

# Scott Ritter on US Foreign Policy, CIA & What's REALLY Happening

In this hard-hitting interview, former US Marine Corps intelligence officer and ex-UN weapons inspector Scott Ritter shares his unfiltered analysis of US foreign policy and recent geopolitical events. Support Independent media to remain bold: <https://patreon.com/IndiaGlobalLeft> Link for donation: <https://paypal.me/sankymudiar> We dive deep into critical questions, including: 1. What is Scott Ritter's view of today's US foreign policy? Why Washington's strategy is driven by power, leverage, and strategic interests. 2. Is the shift to blunt domination due to domestic politics or the rise of China & Russia? Ritter explores whether internal politics or external challenges are reshaping US approaches. 3. Why the US empire isn't retreating — ideological goals or institutional forces (like the MIC)? A look at whether ideology or powerful institutions keep the US engaged internationally. 4. What really happened in Venezuela? Ritter analyzes US involvement, regime change dynamics, and what it means for regional geopolitics. 5. Did the CIA "buy" Venezuelan elites? And what about Delcy Rodríguez? Insights into US covert influence and current political alignments in Caracas. 6. Are the US-Iran talks in good faith — diplomacy or another bluff? Ritter discusses whether negotiations offer real peace or strategic leverage. 7. What drives US policy on Iran — Israel lobby vs. strategic interests in West Asia? We break down competing forces shaping American strategy. 8. Where are US-Russia talks going — forward or backward? An honest assessment of the current state of superpower diplomacy. Watch till the end for Ritter's predictions on the future of global power, resolve in the Ukraine war, and the long-term implications for US hegemony. Subscribe for more expert geopolitical breakdowns and high-level interviews. Follow us on Substack: <https://substack.com/@indiagloballeft> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Indiagloballeft> Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/indiagloballeft/> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61559411353392> Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/show/69Y9iCWUv8ha3ATsPWtWk0?si=ee1f0de3de094f17> Telegram: <https://t.me/+WNIqoiv1Rhg5NjEx>

## #Mudiar

Hello and welcome to another episode of \*India and Global Left\*. If you're new to the show, please hit the subscribe button. Also, consider becoming a YouTube member, a patron, or donating a small amount using the link in the description box. Today we are joined by Scott Ritter, a former U.S. Marine Corps intelligence officer, United Nations weapons inspector, author, and analyst of geopolitics. Scott, welcome back to \*India and Global Left.\* Thanks for having me. I wanted to start out with a big-picture question on U.S. foreign policy. If you could, tell us—what's your assessment of the overall U.S. foreign policy at this moment? That's a big question.

## #Guest

There have been some interesting developments and discussions in terms of public statements. Of course, we saw the National Security Strategy of the United States that was published in November, and it represented a significant deviation from past practice—more of a focus on “Fortress America,” fortifying America's posture in the Western Hemisphere, de-emphasizing Europe, redefining engagement with China and the Pacific, and again, a sort of de-emphasis on our engagement in the Middle East, West Asia, and even South Asia. But then we see Marco Rubio making certain statements recently, in connection with his visit to Europe, that suggest it's not that the United States is disengaging from the Global South.

We're recommitting to a posture that appears to be more neocolonial in nature, you know, as opposed to being respectful of the sovereign reality of the Global South—of nations that are emerging from the shadows of the Cold War to assert themselves more effectively in a more sovereign fashion. We're actually seeking to redefine our relationship with Europe in a way that allows us to exploit Europe's colonial past to project, or reproject, our influence. So I'd say it's a foreign policy that's in transition, but it's not transitioning in a good way.

It's basically taking the concept of American hegemony and, you know, restructuring how we impose our will on the world. Gone is the rules-based international order methodology. And now we have, I think, a more blunt, in-your-face kind of American power. We speak of “America great again.” You know, I think people who bought into that notion said, well, that's OK, because that just means America is turning inward. No—making America great again apparently is an outward projection of American dominance. And I think that's the direction we're going with the foreign policy of the United States.

