

Douglas Macgregor: Russia, China & Iran Seek to Contain U.S. Military

Douglas Macgregor is a retired Colonel, combat veteran and former senior advisor to the U.S. Secretary of Defense. Col. Macgregor explains how the military adventures of the U.S. are incentivising greater military cooperation between Russia, China and Iran. Please like and subscribe! Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glennDiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: 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/gdiesen Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

#Glenn

Welcome back. Today we're joined by Colonel Douglas Macgregor, a decorated combat veteran and former advisor to the U.S. Secretary of Defense, to hopefully make some sense of our current war. As always, it's good to see you, Colonel.

#Douglas Macgregor

Yeah, makes sense. That's a tall order. We'll do our best to describe it, but making sense is difficult in Washington.

#Glenn

Well, maybe we can first try to make sense of what's happening in Russia, because it appears their strategy is changing. There's some escalation going on. How are you assessing the Russian strategy at this time? Are they looking to knock out infrastructure—electric grids—ahead of some major spring offensive? Or is this like the calm before the storm? I know they're not telling you what they're going to do, but how do you make sense of what's happening right now?

#Douglas Macgregor

Well, the first thing I think is that you've got another major **Kesselschlacht** going on down in southeastern Ukraine—what they call a cauldron battle. If you move a little east and then south of Zaporizhzhia, you see a large concentration of remaining Ukrainian troops that are being gradually encircled, and that circle is tightening rapidly. They're being largely annihilated with precision strike

weaponry, but eventually the Russians will swarm over it. That seems to be, at least in the southeast, perhaps the last bastion of Ukrainian resistance. At the same time, we see a lot of interest right now in two things. One is Odessa.

Russian special ops are already walking around Odessa at night. Odessa is lightly defended, and most of its air defense capability has been eliminated. So right now, I think it's a matter in Moscow of deciding what they want to do next. It will involve major operations, and that could easily be Odessa. At the same time, they're closing in every single day on Kharkiv. Now, none of that, in my judgment, solves the ultimate problem, which is Kyiv. As long as that government under Zelensky exists, there's a façade—an impression of something significant in Kyiv. And that's really all the Europeans have at this point. The Europeans are primarily interested in keeping that façade alive.

And unfortunately, even though President Trump says he's no longer really interested and is upset with Zelensky and so forth, we continue to send cash and equipment to the Ukrainians as well, which I think is a source of endless frustration for President Putin. So, you know, I don't know which direction the Russians want to move in, but they've also increased their force size. They've brought on more reservists, and they're currently training soldiers who came in as part of the regular draft. So I think the options are obvious—the three I mentioned: Odessa, Kharkiv, and Kyiv. I think, once again, President Putin is watching carefully what happens politically in Western Europe.

And he's waiting, to some extent, I think, for the Western Europeans to remove their governments. That should have happened a long time ago. But for some reason, Starmer, Metz, and Macron are still there. So he may decide that it's no longer possible to exercise continuous patience and that he needs to move decisively. But again, he's always been very sensitive to the possibility that if he launched a major offensive, it would awaken a sleeping NATO. Maybe he still thinks NATO amounts to something. I certainly do not. I think NATO is effectively irrelevant at this stage. And I don't think the United States wants to go to war with Russia over Ukraine. So I think he has more freedom of action than he realizes. But that's as close as I can come to explaining what's going on there.

#Glenn

Well, of course, in Europe, all our politicians and media talk about Russia's supposed desire to restore the Soviet Union and march on Poland, and so on. But we've now heard from Russia and China that one of the most recent developments is their plan to create a new grand strategy for developing bilateral relations—at least that's what Xi Jinping has been saying. What exactly do you see in the cards there for Russia and China? And of course, I think one of the problems a lot of Europeans haven't woken up to is that, since 2014, the Russians have been taking major steps to build an economic future in the East. So this idea that their foreign policy focus should be Europe is, I think, very misplaced. But what do you think this bilateral relationship will look like, and what are the objectives?

