

# Gilbert Doctorow: Russia's Oreshnik Strike in Warning to NATO

Dr. Gilbert Doctorow discusses the Russian Oreshnik strike in a warning to NATO. Gilbert Doctorow's new book "War Diaries. Volume 1: The Russia-Ukraine War, 2022-2023" is now available on Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/War-Diaries-Russia-Ukraine-2022-2023/dp/B0F9VK1WM2> Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glennndiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: [https://x.com/Glenn\\_Diesen](https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen) Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glenndiesen> Support the research by Prof. Glenn Diesen: PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glenndiesen> Buy me a Coffee: [buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng](https://www.buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng) Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

## #Glenn

Welcome back. We are joined today by Gilbert Doctorow, historian and international affairs analyst, and also author of the book *\*War Diaries: The Russia-Ukraine War.\** Thank you for coming on. I really wanted to discuss with you the strike last night, as Russia launched its Oreshnik missiles at Lviv in western Ukraine. This seems, obviously, to be a warning to the NATO countries in response to recent escalations. I wanted to know how you are assessing the situation.

## #Gilbert Doctorow

Well, to be fair, we're in the fog of war. The Russians didn't come out quickly with a description of what they did or where. Information is coming out in bits and drabs. I understand they fired at least one Oreshnik in the Lviv region, but other reports say they fired six or nine. It could be that the reports are confusing the smaller missiles that a single Oreshnik carries and releases separately, or it could be that there really were six and one. That's not clear. The damage is also not clear—the extent of it—because the reports I've seen indicate that one of the targets, since there are several mini-missiles released by an Oreshnik, was the largest single gas storage facility in Ukraine.

Now, presumably, if that were hit, there should have been an explosion of enormous proportions. But it would also drain Ukraine of heating that covers the country, so it could have been something devastating. And I suspect it was exactly that, because the Ukrainians are going berserk. The foreign minister of Ukraine has called for a United Nations Security Council meeting to discuss this horrible attack, and that indicates it was very serious. But no one is yet saying what exactly it was, and no one is demonstrating the effectiveness of the Oreshnik, which, as you recall, when first used in Dnipro against a military production facility, was very disputed—whether it had a nuclear bomb-type energy or was simply a few tons of TNT. So it will be very important to see the follow-up, what destruction actually took place.

Just remember, this was not an isolated one-missile attack. It was part of a confluence of drones, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles. The destruction was spread across several cities, including Kyiv. And we can imagine that something serious happened there. We can also imagine that the Russians gave advance warning to Zelensky about the impending attack, because he went on air last night telling Ukrainians to stay indoors, in basements, because a bigger attack was coming. So this by itself demonstrates the Russians' confidence that their weapons are invincible—cannot be stopped by Patriots or any other known existing anti-aircraft or air defense system. That sounds logical and would be in line with the message they have for the West: forget about your dome in Germany, forget about your dome in the United States.

These are utterly useless concepts, given the present state of Russian armaments. So it would send a big message. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine helped too, to spread and disseminate that message. I don't know if he's aware of how damaging his statements were overall, but he was trying to tell Europe they have to wake up, they have to do something, because this is right on the edge of the European Union. Do you realize that? And here we have the Russians attacking with a hypersonic missile—just add two or three more minutes and that same missile could be in Berlin. Well, he did a wonderful job for the Russians, scaring the Europeans out of their wits. So I think that was not very carefully thought through when the Ukrainians made these statements. From the little information that came out, the Russians are saying this is a return visit.

This is their answer to the drone attack on President Putin's residence in Valdai—his country home where his common-law wife and children live, small detail. This was a response to that. But I think that's just part of the story. There have been many acts of provocation—mounting provocation by the West, by the United States against Russia. There was that attack on his residence ten days ago, or whatever. There was the seizure of the Russian-flagged tanker in the sea off Iceland. There's the reputed agreement of Trump to back the so-called peace terms that were finalized and agreed upon by the "coalition of the willing" in Paris at the start of the week, with Whitcoff present.

And, um, there was this notion in the air that Russia would be intimidated by the 500% tariffs that are about to be imposed—assuming the bill in the Senate passes, which it will, and that the House backs it, and that Trump does what he said, that he'll sign it because he has no choice. The Senate has 82 votes in favor, so his veto could be overruled immediately. That 500% tariff is a secondary tariff on countries buying Russian oil, which includes three of the four founding members of BRICS—Brazil, India, and China. It would be used as a cudgel to get the Russians, to get Putin, to sit at the negotiating table and sign what has just been agreed by the EU leaders and Zelensky in Paris, which amounts to forcing a capitulation on Russia.