## **#Mudiar**

And what do you think is the reason for this shift from, let's say—for lack of a better word—a more subtle, hegemonic, imperial strategy that evolved after the Second World War, to what you described as a more blunt form of domination? Is it an internal crisis within the United States, including the rising cost of living for young people—rent and so on—or is it challenges from outside, like China, Russia, and the rise of other powers that are now challenging the U.S. empire?

## **#Guest**

I de-emphasize the domestic factor as an impetus for foreign policy for the following reason: the millennial generation, which should be dominant politically in the United States given the demographics, is passive. They're disengaged, especially when it comes to foreign policy, and they're easily managed through economic incentives or distractions. So I think that, from a domestic standpoint, this is a manageable issue and not the one driving the ship. What's really happening is the need of the United States to—look, again, we just have to be brutally honest here—you know, we don't exist as an equal power. I hope the world understands that. We exist as a dominant power.

The way we operate in the world is that, in order to maintain equality—our standard of living at home—we have to access the world's resources at prices that are to our advantage, not to yours. We did that through the so-called rules-based international order: the domination of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and other economic structures that defined how the globe coexisted. But now we see the world transitioning into something new, and so the United States needs to redefine how it will assert its dominance. As I said, the rules-based international order is no longer an effective mechanism for that. We're seeing pushback.

For instance, one of the mainstays of the rules-based international order is the G7. The United States tried to exploit the perceived success of the G7 by creating the G20, which would pull the Global South into an umbrella dominated by the G7. Instead, what we got was the rise of BRICS—an alternative economic forum, an alternative economic reality—that not only diminishes the effectiveness of the G20 but exposes the frailty of the G7. The United States can't be held hostage to these legacy frameworks, so we're jettisoning ourselves from them, redefining our posture, and going it alone. Gone is the pretense that we need anybody. We don't need anybody. We never did. We always used that as an excuse to create alliances of convenience—but they were really alliances of exploitation.

Today, at least, I mean, the one thing we can say about American foreign policy right now is that it's probably the most honest foreign policy the United States has ever waged. Because there are no pretenses here. We're just saying it straight to your face: we are the biggest dog on the block, and if you want to take us on, we'll bite you, chew you up, and spit you out. And that's the world we live in. Now, whether or not this dog can actually follow through—you know, this dog might have arthritis, might have some loose teeth and bad eyesight, because it's an old dog. But the point is, we are redefining our society, our position in a changing world. And we're not going to do it in a way that allows people to be our equals. We won't accept equality. I mean, we will only tolerate American dominance. That's it.

## **#Mudiar**

And this doctrine of not accepting others as equals—or even imagining a rollback of the U.S. empire—this is not happening. Is that because of the ideological positions of the people in power, or do you think it's more institutional? Meaning, the military-industrial complex, the CIA, the intelligence frameworks, and so on. Is it because of that that the empire doesn't roll back, or is it more about those in power and their ideological position?

## **#Guest**

I think it's more systemic than that. I think it's wrong to blame just those in power, or even to blame the establishment. Of course, that's all true—they aren't going to yield power. The American people are to blame, ultimately. The American people are to blame. We demand this policy. We don't want to be the equals of anybody. We've been—well, we are raised to believe that we are a breed apart,

that we are the exceptional people. There are some people, and I like to count myself among them, who understand the lunacy of such a projection. But the reality is, on the average street of an American city or town, the American people—you cannot run for office today and win a national election if you speak about America being the equal of anybody in the world. Politically, that's the death of you.

We are Americans. We are the best—well, we're not. We are the brightest—we're not. We are the strongest—we're not. We are the smartest—we're not. But we believe we are. And it's not just that we believe it; we believe we're destined to be. That this is the proper role of America and Americans today. And again, this is where I blame the millennials, because their passivity in engaging on this issue has allowed the generations who should be releasing control—releasing their hold on power—to retain it. I mean, we're talking about legacy mindsets, boomer mindsets. And, you know, that's normal—it's very hard to get an old dog to learn new tricks. But the problem is, unless the new dog is ready to jump in and take over the stage, the old dogs are going to sit there and keep performing the tricks.