#Douglas Macgregor

Well, I think militarily the two understand that they now have a permanent interest in mutually reinforcing their capabilities and their strength. If you were to draw a line all the way around Russia and all the way around China, you'd be identifying the largest fortress in the world. These are the two great continental powers prepared to pool their military and economic resources—not only to increase their prosperity and enhance their productivity, but also to protect themselves against us. Because with each passing day, whether or not Donald Trump understands it, we seem to be getting more and more belligerent.

Each week we're threatening some new country somewhere with some sort of drastic action. So the only conclusion you can reach in Beijing and Moscow is that they need to reinforce their ties. They need to very seriously band together against the possibility that this unstable country called the United States could present a real existential threat to them. And again, I think this is a source of unending bewilderment for President Putin, because when President Trump says, "Well, I know President Putin, we have a good relationship," I think President Putin interprets that to mean something serious—but it's meaningless. Personal relations mean nothing in the international arena. Interests—strategic interests—are everything.

And the strategic interests we seem to represent are hardly what most Americans would sign up for. But they reflect certain, what I would call, domestic constituencies' interests. We would not be in the Middle East at all at this point, and we certainly would not be in a position of hostility toward Iran without the enormous Israel lobby and its money—its financial power to elect, to de-elect, to remove, to appoint people in the United States government. You also have the Cuban lobby, which is very well funded, quite large, and influential. In fact, President Trump mentioned it when he talked about Cuba, when he declared a national emergency vis-à-vis Cuba. People said, well, effectively, why are you doing this?

And he said, well, we have lots of people from Cuba inside the United States. Remember, this whole administration has been a pay-for-play operation. You donate enough money to the Trump family interests, as well as to the interests of others associated with Trump, and then we'll seriously entertain your request. If you can't do that, we're probably not going to pay much attention to you. Those are the things that are driving us externally to the United States, sadly. I think it's outrageous. And this also applies to Russia, because many of these same groups have a long history of hatred toward Russia. And that hatred has translated into policies that are fundamentally hostile to Russia.

#Glenn

Well, one area where we could also see the U.S., and possibly its NATO allies, coming into conflict with this new bloc being shaped—with Russia and China at the center—is, of course, the Middle East. I'm not sure if there's a stalemate going on with Iran. It appears that Trump, I guess, wanted an easy victory or a short war, but the Iranians seem to have essentially threatened massive retaliation against any attack, which makes it very difficult to assert any escalation control—that is,

to decide when the war should start, how it should be fought, and when it should end. But how does this affect the wider, I guess, strategic picture here? To what extent would, for example, Russia and China involve themselves, or probably already involve themselves, to some extent?

#Douglas Macgregor

I think we have to understand something. The Mossad–CIA–MI6 triumvirate was successful in persuading President Trump, a few weeks ago, that Iran was on the verge of falling apart—disintegrating—all based on what they claimed was a concerted effort inside the country to overthrow the government. In reality, the protests that began were quite legitimate. They were not violent, and they weren't aimed at overthrowing anyone. These were large numbers of people who were extremely upset over the state of the Iranian economy, for which we in the United States are mightily responsible. Their currency was being systematically destroyed, and they were all aware of that. And that was the foundation for the protests.

They were not necessarily aimed at regime change. Then the Mossad, with support from MI6 and the CIA, inserted themselves into the equation. We don't need to go back over the 40,000 Starlink terminals that were smuggled into the country, or the Mossad agents who were operating within the crowds, providing money as well as weapons to people and urging them to shoot at police and kill members of the government, and so forth. All of that was, thanks to Russian and Chinese assistance, very rapidly suppressed and eliminated, frankly. The 40,000 Starlink terminals were shut down, and the Russians and the Chinese both helped identify where they were. That helped the Iranians eliminate that threat.

