

Douglas Macgregor: US-Iran Diplomacy Fail - Full-Scale War Coming Soon

Douglas Macgregor is a retired Colonel, combat veteran and former senior advisor to the U.S. Secretary of Defense. Col. Macgregor discusses why a decision has likely been made to attack Iran, and why Iran will fight with everything it has as this is a war for survival. 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/gdieseng Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

#Glenn

Welcome back to the program. Today we're joined by Colonel Douglas McGregor, a decorated combat veteran, author, and former advisor to the U.S. Secretary of Defense. Thank you very much for coming on. Now, about the possible war against Iran—it's a bit confusing. On one hand, we see this massive buildup, or rather, concentration of military power. On the other hand, one could get the impression that Donald Trump, during his State of the Union speech, was walking back some of the strongest demands against the Iranians. I was wondering, how do you read the situation? Do you think a decision has been made to go to war?

#Douglas Macgregor

Yes, I do. I think he recognizes that he doesn't have much choice. You know, we have to understand who put him in the White House and the enormous power and influence of the Israel lobby and the Zionist billionaires in the United States who contribute to it. I'm sure if you watched the State of the Union address, you saw that when it came to his comments on Iran, he received a standing ovation not only from his own party but also from the Democrats. That demonstrates that the lobby owns both Congress and the White House. So under those circumstances, I think war with Iran is unavoidable. Now, people are wondering, well, why hasn't it already happened? I thought it would have happened somewhat sooner, but I think we have to understand that there are a number of problems we're dealing with.

First of all, you know, we've only got two carrier battle groups. Normally, for an operation of this size against a country like Iran, you'd have several. But the Navy isn't in the best condition right now. We have three more carrier battle groups that could be readied for action in the next couple of weeks, but they've got problems—they're not at full strength. So one wonders whether we're going to wait that long for them. I don't know; I doubt it. I think the burden for this operation is going to fall

largely on the U.S. Air Force. The fleet will try to protect the Israelis, particularly the one up in the Mediterranean, from incoming missiles.

The fleet down in the Indian Ocean—I'm not sure how effective or impactful that's going to be. Several of my friends have gone through the process; I haven't sat down and done it myself, but many other analysts have. When you look at the hundreds of miles we have to fly, either from land bases or sea bases—that is, from aircraft carriers—to deliver bombs, munitions, missiles, rockets, and so forth, you're in a position where you probably have to refuel on the way to the target area and then refuel again on the way back, because we're talking about hundreds of miles. So aircraft that, on a good day, can fly around 300 miles are now going to be asked to travel 700 or even 800 miles to reach the target area.

And I'm not talking about necessarily penetrating Iran's integrated air defenses, which this time I think will perform infinitely better than they did last time, simply because the Russians and the Chinese have invested a great deal of expertise, time, and money in making them effective. So yes, I think we're going to see a war. And the American people, overwhelmingly—at least based on the polling data—are opposed to a war with Iran. Depending on which poll you look at, it's 70%, 75%, almost 80% saying no. No more wars in the Middle East, period. No war anywhere, as far as most Americans are concerned.

But Americans do not control Congress—the Israel lobby does. And so, when we talk about democracy, I think we ought to take a step back and look at the reality. It's not just the Israel lobby on this particular issue—obviously, it's decisive—but many of the lobbies in Washington, D.C., spend a lot of money to sway votes in their favor. In the case of the Israel lobby, they say, "Well, we only spent three-plus million on lobbying." Well, that's true, but that doesn't include, you know, basically over a hundred million dollars that's spent by Zionist billionaires directly to get control of candidates. How do you do that?

Well, you know, you put money into their campaigns, into their political action committees, and you make it clear that if they don't vote the way you want them to, you'll support their opponents. It doesn't matter who the opponent is or what party he belongs to. In other words, do business as we tell you, and we'll get along just fine—you'll get lots of money out of this, and we'll throw other good news in your direction. Because remember, these billionaires own most of the media. They're leaders in the financial community. They own Hollywood. That's not all—they probably control most of the legal profession. But the bottom line is, they're in a position with the banks—

#Douglas Macgregor

And the various corporations will put even more money in your pocket if you go along with them.

#Douglas Macgregor

So I'm afraid that at this point, it doesn't matter what the American people think or want. Their government is on a path to war with Iran.

