goes beyond even freedom of speech and

freedom of opinion, because here it's clearly opinion manipulation. And that's quite interesting. His view—again, I didn't know this person, but he apparently followed me—he said in his video that he doesn't always agree with me and all that. But at the same time, he said Jacques Baud never said what he's accused of. So we're in something that goes well beyond the idea that you could even burn my books, you understand, because in the end, it's not my books that are the problem, but what people could interpret from reading them.

It goes even further than the books themselves. We're really entering a kind of, let's say, an area where we've never been before—or probably we did, in the Soviet Union, maybe. In fact, the process we have now, when security or, let's say, the prevention of security issues takes precedence, it supersedes the law. That's exactly what happened in the Soviet Union, where, just as a reminder and an explanation, the KGB was responsible for both external security and domestic policy. So there was this seamless transition between foreign policy measures and domestic policy measures.

We're seeing exactly the same pattern today with the European Union, and that's exactly where we're heading. I find that extremely concerning. I'm not the only one, because I've been contacted by quite a few European parliamentarians. Apparently, this hasn't raised much, let's say, interest within the European Parliament, but some members are very worried about this development. Because, as I said, today it's fine—everybody's against Russia, Russia, Russia—but tomorrow it could be something else. And the same rules could be applied to anyone. That's the question.

#Pascal

It's probably part of Europe's war psychosis—that now you see the enemy from without and the enemy from within, and you have to use terrible measures against both of them. It's very, very scary if that's indeed what it is, because this will get worse.

#Jacques Baud

If you look at the timeline, you can see that this didn't happen three or four years ago—it's happening today. And it's happening now at a point where, obviously, we see that the European, or rather the broader Western, narrative is crumbling. That's probably also a sign of something. It's fascinating to see that nobody cared about what you said in 2022, because everyone was convinced by the European narrative that Russia would be defeated. Yeah. But today, as the Belgian prime minister said recently, during all those discussions about Russian assets and so on, he said, "Well, if you think that Russia will be defeated, that's an illusion." Now, exactly at this point, people understand that the narrative is falling apart, and therefore it needs more protection. And that's exactly where we're heading—toward something that's probably going to get worse.

#Pascal

I wonder, though, what it tells us about the way our states in the West are built. Because, you know, in theory, there would be a completely normal legal way of achieving what they achieved with you—and that would be to criminalize the act, right? Make a law, run it through the European Parliament, run it through the national parliaments, and criminalize propaganda. You could do that. But that would be a long, drawn-out process, and it would raise a lot of red flags left and right, because it would run into obvious problems with freedom of speech. So instead of doing that—which would be the normal way—you just go the foreign policy route, which is much easier, much more direct. But does that tell you something about the way states are structured at the moment? Maybe also about the avenues available to strike back against this kind of bestiality?

#Jacques Baud

I think if you start questioning the way our states function, I mean, this is an endless discussion. My books, in fact, are not about whether it's Russia who wins, or Ukraine, or whoever. My books are about the way we make decisions. That's the topic of my books—the way we make decisions. And we see that one day people are telling you that Russia is taking microchips from washing machines to put in missiles, that they don't have missiles anymore, that they have only three or four months of ammunition, and so on. Then, three weeks later, they tell you that Russia is about to attack Paris, and the chief of staff is concerned because France might be attacked within a couple of years. So this is the whole issue: what is the credibility of our states? Again, I am a Cold Warrior—I mean, we experienced the situation we had during the Cold War.

During the Cold War, Pravda was not forbidden. You could buy Pravda at a newsstand; it wasn't banned. We didn't even forbid the Communist Party. I mean, the French Communist Party, for example, was very much connected to the Soviet Communist Party—but it wasn't forbidden. Probably people were monitored, and there were likely more civilians aware of that, certainly. But it was not forbidden. The reason we didn't have to resort to censorship or restrict freedom of speech or opinion was because we were confident that we had the better system. We believed our system would prevail, and that no matter how Soviet propaganda worked, our narrative would always be stronger.

And therefore, you don't need censorship. It's a kind of informational Darwinism, if you like. The problem is that when you start engaging in censorship—sanctions against individuals, prohibiting speech, forbidding people to publish or whatever, even banning Russian media, for instance—it means you're not confident in your own system. It means your decision-making isn't based on facts, that you can't justify what you're saying, and therefore your own policies, your own speech, your own governance are fragile, because they're not built on a solid foundation of facts and evidence. In fact, what we're seeing here is an example of essential weakness.

The values we have in Europe—the values of freedom, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of opinion, freedom of the press, and so on—are strong because we are strong. We are not strong because of the values; the values are strong because we are strong. The problem is that

when we start to feel weak, we tend to disregard that and think we need to establish barriers. This is exactly what happened in the Soviet Union and in all dictatorships before, because they felt their systems were essentially weak. And therefore, they needed to protect them, to add more protection, more barriers, to channel freedom of speech, freedom of thought, and opinion, and so on, because they felt there was an inherent vulnerability.