This is the way things are going, so it's understandable that, with all these developments against its interests—and which assume it has no ability to respond—the Russians would act. And they've acted in a way that I think the real patriots, the people in the close circle of Vladimir Putin in Moscow, who have certainly been pressuring him to drop the friendly, "gently, gently" approach and show the fist,

will be satisfied with. Because everyone has made one demand: use those adhesions and stop just talking about them. And finally, he's done that. How many adhesions were used? What exact damage? We'll find out in the days to come.

## **#Glenn**

That's a good point. How do you assess the Russian strike? It has multiple warheads—or, in this case, dummy warheads—so it's just unclear how many of them were launched, or if there was only one. But a lot of Russia's anger obviously came out after the attack on Putin's residence. Many people have noted that the Russians haven't shown this much anger in the past, and my take on it is that it has to be seen in the context of an attack on Russia's strategic deterrent.

Because it shouldn't be hard to draw a common thread here. Between 2022 and 2025, we've seen multiple attacks on the Engels airbase, where Russia hosts its nuclear-armed strategic bombers. It's very doubtful that the Ukrainians could have done this without the backing of Western intelligence agencies. Also, back in May 2024, there were attacks on Russia's strategic nuclear early-warning radar, which obviously has no purpose at all in this war—the proxy war in Ukraine, that is. And in June of last year, we saw an attack on Russia's nuclear bombers, actually destroying many of them, which are key to their nuclear deterrent.

And, of course, last month there was that attack on Putin's residence. According to people like Arastovich, it also hosts a nuclear command center, which is why it was seen as such a dangerous attack. Because, you know, any of these incidents would have been unthinkable during the Cold War. This would have been seen as something that could trigger a possible nuclear exchange. Yet now we're seeing this become more and more bold. And it seems as if not just the British, but also American intelligence agencies are deeply involved in it. Do you think this is why the Russians are reacting so fiercely now—that they essentially see this as a Western attack on their nuclear deterrent?

## **#Gilbert Doctorow**

I think this is a factor. They also have to look at the dynamics of power within Russia and the position of the supreme commander. I have the highest respect for what Vladimir Putin has done to restore Russia from what I saw when I lived there in the 1990s, which was a wrecked economy, a destroyed society—a country that was pauperized and demoralized, possibly beyond redemption. Now, he didn't start the redemption; it began already in 1998. But he picked it up and carried it in a way that nobody could have foreseen. And the success has been dramatic, really. He has achieved what Peter the Great did without having to send hundreds of thousands or millions of peasants to their deaths. It has been an astonishing improvement. At the same time, I reserve the right to be critical of his role in defense and his role in dealing with the West.

I don't think only of the latest events. I wrote several years ago that I was urging Vladimir Putin to take a lesson from Nikita Khrushchev. Nobody ever dared to call Nikita Khrushchev a murderer or a thug or anything like that, even if he was a murderer and a thug. They didn't dare. Imagine if they could say that in public. They've done that to Putin going back a decade, and this is because he never responded properly—with force. He never took off his shoe and banged it on the table, as Khrushchev did. He never said to the West, "We will bury you." Of course, that was later explained—it didn't mean it literally. Figuratively, nonetheless, it was well understood that Russia had the wherewithal to destroy everybody on Earth, because the number of nuclear weapons at the time was ten or twenty times enough to destroy all life on this planet.

So, Khrushchev had no hesitation to threaten. He was very brave. He may have been a crude man, but he certainly was not a stupid man. And he was very brave, and he took risks—risks with the national survival of Russia. Mr. Putin is a much more sophisticated man. He is very intelligent, a man with legal training and a legal turn of mind. But he has not had the force of Khrushchev to put the fear of God into the competitors—adversaries, even outright enemies—of Russia in the West. So the problem that Russia has, which is now expressing itself in these dramatic, very threatening developments, is, for example, the firing of the S-300 to within 100 kilometers of the Polish border, and the attack on the reservoir that is the life support for gas for Ukraine.

This is something that's been a long time coming. And now that it's arrived, we have to expect more of the same. This puts, in particular, Mr. Trump—and the hubristic command around him, who are now feeling so strong and powerful after they've humbled Venezuela and even seized a Russian-flagged oil tanker at sea—in a position where they feel like the lords of the universe. Pete Hegseth is the most notorious, with Marco Rubio next to him. They really need to be sobered up. The remark that Dmitry Medvedev made in response to the Ukrainian complaints over this Ershnik attack was that they had just administered an antipsychotic inoculation to the Ukrainians.