#Glenn

Well, how do you think this war will be fought? You mentioned that a lot of these bombers have to fly much farther than they usually would, but there are reports of more than a hundred aerial refuelers being deployed to support what looks like a massive buildup of both naval and air power. So how do you think this can be fought? Because this won't be a limited war—and I think the Iranians have ruled out the possibility of just a limited strike as well. So how do you see this war? I know you're not part of the war planning on this one, but how do you think that planning is being carried out?

#Douglas Macgregor

I don't know the various options being presented to President Trump. Politicians, as you know, historically always want to be a little bit pregnant. Most politicians don't want to bring the child to term—and by that I mean they're looking for something short of what they fear most, which is all-out war. So I'm sure he's being presented with a couple of limited options, because politicians like to signal that, as opposed to actually doing anything. You know, when we were moving toward the Kosovo air campaign back in 1998, the politicians in Brussels were floating ideas along the lines of, "Well, let's have a demonstration strike to show the Serbs that we're serious."

And of course, this was ridiculous. You know, you're going to fire cruise missiles at a target where there are no people, no installation to speak of, and tell everybody to look at the target and then watch an explosion. And they believed that this might avoid a bombing campaign against the Serbs. Of course, that was eventually thrown out. But they continued to try and tinker, and ultimately, we miscalculated. I say "we"—I'm talking about Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe—on the numbers of aircraft and munitions that would be required. So the air campaign, instead of being over within two weeks, lasted 78 days. I think you have a similar phenomenon here.

You're talking now not about 8 million people in Kosovo and Serbia; you're talking about 90 to 93 million people inside Iran, which is about the size of Western Europe. And the population centers are now actively covered by various air defense systems. Now, will all these air defense systems work very well? I don't know. I would assume they'll do better than they did the last time. But the challenge for us, as I mentioned earlier, is twofold. First of all, you have to sustain yourself in a region where, right now, almost everyone is telling us to get out of their country. Let me stop and consider this for a minute. Jordan is allowing us to occupy bases in the western part of the country—two of them.

And there are large numbers of aircraft sitting on the ground there. Otherwise, we're largely dependent on air bases outside the region. That's a huge problem, because instead of just flying

back and forth within relatively close proximity to Iran, which is what we did last time, this time, as you pointed out, we're going hundreds of miles. To do that, you need an almost inexhaustible supply of air refuelers. And these have to rotate—you've got to have air refuelers on station, then air refuelers on their way, and air refuelers on their way back so they can be replenished, and so forth. Right now, it looks like we're planning to operate in Iraqi airspace.

Now, the Iraqis are not supporting us, and they're strongly opposed to any war with Iran. I don't know what that means. Does that mean we could face hostility from Iraq in that airspace? Are we constrained by it? I mean, people have been talking about, well, you could have attacks from the north and Iran attacking from the south. Well, if you come from the south, you're flying almost a thousand miles to reach the targets you're trying to hit. That's enormously difficult. Just recently, within the last 24 hours, a friend on the ground over there said, you know, we're being forced to fall back on India as a place from which we could stage, refuel, rearm, and then fly back into action.

Or you're forced into Africa, but even the African states like Egypt and Sudan are not supporting us in our war with Iran. Now, part of that is they never wanted to begin with, but I think we also have to point out that the comments made by Ambassador Huckabee in his interview with Tucker Carlson have had a very negative impact. People living in the region are looking at the Greater Israel Project as an existential threat to them. So you put all of this together, then you look at the fact that you've got a Navy that's overstretched, overextended, and frankly worn out and exhausted. The Ford battle group was down in the Caribbean for more than six months. I think they're looking at month nine, maybe ten, at sea.

That's outrageous. That's just unacceptable. Now, they've pulled into Souda Bay, which is in Crete, right off the coast of Greece, to deal with a lot of problems. Everybody's heard about their waste disposal problem—let's put it that way. But then you have the problem of, once your ships have fired their missiles, where are they going to go to load new ones? Do you steam all the way down to Diego Garcia? You can't use the Gulf, and historically that's where we've reloaded. Do we go back to Italy, to Sicily, all the way to Naples? Do we go north into Greece? Probably into Greece, I suspect, to some extent. All of these issues, I don't think, were anticipated, and they're now being aired and people are discussing how to deal with them.