But the people who went in to tell Donald Trump that Iran was weak, vulnerable, and easy to essentially overthrow are still there. And then they went back to President Trump and said, "Well, you know, our attempt to overthrow the government surreptitiously, using intelligence forces, failed." So his answer was, "Well, what's the next step?" And that was a legitimate question—and he got an answer. The answer came from both the intelligence community and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs: we don't have enough firepower, we don't have enough force on hand to affect anything inside Iran. The reason nothing has happened so far is because we're still waiting for additional assets to show up. There are probably at least two more carrier battle groups on their way to the region.

Now, one may be in the Mediterranean; I don't know. Another one will certainly be down in the Indian Ocean. But I also don't know what's going on on the Air Force side of the house. We have to remember that the real power behind the strikes on Iran won't come from the fleet at sea—it will come from the United States Air Force. They'll deliver, presumably from high altitude and out of range of Iranian air and missile defense capabilities, enormous firepower in the form of glide bombs, precision strike weapons, and so forth. So these talks that have now been convened, I think, are meaningless. I don't think the Iranians are terribly fooled. They're showing up because the Chinese and the Russians said, "Go to the talks. Listen to what they have to say."

But they've also made it very clear right up front that Mr. Netanyahu's talking points, which form the basis of President Trump's demand—two out of those three talking points—have been dismissed out of hand. And that is any change, dismantlement, or restructuring of the missile arsenal so that Israel need not worry about being within range of Iranian weapons. That's off the table. And the notion that Iran will stop supporting or working with its allies in the region—that's off the table too. So the only thing they're willing to talk about, apparently, is enriched uranium. Now, how far can that reach? I'm not sure it can get very far, because if you start talking about levels of enrichment, storage issues, and where it's going to be, you're on the road back to the JCPOA that was there under the Obama administration.

I don't think these talks are serious at all. I think they're just buying time. I wouldn't expect anything to happen for another week, maybe two weeks—but certainly not for at least another week or ten days—because more assets are required. Now, that brings us to the next question, which is the most important one: what's the objective of the probable air and missile campaign that will start in another week to ten days? Is it regime change? Are we back to that? Or is there something else? Well, I think there's still going to be a concerted effort to identify, find, target, and destroy the government if it can be done. But I think this is about destroying Iran. People need to understand that. This is a ruthless war of destruction.

It's designed to promote the disintegration of the Iranian nation-state. They think they can do this. I don't know—I have my doubts. I mean, this is, after all, a nation of ninety-three million. The area is about the size of Western Europe. But of course, the areas of greatest interest are still largely in the north and central parts of the country. They're not down south, which means the targeting challenge isn't as immense as it would be if you were going after Western Europe. But it's still a significant challenge. And I think that's where they're headed. They simply want to destroy this nation-state, cause it to divide, to fragment. And again, you go back to the intelligence assessments, to the people who've been telling Donald Trump—and who told Biden, by the way—that Russia is weak.

Russia will be easy to defeat. Russia can't withstand the pressure. We're hearing the same kinds of things now about Iran. But Iran is not Russia, and Iran has several very serious vulnerabilities. You're familiar with them—water is a huge problem, and food for the people who live in the country. They're dependent on external deliveries of food. Can the Russians and the Chinese help with that? Perhaps. But I think that's a real danger. The question is, can they do enough damage to the point where somebody stands up and says, "Enough, we can't take it anymore"? Now, what's the Iranian response to this? Well, the Iranian response is that they have no incentive to exercise any restraint.

So if they're attacked, their predisposition, Glenn, is to use everything they have. Now, the issue for us is, I don't know how effective that will be. I've always said—and I think others agree with this—the Iranians can handle Israel. But can the Iranians handle Israel and the United States, in terms of military power? That's unclear. Enormous amounts of weaponry, munitions, missiles, and so forth have been delivered over the last few weeks by the Chinese. The Russians have been on the

ground, working to help with the integrated air and missile defenses. The Chinese—and I presume the Russians as well, though we know without a doubt the Chinese have done this—have provided satellite imagery, real-time feeds to the Iranians.