Well, put it in milder English—a kind of sobering-up attack on the Ukrainians. And I think this will be understood in the capitals of the West as a sobering-up attack for them. I think we're past the point where Vladimir Putin is going to tolerate visits by Viktor Orbán to hold his hand for three or five hours and talk about a peace settlement that the United States is utterly unable to help realize. I think the Russians will now proceed on one track—resolving the war on their terms and by their military means. So, a lot of things have changed in the last few days, but it took a long time to come to this moment.

## **#Glenn**

Well, we've seen all these strange developments out of the U.S. that seem to have encouraged European leaders to push for sending troops into Ukraine after the end of the war. They even seem to have gone so far as to make the Europeans believe they'd get some kind of backstop from the Americans. So it doesn't seem like they necessarily don't want to end the war, but rather that, as

they're running out of Ukrainians, they're putting the Europeans on the front line instead. So I guess my question is, are the negotiations all nonsense by now?

It doesn't seem like there's anything... We also see these reports, of course, in the New York Times that Trump has given the green light for attacks on Russian tankers and refineries. Some are wondering, are they simply trying to sabotage Trump, or is Trump actually behind this? But to some extent, that point doesn't really seem relevant. I mean, is Trump being deceptive toward the Ukrainian government—sorry, toward the Russians—or is he simply weak? That is, that he can't control his own house, that his intelligence agencies and his own staff are essentially carrying out a policy independent of him. I'm just wondering, does it really matter, though?

Especially now, you see that Trump is—well, the Americans are seizing Russian ships as well. He has to be extraordinarily weak if he can't push back against any of this. It does seem that he's just assumed this role of mediator, so he gets some goodwill from the Russians and takes advantage of it as much as he can. But again, weak or deceptive—does it really matter? There doesn't seem to be any possibility of making peace. If anything, they say the Europeans are the spoilers, but they seem to be egging them on as well. So how do you see this? Are the negotiations now only for optics, or is there still a real possibility?

## **#Gilbert Doctorow**

The fog of war also extends to the analysis of Mr. Trump. There's nothing foggier than what's going on around him. A day ago, I put out an essay asking, is there a method to his madness? That this is mad is obvious—but is there a method to it? Are we being deceived? Everything around Donald Trump is deception. He has used deception as his main vehicle for achieving his aims. He used deception with the Iranians before the attack, luring them into negotiations while preparing to strike them in the most vicious way. Nothing is what it sounds like or seems like, and I never take any of his words at face value. What he's doing now—it seems that, well, I'll just devote attention to something very, very hot: what he wants to do with Greenland.

I was very impressed to read in the editorial of the Financial Times—I think it appeared this morning or late last night—in which they were addressing the question of what Europe should do with respect to Donald Trump's threats, his designs on Britain. And they understood that Europe has very few leaders and that Europe is very weak. So they were proposing a combination of incentives and realistic pushback to deal with Trump's latest planned adventure. On the one hand, there would be a promise to step up European—not just Danish, but all European—investment in the defense of Greenland, so that the issue Trump has raised, that this is a security risk for the United States, is properly addressed.

The Russians and the Chinese want their ships just off Greenland. It opens a hole in the Arctic and so forth—that would be addressed. And on the other hand, they would remind Trump that they're ready to leave NATO. If they leave NATO over this violation of basic principles of the NATO Charter

by the United States, in seizing assets of one of the NATO members, that would weaken U.S. defenses. I found it amazing that the editorial group wrote this without thinking for a moment that the breakup of NATO and the dissolution of the EU are exactly what Trump wants. So on the one hand, you've got his ambitions, which everyone's denouncing as imperialism, blah, blah, blah.

And it's possible—that's all it is. But it's also possible with Trump that the man is using this attack on Greenland to achieve what he otherwise cannot achieve and very much wants to. He cannot take the United States out of NATO, but he can force NATO to dissolve itself because they see him as an enemy. So for this reason, Glenn, I'm very cautious about making a definitive interpretation of what's going on. Mr. Trump is an unbelievably devious person. The fact that the Washington Post had a Pinocchio chart on him in his first term, counting daily what lies he spread—that was justified, of course. And I think it's been raised here to a still greater art in his second term now.