So while we have enough rockets, bombs, and missiles on hand to destroy much of Iran—there's no question about that—how do you get them on target? How do you get there? How do you get close enough to drop your munitions or launch your missiles without putting yourself at risk? We were drawing arcs, looking at the Shahab-2, which is a theater ballistic missile—a medium-range ballistic missile that the Iranians have developed. It's hypersonic, and they have large numbers of these. Even the airstrips or air bases in western Jordan are within range. So, of course, is Israel, and so, of course, are ships in the Mediterranean. So we've got the advantage, I would argue, in air-to-air technology and surface-to-air technology in many ways, but we're dealing with the tyranny of distance.

And the only people who can fly in and out and deliver their munitions easily—provided they're not shot down, though we don't think they can be targeted effectively—are the B-2 bombers and, eventually, the B-52s. But they fly at, what, 40,000 feet? Now, we're not sure. We don't think the Iranians can shoot them down, but we may discover we're wrong, because we do see a lot of evidence that they can track them. And if you can track something, as the Serbs demonstrated, you can shoot it down. So the bottom line is, we have a lot of questions for which there aren't good answers. The Navy and the Air Force are working hard to deal with these issues and come up with solutions. But I think that's why you're beginning to hear rumblings in Washington from the military about its uncertainty regarding the outcome of the Iran missile campaign.

#Glenn

To what extent is this just poor planning? Because it does seem expensive to keep all this military hardware and all these troops. And as you mentioned with Gerald Ford, there's also the problem of basic waste—you have to bring things back now and then for maintenance. But given that they have all these weapons in place at the same time as they're engaged in prolonged diplomacy, and without a clear strategy for war—meaning, what are the war plans? Where do you refuel? Where do you load more missiles? All these different issues—yeah, is this just poor planning? You'd think this would have been worked out. Or was the U.S. taken by surprise that Iran wouldn't permit a limited war? Or is this not such a big deal?

#Douglas Macgregor

Well, you know, that's a good question, and I think we got a partial answer to it quite by accident when Mr. Witkoff, one of the two plenipotentiaries President Trump is sending around the world to negotiate deals for him, was asked about something similar to what you just asked. They haven't been very successful, obviously, but he keeps using them. And he said, "Well, you know, we thought when they saw this enormous military buildup, they would capitulate." That's what he said. So I think, to some extent, you're dealing with people who not only have an inflated picture of us—of ourselves—in other words, of the American military, its effectiveness over time, its power projection capability.

You have a group of people who don't understand the world they live in. They don't understand that for Iran, survival at this point—against us and Israel—is an existential question. When you're confronted with existential questions, you tend to fight to the bitter end. You know, Ulysses S. Grant, after his presidency ended, went on a world tour, so to speak. He stopped, interestingly enough, for some time in China and visited Beijing. He didn't speak with the emperor at the time—actually, it may have been an empress—but he did talk to the principal representatives, chancellors, and so forth.

And they asked him, "General Grant, under what circumstances should we Chinese be prepared to go to war?" And of course, at the time, China was living through this century of humiliation, when

the Europeans were marching back and forth over its territory, and there wasn't a great deal they could do about it. And he said, "War is always a mistake, short of national humiliation or strategic disaster." In other words, you don't fight unless your very existence is at stake. Well, for Iran, that question is answered—their existence is at stake. You do not surrender or capitulate to powers that are dedicated to your destruction. Now, we can go back and look at all this nonsense about "Help is on the way, we're coming."

And all the Iranians—millions of them—are not going to jump up and down and say, "Please bomb us. Please destroy our country so we can be free." That's all crap. And the numbers being peddled on the street about how many thousands of people were killed are nonsense. The way the entire thing is being characterized is nonsense. But the point is, if you're an Iranian right now, you have a choice: you can live on your knees as the permanent subordinate or subject state of greater Israel, or you can fight. They're going to fight. And I don't think Mr. Witkoff, or President Trump, or Mr. Kushner, or any of the other people in his inner circle—like Mr. Ludnick—really understand what it means to Iran.