So the Iranians are not in the same position they were last time, where they might not know where things are or be caught by surprise. I think they know where everything is now, and that includes the ships at sea. If you look at the weapons, I don't know how many of these missiles— I think it's the DF-21 or DF-23—that the Chinese have produced exclusively for targeting ships at sea. We haven't seen them used, and we don't know how effective they are. But given Iran's performance during the 12-day war, it turned out their weaponry was actually very accurate and very precise. So I think that, in addition to firing whatever they've got at Israel, they will definitely hit our bases, and they'll probably go after our ships at sea.

What they can affect, obviously, are massive bombing runs right now. Now, we don't know—perhaps, depending on the path our bombers take and the altitude—can they be tracked? Well, stealth is not the miracle most people think it is. Stealth, in terms of the design built into aircraft, can delay detection, but it can't make you invisible. So you can delay detection for some period of time; I don't know what that delay looks like. What we can't address right now is what happens to B-2s that overfly. Can you use B-52s if the B-2s have to be very effective against the air and missile defenses, as well as the critical targets, before you can use B-52s?

B-52s are wonderful delivery systems for massive numbers of bombs, but they're very vulnerable because they're old aircraft. They're easy to target and shoot down. So we just don't know. There are a lot of questions we can't answer. I don't know what answers are being provided to Donald Trump, but I suspect he's the victim of what I'd call the "rosy scenario." The final point is, how long can this last? I think ten days to two weeks is about it, because at that point we're actually scraping the bottom of the barrel for missiles. And that's not a minor issue, because you've got to protect your ships at sea and your bases at home.

How many missiles can you afford to expend before you're at an unacceptably low and dangerous level—especially if the Chinese and the Russians become involved? I think that's the final question. Everybody asks, "What do you think the Chinese and Russians are going to do?" And the only answer I can give is that neither China nor Russia will allow Iran to be pulverized out of existence. In other words, if it gets to the point where Iran really is on the ropes and could disintegrate, then Russia and China, I think, will act. Now, what will that action consist of? It won't be nuclear, but it could involve a collision at sea very easily, because both China and Russia have plenty of submarines—and we're not very good at tracking modern nuclear-powered submarines in deep water.

#Glenn

I think people often see China as very cautious, and I'd agree with that. But allowing Iran to fall in this way has nothing to do with caution—it's extremely dangerous. It's hard to imagine either Iran or China wanting to go directly against the United States, but something has to be done to prevent Iran from collapsing. Given that Iran would go all in, since they see this as existential, they won't accept any kind of limited "bloody nose" attack that could stop the war. And since the Chinese and the Russians can't afford to see the balkanization or destruction of Iran, do you think the war would still happen? I've heard some suggest that Trump is trying to walk this one back—or is it simply too late now?

#Douglas Macgregor

Well, I don't know that it's necessarily too late. I think the decision has been made—that was my point about the talks. I don't think the talks are serious at all. I think it's just a matter of time to assemble more assets for what's obviously going to be a much larger challenge than they originally envisioned. I think they thought they were going to have an easier time destabilizing and then ultimately destroying the regime.

I think they had assembled what they thought they needed to attack the regime at the point when they were convinced it was very, very vulnerable. That turned out to be false. Now, there's something else that deserves mention, because we don't bring it up very much. I noted that the Ayatollah—the supreme leader, whatever title you want to use—who actually speaks very rationally when you listen carefully to what he says, has made it clear that this war will not be like the last one. This will be a regional war. Now, people are interpreting that to mean, well, that's because the Iranians can target all the bases in the region and may ultimately go after ships at sea. That's part of it. But I don't think we're looking at the region through an objective lens. And I'm talking specifically about Turkey—Türkiye.