## **#Glenn**

Yeah, and I thought that was a great point. All the Europeans came up with these ways they could counter Trump. That is, well, we can't go to war against the United States, obviously, but they could threaten to expel U.S. troops from their bases. And I thought, but the Europeans want them to stay there—that was the whole point. In August, when Trump was telling, more or less, the Baltic states and others that we're planning to draw down our forces in Europe, in the Baltic states, the Europeans went into panic. Suddenly, we had all these nonsense stories about Russian drones near airports, with absolutely zero evidence.

The Russians violating the Estonian airspace—the hybrid war is coming. America, you can't go. You know, this... I mean, it's the Europeans who want the Americans to stay, and it's the Americans who want to reduce their presence. So it seemed like a very strange punishment indeed. But I also make the point that what the Europeans should do is just, well, essentially threaten that they will respond militarily, because this would be a disaster. It looks like Trump's source of success is to make everything short—short wars. Like Panama: he makes a little threat, and they give him something.

It seems Gaza just let the Israelis burn everything down, but then put something in place to stop it. Bomb Iran for a few days, strike, and then come in and make a peace deal—get it over with. And now Venezuela as well. A lot of the hawks are a bit critical because they're saying, well, this isn't nation-building; we haven't taken over the government. But instead, he's claiming that the acting president will have to do as she's told—otherwise, we'll strike some more. Again, he's looking for quick fixes. I think he's not an opponent of wars; he's just an opponent of forever wars. So as soon as he can get the war over quickly and then move on to the next one, that's a success.

So, you know, if the Danes don't want to lose Greenland, they should just put something in place that might pull in the United States over the long term or create more of a scandal. And, you know, he can't be bothered. He has so many other projects he wants to move on to, which, you know, can be quick in and out. And I just... I think people either want to see him as a warmonger or a man of

peace. I just think he's willing to use military force in any way to achieve his goals, but he doesn't want to get drawn in. That's when all your resources, all your focus, everything gets sucked in, and you can't really do anything else. And I think that's his main concern. I'm not sure if you see it the same way—that this is his approach.

## **#Gilbert Doctorow**

It's too early to draw conclusions about what his real objectives are. He doesn't tip his hand. That's the main tactic he uses as a negotiator—to remain an unknown. I think, as commentators, we have an obligation to draw a distinction between what we'd like to see happen and what we acknowledge may happen. And I've just described what I would like to see happen. It could happen that he proceeds in a bellicose way and the Europeans cut off their nose to spite their face, as we say in American English—doing themselves harm while thinking they're going to harm him by disbanding NATO.

But the reality is—the greater likelihood—is that they'll reach some kind of accommodation with Denmark. Twenty-five out of twenty-seven European heads of state or government will very likely, quietly, behind closed doors, apply maximum pressure on Denmark to just shut up and get it over with, and to take the offer that Trump gives them to buy them out. I think to buy out the population of Greenland—the Inuits there—would probably take about a million dollars per person. That's fifty-five million. It's small change; I don't even count that. But some billions to Denmark, to get them to agree to the sale.

I think that probably has a greater likelihood than the scenario I prefer—the end of NATO. Denmark has a very strong social market economy, with a still-intact social services system. They're going to be hit hard as the defense budget rises to 5% of GDP. A helping hand from Mr. Trump could make Denmark one of the biggest winners in the coming ten years by giving them the capital to do both—guns and butter—while their neighbors in the EU suffer, without the cushion that Mr. Trump is about to provide.

## **#Glenn**

Well, I recently spoke with Professor Mearsheimer. He was making the point that we crossed the line from a proxy war to a direct war long ago. That is, these attacks are now not through Ukraine—we're engaging directly. And I guess the only question now is: when does Russia retaliate directly? Because, as we saw with the Oreshnik, they struck energy facilities in western Ukraine, but the warning nonetheless was for the NATO countries. The West isn't really taking these warnings seriously. And again, it has to be pointed out that the whole reason there's a warning—why they haven't struck yet—is because once that happens, you can't stop the escalation anymore. Then it will spiral out of control. So how close are we to a massive direct war? Because once Russia retaliates against NATO, then we're at war without any pretense of simply helping Ukraine.

So again, I know the Russians have been restrained so far, but there's still mounting pressure on President Putin. In the West, especially in Europe, they're very dismissive. They just see this as, you know, "We can't reward their bullying or their threats." It's seen as a moral obligation to ignore any deterrents the Russians are putting up. So how close do you think we are to—not a world war, but a direct war between NATO countries and Russia, with them actually beginning to retaliate? In other areas, we also see that Russia is moving up the escalation ladder, carrying out more destructive attacks—not just on energy infrastructure, but also on other systems that support Ukraine's economic and military potential.