And right now, the boomers—my generation—and Generation X, which came after me, we're not giving up our hold on power. And the millennials aren't demanding release. So our policy will continue in a changing world where any rational human being would recognize the absolute necessity for the United States to learn to peacefully coexist with the rest of the world as an equal partner in the global community. That's the rational view. The boomers refuse to yield, and we continue to demand that we assert our hegemony, our authority, our dominance in the world today. This is a systemic problem in the United States. It's not just the problem of one political faction or a deeply entrenched political elite. This is systemic to the United States. It's a grassroots problem.

## **#Mudiar**

With that big picture in mind, I wanted to ask you about a few specifics of U.S. foreign policy, and I wanted to start with Venezuela. We've had a few shows—maybe five or six—on Venezuela since the U.S. regime tried to kidnap Nicolás Maduro, the president of Venezuela. Could you give us a sense of what happened with that operation? We haven't really discussed in detail what actually took place in Venezuela during that operation.

## **#Guest**

Well, you know, I think what happened is that everybody was distracted by Delta Force flying in and kidnapping Maduro. That was the glamour. I mean, you know, then we throw in the sonic weapon—people got distracted by that. The radars didn't work—people got distracted by that too. And what they're not paying attention to is the fact that the CIA bought Venezuela. And then the real question is, how did that happen? How did the United States insinuate itself into Venezuelan society to the

extent that we basically neutralized popular support for Maduro, and we hijacked the established elites—military and civil—to the point that we now view the former vice president of Maduro, the president of Venezuela today, as an acceptable outcome because she works for us.

We own her. We bought her. We bought everybody. That's what happened in Venezuela. It's a manifestation of a decades-long pattern of behavior by the United States that repeats itself globally. And it should serve as a wake-up call to nations like Iran and Russia, to be honest. Anytime a nation engages in meaningful economic interaction with the United States, it opens itself up to exploitation, because the United States uses hybrid warfare that's tied to cultural imagery—the Hollywood vision of what the world should look like, what it could look like if only you were like America, if only you believed in America.

And people buy into that dream. One of the big facilitators of this is the internet—the role the internet plays in corrupting the minds of the younger generation. Go back to the time of, maybe this is a name that isn't familiar to you, but it should be: Jared Cohen. Jared Cohen was a guy who, back in the early 2000s, wrote a book about how he traveled through the Middle East and saw in the youth there a desire to be like America—that we were the same. And therefore, it was the duty and responsibility of the United States to create connectivity through the internet so that the youth could collaborate.

But this was really nothing more than an expression of soft power. Jared Cohen wrote, then became a member of the State Department, working first with the Bush administration and later with the Clinton administration to carry out what they called "digital democracy"—injecting, infecting nations with the vision of America. And we did that in Syria. We did that in Egypt. We did that in Iran. We do that everywhere. You know, in Syria, where every stone has been turned over because of conflict—why does the internet work so well? Because it has to work well so we can infect the minds of the Syrian people, and in Iran today, the same thing.

You know, over 100,000 Starlink terminals have been sent to Iran. The Iranian government has only rounded up a few thousand of them. The ones that remain are still connected to a population that's being actively infected with soft, hybrid warfare techniques to undermine the Iranian regime—to infect it from within, to make it susceptible to exploitation and manipulation. That's what happened in Venezuela: the elites were infected, and the United States took control. The Venezuelan model is the one the Trump administration plans on using over and over again.

I mean, again, look at the arrogance of it. In Iran, Scott Ritter, the Secretary of the Treasury, admits that he triggered the currency crisis that led to the demonstrations—that it was planned and done in concert with other actions. And then we see the unrest unfold based on directions being sent into Iran through internet connectivity. And then it spreads out. This is the power the United States has. It's a power that goes beyond simply parking aircraft carriers off the coast of countries and threatening to bomb them. This is the power to destroy nations from within by corrupting the minds of the youth.

## **#Mudiar**

I want to get your comment on the CIA buying off Venezuelan elites. There are analysts who say that Delcy Rodríguez, the current acting president, and Diosdado Cabello, the head of national security in Venezuela—these are people who are committed to the Chavista, Madurismo ideology and government. But there are others who say they've been bought off or coerced. What's your analysis of that?