The Turks are very concerned for several reasons. First of all, they see no benefit to the destruction of Iran. What they expect is that if Iran disintegrates or fails to hold together, they'll be overwhelmed with tens of thousands—maybe millions—of refugees. That's probably also true for Iraq and the other surrounding Arab states. None of those states want to face that. And frankly, many of those people would probably be redirected toward Europe. I'd be very surprised if that didn't happen. The Turks don't want anything to do with that. Secondly, the Turks are dealing with the Israelis right now in Syria, and to a lesser extent in Lebanon. They know what the Greater Israel Project is about. The population of Turkey itself is enraged over what has happened in Gaza.

The hatred of the Israelis in Turkey is so thick you could cut it with a knife. In Istanbul, there's an exhibit—something we might compare to the Holocaust Museum, something along those lines. And this exhibit is all about Gaza. Now, I haven't seen it myself, but I have friends and relatives who have been there, and they told me it's absolutely shocking. The images of murdered children, the starving population, the destruction—it's overwhelming. The Turkish population is streaming through

this place in Istanbul, and it's getting coverage all over Turkey. And there is a readiness in Turkey, to be frank, to fight. So if you're sitting in Turkey and it looks like things are so bad in Iran that the place could, in fact, fall apart and disintegrate, do you wait to be next on the menu? Because from the Turkish vantage point, if Iran goes down...

That leaves only us to oppose Israeli Jewish supremacy in the region. And I don't think the Turks want to be alone in that. Now, given that situation, what would you do as a Turk? Well, you'd also talk to the Russians and the Chinese. The Russians have a lot invested in Turkey—they're building a nuclear power station there. They've had their ups and downs with the Turks, but this is an existential question. I think the Russians, the Turks, and the Chinese will all work something out at some point, and they'll be united in their opposition to the destruction of Iran. Now, the other Arab states in the region are militarily irrelevant. Unfortunately, Egypt is an ambulatory patient. It has plenty of troops.

It's got plenty of equipment—plenty of tanks, aircraft, and so forth—but they seem unable to do anything because, internally, Egypt simply isn't very stable. Egyptian society isn't very cohesive. The government seems more concerned about the threat from its own population right now than about the Israelis. That doesn't mean they're not sympathetic to others in the region, especially the Iranians at this point, because Egypt and Iran have had good relations for several years. But I wouldn't expect any of the Arab states to do anything unless it appears that the three states I just mentioned are actually prepared to intervene in some fashion. In other words, this is a disaster on a regional scale that could ultimately spill over and become almost global.

That's the bad news. And I don't think there's an appreciation for that in the White House. I think, once again, you're dealing with people who say, just as they did about Russia, "It's weak, it's this, it's that. No one will challenge us. No one will stand up to us." What happened the last time? Did the Chinese or the Russians do anything? The answer is no. But the last time was not an existential question. The last time, it ended after twelve days. Now, set all of that aside and consider the following: I don't think President Trump wants this to happen. I really don't. But I don't think he has much choice. I think he's a prisoner of his commitments to others over the last couple of years that ended up putting him in the White House. So I don't think he can back away from this.

#Glenn

Yeah, one of the major weaknesses, the way I see it, is this illusion of escalation control. It's similar to what's happening in Europe—the idea that we can just keep the war against Russia on a slow burner, that they'll just slowly kill each other, and we can end it whenever we want at the negotiating table or whatever. But it just seems like this could explode at any time. If the front lines begin to collapse, as they appear to be doing, and the Russians start making major advances, it's very hard to see why they would accept any compromise that would allow NATO to revive the Ukrainian front line against Russia in the future.

Same with Iran. I think once this war has begun and the same thing happens, the US or Israel would run out of missiles. I don't think you can just hit the pause button and fight it again six months later. It would be very difficult to get this thing under control. So again, the illusion of escalation control seems to be a problem. But in this more chaotic environment, how do you assess the Europeans here? They seem to be supportive of the campaign against Iran, just like they've been more than supportive of the campaign against Russia.