So that's exactly what we're witnessing today. I mean, in the past three years, regardless of what's happened in Ukraine, obviously a lot of bad decisions have been made. And we see that Europe has weakened—essentially, economically, on various levels. And that, in fact, demonstrates the weakness of governance. Therefore, the governance has to protect itself, and that's how I see it. I'm not sure these sanctions are beneficial to the EU, if you look at it with some distance. In fact, they affect the credibility of the whole system. And you can see that in individual countries. I mean, you mentioned the case of Germany—Germany was one of the first countries to sanction its own citizens.

#Jacques Baud

I mean...

#Jacques Baud

Germany as a country—not as the EU, but Germany. I think it was Ms. Lipp, who used to be a journalist working in the Donbass, and she was sanctioned. She's a German citizen. Now she's living in Russia, I assume. I don't know exactly; I'm not following her, but... In any case, that means that when you start sanctioning your own citizens, something is wrong in your system. Because otherwise, you wouldn't need that. The truth would be enough.

#Pascal

And then, instead of the system renewing itself and fixing its shortcomings, it actually hardens and atrophies even more. But Jacques, what should we do? What's your advice to people at home who sit in frustration and think, "I wish there was something I could do?"

#Jacques Baud

Well, first of all, I think—and I think Alexandra Hofer said it too, as did many others—basically, this battle won't be decided at the legal level but will have to be fought at the political level. In the European Union, people understand that my case is just the tip of the iceberg and could set a precedent for other issues. I know several things will start moving now—obviously, we had the holidays—but the whole system is weakening, and therefore we'll see more action. People realize that my case should be taken as an example to avoid creating a precedent. So this political struggle will certainly begin. I receive a lot of messages from all over Europe—actually, from all over the world—from people who are very concerned, but especially within Europe.

And because, of course, people in the EU are directly affected by such a decision, we'll see political action on that. I don't know exactly what the Swiss government wants to do—or if it wants to do anything, by the way. I have absolutely no indication of that. I tried to get in touch with the embassy in Brussels on the 12th of December, when I first received word that I might be on the list. As I already explained, they never called me back, and they still haven't, even after more than three weeks. I was contacted, however, by the Swiss embassy in The Hague, which is responsible for consular protection of citizens living in the Benelux.

But without telling me what Switzerland wants to do. I mean, the ambassador gave me a few links to the EU sanctions, something like that. She told me just twice, and that was it. So from the Swiss government, I don't know exactly what they want to do—if they want to do anything. From Swiss citizens, I see a lot of people who have written letters, who are making petitions, collecting signatures to address the Swiss Federal Council and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, urging them to act on my case. So I don't know how powerful the Swiss government is in this particular situation. But there will be political action, both in the European Union and in Switzerland, to try to have me removed from the sanctions list.

Beyond this, there's more fundamental work to be done. And what you do, I think, is extremely useful. I mean, you and other channels like yours are extremely useful, because this kind of advocacy is really the way to reach people. You see, my case in France, for instance—although I'm a French speaker—almost nobody knows about it, because the French media have been extremely silent. And you know, the French media are just like during the German occupation: they say what the government tells them to say. So that's it. They stay silent if the government tells them to be silent. And that's exactly what's happening with my case. In fact, I have family living in France who weren't even aware of it.

#Pascal

How sad. Really sad, the whole thing. Jacques, one last thing—people who want to somehow support you. I mean, since all of your accounts were frozen and so on, it's probably really hard to wire you anything. But is there any way for people who really want to do something for you? Should they contact you? What should they do?

#Jacques Baud

As far as I know, there isn't currently a committee being created in Switzerland that will collect not just signatures but also money to support my case. I'm not exactly sure where the project stands at this stage. Of course, it couldn't move as fast as we wanted during the holiday season, but now it will start. In the coming days, I'll probably get more information about it. If some money can be collected, it can only be collected in non-EU countries—so it could be collected in North America. I've

received a lot of offers from people in Canada, the U.S., and of course in Switzerland. Most probably, Switzerland will be the place where this money is collected. Again, I'm not aware of all the details, because this is being handled by other people.

I shouldn't even be aware of that, because according to EU rules, nobody is allowed to provide me with any "resource," whatever that word means. So people aren't allowed to give me any resources. I mean, even those who are providing me with food—well, I assume that basic food for basic needs won't be considered a punishable action or a criminal case. But providing me with resources, most probably financial ones—wiring money, for example—they can't do that. We have no money because my accounts are blocked. And giving me money would then be a criminal case for those people. So, in Switzerland, I'll keep you informed about where this money will be collected. It will be in Switzerland, and I'll give you the address and the proper contacts.

#Pascal

Yeah, for everybody listening, please check the description box below. Once I get the updates, I'll put them there too. And we'll do another interview once everything is in place. I'll post it in other places—just look out for it. And again, Jacques Baud is not the only one. There's Nathalie Amth, there's Hussein Dogru, there are other people—others who might still be put on this list. It's not about just one person; it's about the rule of law itself. So, Jacques Baud, thank you very much for fighting this fight.

#Jacques Baud

My pleasure. Thank you very much for inviting me, and thank you for all your efforts—for you and everyone who supports my case. Thank you. Thank you, Pascal.