## **#Guest**

Why is the United States opening an embassy in Caracas?

## **#Mudiar**

Many are saying that this is pressuring Venezuela into accepting a middle ground, rather than buying off Rodríguez and others.

## **#Guest**

That's coping. The bottom line is, you're allowing the United States to install a bastion of control. People know what an American embassy is—you should know what an American embassy is. All right, it's not there to help you. It's not there to be your friend. An American embassy is a control mechanism from which the United States exerts power, influence, and control—direct control. An American embassy allows the CIA to have a formal operational base inside your country.

So there's only one way to interpret the Venezuelan government allowing the United States to reopen its embassy, and that is that it has surrendered to the United States. Now, the CIA is smart enough to understand that you have to conceal certain things, you have to play certain games, and so on. You know, especially early on in this stage, you don't want to make the reveal too quick. But no, I don't accept this notion of, "I know what resistance looks like, and I know what capitulation looks like." And what I'm seeing in Venezuela isn't resistance—it's capitulation.

## **#Mudiar**

I wanted to move to Iran, given that we're seeing a new round of negotiations—first in Muscat and now in Geneva. In parallel, there's a tremendous buildup of U.S. military assets, including the deployment of aircraft to the region. Iran, of course, is showing off its missiles and drones in the waters of the Indian Ocean. Are these negotiations genuine, good-faith talks, or just another bluff like we saw last year, setting up for the right moment to attack or stage another coup in Iran?

## **#Guest**

I think past performance is always an indicator of future outcomes. The United States, first of all, is not interested in a negotiated settlement with Iran. The United States is interested in one thing and one thing only: regime change. President Trump's own rhetoric has backed that up. Ask yourself why Jared Kushner, who was one half of the negotiating team that met with the Iranians in Geneva, also met with the Iranian diaspora in the United States to begin building the next government of Iran. If we were truly interested in a genuine diplomatic outcome, would we be working hard to find a replacement government while we negotiate? It tells you this is a ploy. The United States has made it clear that it will not accept any Iranian enrichment.

And yet the Iranian position is that they must be allowed to have enrichment as permitted under Article 4 of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. So what is there to negotiate? Um, you know, the Iranians fell into a trap where they've come up with an agreed-upon construct that gives them hope. They're positive about this. Now they're going to go back for two weeks and engage in discussions on the next stage. During these two weeks, the United States will be building up its military power. But as long as diplomacy is open—see, the window of vulnerability for America is right now. If Iran were to exercise its Article 51 right of self-defense—preemptive self-defense—it's permitted under international law when an imminent threat is manifesting itself. You're allowed to preempt it under the Caroline doctrine, which is recognized in international law.

It clearly states this: if Iran were to exercise preemptive self-defense and hit the United States now, as it's deploying forces to the region, it would end any chance of an American, uh, decapitation strike. But now Iran is trapped in a negotiation. It's talking about a deal that will never manifest itself. And while they're talking, the United States is finalizing its deployment. My guess is that on the eve of the next round of negotiations, the United States will pull the trigger and begin a massive campaign targeting Iran, the goal of which is regime change. This is what Donald Trump says his goal is: that al-Khamenei must go. Must go. I mean, how many times does Donald Trump have to say that before people believe that is indeed the policy of the United States?

## **#Mudiar**

And I wanted to ask you, what's your assessment of a realistic scenario if a war were to break out between the U.S. and Iran?

## **#Guest**

Well, there are some in the United States who believe that Iran will hesitate at the moment of decision—that if there's an attack, rather than immediately, you know, burning everything to the ground, because that's the only defensive deterrent Iran has, they'll hold back. You say, if there's a war, everything will be destroyed, nothing will be left. We believe Iran is going to hesitate on pulling that trigger, which gives us a window of opportunity to come in with massive application of force to neutralize as much of their ballistic missile launch capacity as possible, and to make sure any Iranian response is, you know, watered down and manageable.