As a good example, if I'm not mistaken, Klitschko, the mayor of Kyiv, has now asked citizens of the capital to start leaving if they can, since there's no electricity in many areas. The idea is that the city can't sustain such a large population—people should get out. I've heard from several Russian sources that this is essentially what Russia would like, because once people begin leaving the big cities, there are many benefits. The economy wouldn't function as usual, the military potential would decline, and if Russia wanted to seize Kyiv, it would be much easier without millions of people there who could end up as human shields or be killed. Nobody wants to see mass casualties.

So how do you—how do you assess these efforts by Russia to step up? Because it's been feared or predicted for some time that once Ukraine starts to fall apart on the front lines, they would also simultaneously increase pressure in other areas—trying to knock out the economy, maybe go after the political leadership. Again, that's just a theory so far. But do you see this as the Russians' endgame, as opposed to trying to take out the political leadership while the Ukrainian army is still standing strong—since those leaders could simply be replaced? Are they just tearing everything down and going after all fronts at once? There are a lot of questions there.

## **#Gilbert Doctorow**

We're on the same wavelength. Just before you mentioned Klitschko, that's exactly what I was about to say. It was dramatic—and what was dramatic about it is precisely why they should be, because in a city like Kyiv, with a lot of high-rise buildings, they have no water, no electricity. People want to be maudlin about this. They say, "Oh, it's in the middle of winter, they're cutting off power." Well, wait a minute—in the middle of summer it isn't great either if you live on the 20th floor of an apartment building and there's no electricity. You can't get there. So the point is, they're making the city uninhabitable, which is their intention. Do they want to save lives by that—to clear out people for an attack, a leveling attack? I don't think so.

What Russians have been saying for some time—this goes back more than a year—when they were talking about revenge for the attacks on the neighboring oblasts to the east of Kharkiv, which were being supplied from Kharkiv, was that Russia should level Kharkiv to the ground. And you do this by giving three days' notice: everybody clear out because we're going to destroy it. So, going back to their most destructive dreams, Russian patriots had no intention of killing millions of people. Their intention was to give a warning. And as we see, I think it's quite likely that Putin gave a warning to



Zelensky before firing the Iskanders—and I say plural because it's not clear if it was one or several—and the other massive attacks that took place yesterday.

They can give this warning because they're confident there's nothing that can stop their missiles—cruise or ballistic, hypersonic in particular. So I think they'd be very happy to send another ten million Ukrainians running to Germany, to make the relief system so untenable in Central Europe that they'd have to go negotiate with Russia. I think that certainly is in their plans. Leveling cities for the sake of leveling cities—I don't think that's their intent. But to frighten people and drive them out of the country, yes, I think so. It destroys the economy, and it destroys Europe. Europe has no room for another ten million Ukrainians, and it would simply break the social and medical services to have all these countless Ukrainians showing up at our doors.

So yes, the Russians are getting very destructive. They've moved into the china shop and thrown everything to the ground. It's been a long time coming, and it's just surprising. I think what you and I have discussed—deterrence—I think we're now witnessing the revival of option deterrence. Because the war-will, as it were, was in doubt, and really deserved to be in doubt—was there a will to use the war-will? And what we're seeing now, in these several actions—both the Ureshnik, as confirmed that it happened, and the seizure of the ships, which we're waiting to see whether it's as described—the Russians are clearly showing that they have the will to take on the United States and the West.

## **#Glenn**

Well, I've been saying this for months—that we're now seeing the end of the war. And just as in other wars, the worst devastation happens toward the final stage. You saw this with the Germans in World War II as well. That's when the vast majority of military casualties are inflicted, as the army falls apart. It's also when civilians become more exposed, and when people start fleeing their homes. I mean, it's so incredibly predictable that a massive tragedy is about to play out if we don't start negotiating in good faith with the Russians. And that means not doing what they did in Paris—saying you're going to send troops after the war and set up military facilities. I mean, this is why the Russians invaded: to prevent NATO from entrenching itself in Ukraine and somehow defeating Ukraine.