#Douglas Macgregor

Well, before we leave Russia, let me just make an observation that was passed to me a few hours ago by someone who has spent many, many hours—perhaps hundreds—watching videos and speeches by President Putin. He pointed out something I found very interesting. You realize that February 2nd is the anniversary of the fall of Stalingrad. Americans pay no attention to this. We know that the Russians, or the Soviets at that point, sustained at least a million casualties defending Stalingrad against the Germans. It wasn't the end of the war for the Germans by any means, but it was a tremendous setback. It was also an important turning point for the Russians because they'd had very little success against the German armed forces up to that point. Putin went to the memorial service in Stalingrad.

And this man remarked that it wasn't so much what Putin said, which was predictable, but that he had never seen him so somber before. Not just deeply moved by the event—that's not unusual in Russia—but especially somber, almost downcast in his posture and expression. He connected this to some discussions going on in Russia among various people, suggesting that President Putin may have reached the point where he's not sure there's much hope for any kind of—well, I don't want to say reconciliation—but any kind of useful agreement with Washington. I think President Putin has now come to the conclusion that Russia may have to oppose us. And it's not something he wants to do, just as I contend that President Trump doesn't really want to spark this war in the Middle East.

But Trump puts on a great face. He's a natural marketer. His greatest genius is marketing. He speaks and conveys an impression that's totally divorced, I think, from what's really bothering him. But that's not the case with Putin. This apparently was very, very obvious. I say that because there are a lot of people in the West who don't understand the Russians, and certainly don't understand President Putin. I would urge everybody to take the time to look at that memorial service from the 2nd of February and watch him very carefully—not just the translated statements, but look at him, his posture, how he behaves. He's very, very somber. I think he's very serious, and I would take note of that if I were in Washington.

And now, you mentioned the Europeans. I listened to Donald Tusk this morning—I don't know when he said it, if it was today or yesterday—but he tried to make the claim that there was some sort of connection between Putin and Epstein, which is absolutely absurd. There's no evidence for that at all. Putin doesn't need any tax advice from Mr. Epstein, who seems to have been in the business of telling people how to avoid paying taxes. He also didn't need any of Mr. Epstein's other famous

services. But I think that tells you something about the Europeans right now. Tusk is a globalist. Macron's a globalist. Starmer's a globalist.

Merz is a globalist. All these people are BlackRock affiliates and connected with folks that, frankly, I would avoid at all costs if I could in the United States. These are people whose morals and belief systems are absolutely anathema to me—and, I think, to most American citizens. But the fact that they're going out of their way, especially Tusk, to try to make a link with Epstein strikes me as an act of desperation. They're trying to convince people not just that "the Russians are coming, the Russians are coming," but the Russians are not coming—and that's becoming increasingly obvious to people in Europe.

It's also an attempt to defame President Putin and his government once again as evil incarnate, which it isn't and never was. So I think the Europeans are stuck. What we're all hoping for is that the respective electorates will throw these people out sooner rather than later, because there's no reason for the conflict between Europe and Russia. But that hasn't happened yet, and we hope it does sooner rather than later. I guess the place that's most likely to burst at the seams first—according to David Betts—turns out to be Great Britain. So perhaps that's where it begins. France won't be far behind, and I don't think the Germans will do much until they see it happen elsewhere.

#Glenn

I did an interview with David Betts, and I was asking when it's too late to reverse some of this, but he seemed quite convinced that that point passed long ago. So something resembling at least a civil war is more or less unavoidable. But it's interesting with Britain, though—of all the media across Europe, it's the British media that has, over the past few days, really worked hard to try to Russiagate the whole Epstein scandal. That is, to suggest that perhaps Epstein was run by the KGB, as if that's still a thing.