And then to couple that with a renewal of unrest inside Iran, so that Iran is fighting a true front war. Their cities will be on fire. All those seventy to eighty thousand Starlink terminals that haven't been discovered by the Iranian regime are linked to opposition groups who will come out of the woodwork now because they're being told this is the moment of decision. Iranian cities will be burning. Other military aircraft will be suppressing Iran's ability to mobilize security forces. And we'll be looking at the collapse of the Iranian regime—the end of the Islamic Republic—within a few weeks.

That's the Western vision of this. It's a very realistic vision—it's not an unrealistic one. How many people thought a single Delta Force raid could cause Venezuela to collapse? Not too many. How many people predicted the fall of Bashar al-Assad the way he fell? Not too many. So there are a lot of people out there right now who say that because the Islamic Republic has existed for 47 years and has withstood American efforts to remove it, it's simply not going to happen.

I would say that the Iranian government is the greatest vulnerability right now, because the United States, for the first time, is willing to apply the force necessary to achieve an outcome. There's no guarantee of success, though. The Iranians are very resilient, very resourceful. And, you know, my fear is that while we may succeed in burning down Iranian cities, the Iranian people aren't necessarily supportive of that removal, and they may support the government's brutal suppression of these outside powers. No mainstream Iranian citizen supports the Mujahideen-e-Khalq. No mainstream Iranian citizen supports the monarchy. They don't support the Balochistan Liberation Army.

They don't support PJAK. They don't support any of these breakaway movements. They support a unified Iran. And so I believe they will support the Iranian government's suppression. I also don't believe that, you know, even if we kill Ali Khamenei—which we probably will—we respect the fact that the Islamic Republic is a constitutional republic and that there are lines of succession. There's an Assembly of Experts that has already picked the next supreme leader and has gone too far down that path. We will never eliminate the supreme leader, because the supreme leader isn't an individual—it's a position, a status. It will be filled, because that's what the Islamic Republic demands.

We don't respect the fact that the parliament is elected by the Iranian people in a democratic fashion. So is the presidency, and there are lines of succession that are constitutionally mandated. See, we tend to view this as removing an autocrat—like a Nicolás Maduro-type regime, like a Bashar al-Assad-type regime—and we don't understand that the Islamic Republic is indeed a constitutional republic based on democratic principles that have been accepted and embraced by the vast majority of the Iranian people. Therefore, the Islamic Republic will not collapse like a house of cards. What we'll end up with is a region on fire, a global economy in collapse, and the United States trapped in a war it cannot win. That's where I believe the outcome will be.

**#Mudiar**

What's the degree of vulnerability of U.S. military assets in the region—in the Persian Gulf, in Iraq, and elsewhere?

## **#Guest**

Look, I... I was in the military for some time. I'm not anymore, but I'm a veteran, and I operated at very high levels—meaning I was involved in Army-level decision-making, national-level decision-making. The United States is not just going to sit there and let Iran punch it, all right? That doesn't mean damage won't be done, but we will undertake measures designed to prevent Iran from doing the damage it wants to do. This is why Iran's only hope is a preemptive attack. If Iran allows the United States to bring the forces into the region that we believe are necessary to carry out a major existential event inside Iran, that means we have a plan.

Now, no plan survives initial contact with the enemy. The enemy always has a vote, and Iran will have a vote. But we have a plan in place designed to minimize American casualties, and I believe that plan is built on our preemptive application of overwhelming force. If we attack Iran, it will be something Iran has never experienced before in its history—even in June of 2025. The level of sustained violence will be off the charts. I think that's the American plan: to put the Iranians off balance early on and then sustain that. We're bringing in military capability that is sustainable.

If we're successful in suppressing Iran's ballistic missile retaliatory capacity, then we can sustain it. Iran, of course, also has a plan. I believe they're saying, "What can be done against us?" And, you know, if their plan's better than our plan, then they'll do harm against us. This is why I say the best option is to avoid war altogether, because I don't think anybody's going to win this war. I think this war is just going to lead to devastation of Iran, devastation of the region, embarrassment for the United States, and devastation for the United States because, you know, our economy is fragile.

One of the reasons we're engaging in this very aggressive foreign policy is because of the fragility of the American economy—an economy that's tied to a failed, rules-based international order and the need to replace that system with something new. But that "something new" requires, for instance, energy security on a global scale. And a regional conflict with Iran would devastate global energy security by essentially eliminating an entire energy-rich region's ability to produce and deliver that energy to the market.