Our demand is that NATO should not entrench itself in Ukraine. It just doesn't make any sense. And, you know, I've been making this point for a long time—that this horror would start to play out soon. And I was always told, "This is Russian propaganda, Ukraine is winning." But surely our political leaders, despite being incompetent and immoral, must nonetheless see what's about to happen. Because, for all this talk of standing with Ukraine, surely there must be—beneath all the efforts to weaponize fake empathy—some recognition that, at least for their own self-interest, millions of Ukrainians fleeing into Europe, just when we'd like to start sending them back, is not in their interest. It's not in our interest either; it's in Europe's interest.

I mean, none of this makes any sense to me. Just taking me to my last question, though—if there is an effort to end this war, it doesn't look like we're ending it. Because, let's be honest, it's not as if the European countries are going to make peace with Russia and say, "Okay, we're not going to expand NATO; we're going to come to some agreement on a common European security architecture." Instead, it seems like we're moving into a different phase. I'm not sure whether we're going to support some kind of guerrilla tactics or what exactly they might do. But do you see an end to this war? Or are we just creating a new phase—and what would that actually look like?

## **#Gilbert Doctorow**

Again, to divide this between what may happen or is likely to happen, and what I would like to happen—those are different things, very different things. I think what's most likely to happen will be a frozen conflict, but not the kind of frozen conflict the West described a year and a half or two years ago, like Korea, where they'd have Western military installations to defend Ukraine. No, it'll be a different type of frozen conflict—a very specific one in which Russia takes all Ukrainian territory east of the Dnieper, takes Odessa, leaves Ukraine landlocked, and makes it clear to everyone that it will destroy any Western military infrastructure or personnel that try to come in and support Ukraine. Ukraine must be free of any foreign military presence, or they would impose a restriction zone.

So I think under those circumstances, a rump Ukraine that is economically very disadvantaged, that has essentially lost its manufacturing industry and a good chunk of its black earth—because black earth isn't just in western Ukraine; it's also largely in the Kherson and other oblasts of Novorossiia—this rather poor and degraded Ukraine will be left to itself. It won't be admitted to NATO or the European Union. It's obvious it's not going to join NATO, but not the European Union either, despite all the promises of Ursula von der Leyen, because it will simply be too poor and require hundreds of billions of euros in investment for the 27 nations to agree to it. Nobody has the money for that or wants to spend it, since they're all too busy remilitarizing. Therefore, it will be a very sad country—what's left of Ukraine after this is over.

## **#Glenn**

Yeah, well, this adds to the lack of logic, though. If you know they're going to lose a lot of territory, then that's when you end it. I mean, in 2019, as you know, the Rand Corporation had this report on how to extend Russia's reach—or rather, how to extend Russia's involvement. It identified pretty much every country along the Russian border that could be destabilized. And this is the think tank of the intelligence agencies. But the main logic was: we should send weapons to Ukraine and threaten NATO expansion, because that would increase Russia's commitment in Donbass. And this way, we could slowly bleed the Russians—at least of their resources. But still, this report essentially presented the counterargument, saying that if it breaks into a full-scale war and the Russians begin to take strategic territory, then the war is no longer benefiting us.

So, translated into the last four years of proxy war, for NATO it seems it would be ideal to just have the Russians and Ukrainians fight each other. If the front lines are stable and they just kill each other in huge numbers while the Russians bleed resources, that would be a good war. But once the Russians begin to win, the casualties overwhelmingly go against the Ukrainians and they start losing territory. Then, for NATO, it's a bad war. But still, for the life of me, I can't understand why we're still doing this. I mean, this is the point in time when you count your losses and put an end to it. But there doesn't seem to be any appetite at all.

## **#Gilbert Doctorow**

Putting an end to it would mean that those who invested all their political capital in its continuation would be forced out of office. And I think there's a big contradiction between the national interest and the personal interest of leadership in at least 25 out of 27 member states of the European Union. So they're in it for the same reason Netanyahu is continuing the war—because the moment he stops, he'll be going to prison. The same reason Zelensky is continuing the war, regardless of the massive loss of life among his men. As soon as he stops the war, there'll be an election, he'll be voted out of office, or he'll simply be murdered. So these are regrettable—the deep corruption in these societies, where there's a contradiction between the personal interests of the leaders and the national interests of the people who put them in power.

## **#Glenn**

That's never a good thing. Well, not when you get rational policies, at least. Thank you very much for taking the time. These are crazy times indeed. If any of this had happened during the Cold War, it would have dominated the pages of the history books. But now it seems to have become almost a daily occurrence—this kind of reckless escalation. So thank you, and have a great weekend.

## **#Gilbert Doctorow**

No, that's the UK.