But it's—no, it's... it shows the attempt to rely on the continued hatred of Russia to deflect, but also a very cynical way of trying to provide political cover for their own elites, many of whom are implicated in this. But since you brought it up, I wanted to ask you lastly about the Epstein files. What can be concluded from them? I mean, you have a very strong hidden network of power. It's not a deep state, but it's still a very profound network of power, suggesting that power doesn't really reside with the voters but instead—well, to drop the polite language—a lot of the power resides among perverted elites. What significance do you see this having for the foreign policies of the West?

#Douglas Macgregor

I think it's very reminiscent of what the French people discovered in the late 1780s about their own ruling class. By the time you get to 1789, they had developed a serious loathing for the aristocratic leadership of the country. The aristocrats flaunted all the morals and values. Now, the French are not, and never have been, unreasonable people. But when you go out of your way to pour buckets

of filth and abuse over the institutions of the country—whether it's the church, the army, or the government—you're signaling to the population that you have nothing but contempt for them. And one of the reasons you got the revolution in 1789 wasn't just because the price of bread was no longer affordable.

It was also the willingness to say these people don't deserve the positions they hold. I think, increasingly, in the United States, more and more Americans are concluding that the people who govern them are unworthy of the positions they hold. They're also becoming more aware that the people governing them really aren't governing them. It's this group of billionaires behind the scenes, with their various tentacles in Congress, the courts, even now in the senior military leadership and the White House—to the point where people are beginning to wonder who is actually calling the shots. And more and more of them are concluding it's not the people we elected; it's the people who paid for the election.

#Glenn

So, a crisis of political legitimacy—at least that's what seems to be brewing in Europe as well. Before we wrap up, do you have any other predictions, or maybe not predictions but thoughts, about where we might be heading, at least here in Europe? Especially regarding what the Russians might have planned next?

#Douglas Macgregor

Well, the Russians are going to do what the Russians are going to do. To be perfectly frank, the Europeans are increasingly irrelevant to that process. What we don't know is what's being decided in Moscow. But I think, based on the observations of this individual who is a professional Putin watcher, and also on what we see happening on the ground in eastern Ukraine with the military, this is going to end on Russian terms. The decision is about to be made—when, where, and how that will happen. What we're going to see in the future is going to be different from what we've seen over the last nearly four years.

But Russia—remember, when they began this process, their military was far too small, completely ill-equipped, and incapable of coping with the crisis. It took a few months for that to sink in. By June or July, President Putin met with his leaders and decided, "You know, we're going to have to change everything we thought. All of our original assumptions are wrong, and we're going to have to build a new force." They've done that. So I think they're in a different situation now, where they know they effectively have a dominant position on the ground in Europe, and they know the Europeans have nothing with which to stop them. The question is, how much further do we go before we finally say, "Enough's enough?"

And there are lots of Russians saying, "We need to go all the way to the Polish border." But I think the previous position was to go to the Dnieper River—certainly to seize Odessa—and potentially,

although it's not something Putin wants to do, to march straight into Kyiv and rid themselves of this government. There are others who could take the reins and run the government in the rest of Ukraine. But what people have never understood is that the Russians do not want to govern Western Ukraine. They don't. And they have a long history of experience with the people there. So do the Poles, by the way. The only people who seem to have had any real success governing Western Ukraine for any length of time, believe it or not, were the Austrians.

And that's actually viewed by most Ukrainians in the West as having been a relatively positive period in their history. But everybody else doesn't want anything to do with it. It's kryptonite. Everyone wants to stay away from it. So it may be that eventually these governments in Europe will fall down, fall apart, and be replaced by people who have a more... realistic view of themselves. I'm still surprised that Germany, which is on the path to national suicide given its passion for deindustrialization, has not already awakened. But these things are coming. What I've learned, I think, over the last few years is that everything takes longer than you think it would. That's the best I can do for you.

#Glenn

Yeah, that makes it difficult to time, but the path nonetheless seems very clearly charted. So, well, Colonel, as always, thank you so much for your time.

#Douglas Macgregor

Thank you, Glenn.