## **#Mudiar**

One final question on Iran before I come to the U.S.–Russia issue. What is the driving force behind this U.S. foreign policy doctrine toward Iran—pushing for government collapse instead of a negotiated settlement? There's a thesis called the "Israel lobby," which says it's mostly at the behest of Israel, which doesn't want Iran because of what it does in Palestine. Others say it's also the strategic self-interest of the U.S. empire in West Asia. What are your thoughts on what's driving U.S. foreign policy toward Iran?

## **#Guest**

Well, there can be no doubt that Israel plays a very critical role in this, and that the uncompromising stance taken by Israel is being mirrored by the United States. You know, there's also, as you mentioned, the fact that the United States needs to mitigate against global competitors, and that if we can't control Iran—because Iran is a big nation with a lot of economic potential, especially in the energy world—then we have to eliminate Iran as a competitor. Both of these, though, are policy problem sets that could be managed if we were looking for a solution.

The thing that blocks the United States from rationally looking for a solution is the Iranian takeover of the U.S. Embassy. The world may have forgotten about that. We haven't—and we will never, ever, ever forgive. The other thing is Iran's role in the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut. The world may have forgotten about that too. We haven't. Now, people will say, "That's not fair, Scott. The United States shot down an Iranian airliner." We don't care. Do you think we care about Iranian lives? Do you think we shed tears over dead Iranian civilians? No. Hell, Madeleine Albright said 500,000 Iraqi children was a price we were willing to pay. We don't care about the lives of others. We care about our own.

And I'm not saying it's justified. I'm telling you that America is infected with a mindset of hatred that's linked to those two events. And now we throw in a third event, because we have this new narrative that Iran is responsible for killing six to eight hundred Americans in southern Iraq during the war—the American occupation of Iraq. We ignore the fact that we illegally invaded Iraq, illegally occupied Iraq, and all Iran was doing was supporting a native Shia resistance to an American occupier. No, you killed six to eight hundred American soldiers, and we will never forgive you for that. That's why we assassinated Qasem Soleimani, primarily because of his role in those actions. This is a disease that has infected America—an Iranophobia.

And until that disease is cured, it's going to be difficult for politicians to come up with rational policy solutions to these tough problems. Because, as I said earlier, no American politician is going to win an election by saying America should be the equal of the world. No American politician is going to win an election by saying America should forget about what happened with the U.S. Embassy, what happened with the Marine barracks, what happened in southern Iraq. That's just a politically unsustainable position. So these are major blocks—obstacles—to any potential political solution to a very difficult problem.

## **#Mudiar**

I wanted to end by discussing U.S.–Russia relations, since this is one area where we've seen the most effective Western propaganda—especially if we compare it to Palestine and elsewhere, where the internet has been able to break through much of that narrative. Russia has, of course, been gaining ground on the field. All of that slowly but gradually led to the Alaska summit, which many saw as the U.S. being forced to accept Russia as an equal partner, whether that was true or not.

Since then, things seem to have moved slowly—some say backward, others say forward. I wonder what your reading is on the direction in which the U.S.–Russia relationship is heading at this moment.

## **#Guest**

You know, it's interesting how we're willing to give the United States credit for being diplomatic with Russia, when we recognize that the United States is incapable of being diplomatic anywhere else. A leopard doesn't change its spots. A tiger doesn't change its stripes. The United States is not a legitimate diplomatic partner to anybody. And this is the lesson Russia's learning. Alaska wasn't about the United States conceding to Russia. The Russians have acknowledged that Alaska was about Russia giving major concessions to the United States, in the belief that the United States was genuinely interested in a diplomatic outcome. It was Russia that made some painful concessions.

They haven't specified them, but there were some allusions to, you know, in exchange for the Donbass being returned to Russia in its totality, Russia would freeze the line of contact in Kherson and Zaporizhia—which would be constitutionally very difficult for a Russian leader to sell. But, you know, the goal was that they believed the United States was serious about bringing an end to this conflict and improving relations with Russia that could lead to positive economic outcomes. But as soon as the Alaska summit transpired, the United States, instead of building on what Russia had done—these concessions Russia made—went and undermined those concessions by seeking to renegotiate them with the Europeans and with Zelensky. And the Russians said, "You're not serious. We made concessions to you. Your job was to embrace these concessions and then make them reality."

But instead, the United States dragged it out, undermined it, and it showed the Russians that the U. S. wasn't acting in good faith. And then you combine that with the fact that the CIA is now actively involved in empowering Ukraine's strikes on Russia's strategic energy infrastructure—strikes against the Russian leadership. Ninety-one drones, directed by CIA-provided intelligence, were used to attack the residence of the Russian president while he was in communication with the U.S. president. I think Russia has awoken to the reality that the United States isn't serious about anything.

And the last remaining obstacle for Russia to overcome before they recognize that the United States can't be trusted at all is that they need to realize this promise of an economic light at the end of the tunnel is just an oncoming train—that the United States has no intention of engaging with Russia as partners. The entire premise of American economic engagement with Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union has been about American domination of the Russian market, American control of the Russian market, and basically injecting ourselves into Russian society in a way that allows us to manipulate it and bring down a form of government we don't support—the strong Russia that Vladimir Putin has created.

We view that as a competitor. And as I said earlier, we will brook no competitors. We want to collapse Vladimir Putin's regime. So we're looking at the indirect approach. Again, I bring up the

Venezuela example—the role the internet plays in influencing the minds of Russians, creating a fifth column, sowing doubt, and spreading alternative narratives, etc. Combine that with the potential of economic largesse, and you've now created a window of vulnerability for the kind of exploitation of the Russian political elites that happened in Venezuela and is happening in Iran, where we promise to buy them off in exchange for either staying on the sidelines or actively supporting anti-regime activity.

So I think Russia, you know, is awakening to this reality. But the fact is, the United States isn't serious about a diplomatic outcome with Russia until it fundamentally divorces itself from past policies. For instance, it has been the policy of the United States for decades to strategically defeat Russia. The Trump administration hasn't walked away from that policy; it simply disguises that ultimate objective with the false promises of Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner.

## **#Mudiar**

And are Western weapons still going into Ukraine, beyond the intelligence networks?

## **#Guest**

Yes, there are still Western weapons going into Ukraine. They're being destroyed. I mean, you know, this notion that Russia is suffering thousands of dead per week is just absurd. Russia is dominating on the battlefield. They're waging a war of attrition that's one-sided in the scope and scale of losses. And ultimately, Russia will achieve its goals and objectives through military means. I mean, this is the reality. You know, it's a tragedy for Ukraine, it's a tragedy for Russia, but it's just reality. I can't say it's a tragedy for Europe, because I have a hard time sympathizing with Europe for what it's doing. This is a self-inflicted wound. You don't shoot yourself in the foot and then cry to me about how your foot hurts.

You're the one that shot it. So I don't view this as a tragedy for Europe, but it is a tragedy for the world—the way that Europe has allowed itself. You know, again, you're from a different part of the world. You may not hold Europe in the, uh, highest esteem that I do, but, you know, my ancestors are European, and I look at history from a European prism, a Eurocentric point of view. And this is a place that most Americans once viewed as the home of modern culture, intellectual development, scientific development. To watch Europe basically devolve into this massive chaos and anarchy, with zero moral compass, is very sad. But I don't have sympathy for the Europeans, because they did this to themselves.

## **#Mudiar**

We'll leave it there, Scott. Thank you so much for your time—good to see you again. All right, thanks a lot.

## **#Ayushman**

Have a good day. Hi, my name is Ayushman. I, along with Mudiar Jyotishman, have started this platform. Over the last two years, we've tried to build content for the left and progressive forces. We've interviewed economists, historians, political commentators, and activists so far. If you've liked our content and want us to build an archive for the left, I have two requests for you. Please consider donating to the cause—the link is in the description below. And if you're not able to do so, don't feel bad. You can always like and share our videos with your comrades. Finally, don't forget to hit the subscribe button.