They are not going to submit. There will be no halfway house between peace and war. If we attack them, they'll be on a total war footing, and they fully expect to fight to the bitter end. I don't think we ever did. I think we tended to impute to Iran the same sort of weaknesses that are very glaring and obvious in many Arab states. But the Iranians are not Arabs. The Turks are not Arabs. These are great powers. If you think they're going to submit to you on the basis of threats that they understand are limited—and they understand what your limitations are—it's not going to happen. So at this point, I think we're surprised. In that sense, you're correct: we did not prepare for the worst case.

#Glenn

Earlier on, you mentioned Huckabee, the U.S. ambassador to Israel, and how he gave this interview to Tucker Carlson where he outlined why Israel should essentially take half the Middle East—it's its right, he said. I think it's reasonable to assume this has spooked many of America's allies. But how do you see the different allies of the United States being willing to participate—either by joining in, or by allowing their territories to be used for launches, refueling, or anything of the sort? Because I guess everyone has an incentive to signal they'll have nothing to do with this. Even the British suggested the U.S. couldn't use Diego Garcia. I'm not sure if they've walked that back since, but I assume it doesn't cost anything to make those statements openly before an attack. During an attack, though, things might change. How do you see the possibility of the U.S. working with its allies in such an operation?

#Douglas Macgregor

Well, as far as the British are concerned, I'm told the RAF is sending their F-35s to participate and also sending refuelers. So it may be one of those cases with the British—which isn't unusual—where

they want to show one image at home and a different one to us. I think you'll find the SAS involved, MI6 involved, the Royal Air Force involved, and their refuelers will be part of it. Now, the rest of the Europeans—probably not. And we shouldn't be surprised by that. Some people will say, well, they're cowards because they're afraid of the large Muslim populations in their countries. That may be true in some cases, but I think there's another side to this: however much the Europeans dislike the Muslims living inside their countries and would like to see them go home, they don't support mass murder.

In other words, they don't support what's happened in Gaza or the way the Israelis are treating the Palestinians, period. That has an impact. Everything we're seeing today has to be traced back to Gaza. Iran sees itself as obligated, as a Muslim country, to demonstrate solidarity with the people of Palestine. And increasingly, the rest of the Arab world follows suit. So I guess the answer to your question is that, other than the British, I wouldn't expect much help or assistance—at least not overtly. There may be other things allies are willing to do, and there's always discussion in the intelligence community. I'd imagine that if intelligence is discovered about some potential weapon system we don't know about, or some intention on the part of the Iranians, the intelligence services will share that information. I'd be very surprised if that didn't happen.

#Glenn

On this, though—the possible new weapons systems—that was actually one of my questions as well. What could be the mutual surprises here? Because both the United States and Iran might have some surprises for each other. I assume that perhaps the U.S. and Israel—well, it wouldn't be a surprise if they've infiltrated Iran, have some targets, and could bring in fighters. But Iran as well—what kind of surprises can it bring in? Is it new weapons, intelligence from other external actors? Because weapons technologies themselves seem to have been undergoing a bit of a revolution over the past few years. And, well, it doesn't seem likely we're going to see the same kind of war we saw back in June. Yeah.

#Douglas Macgregor

I think we have to look at several categories. One, of course, is the theater ballistic missile category. The Iranians delivered five or six hundred missiles over the last few weeks to the Chinese. We don't know the exact mix—in other words, how many are medium-range ballistic missiles or hypersonic versus other kinds. But we do know that most of the high-end missiles the Iranians have access to—let's say out of two thousand—probably represent close to eight or nine hundred missiles. These are going to be targets for us early on. We'd like to destroy all of that before the Iranians get a chance to use it. The Shahab family of missiles, for example, are hypersonic and can reach out twelve, thirteen, fourteen hundred miles or more.

We don't know if they can go further. In other words, the ranges can be changed by altering the weight of the warheads and the nature of fuel consumption in the missile. But we should expect that

within a thousand-mile radius, they can hit almost anything they want with great precision. And it's hypersonic, which means we can't shoot it down. Now, there are some new missiles the Chinese have provided that are designed to sink ships at sea. Their range is shorter—less than 800 or 900 miles, maybe around 200 miles at most. So again, you're back to what we were discussing before: if you're at sea, you're obliged to move farther and farther away to avoid being struck by any of these missiles, because you may not be able to protect yourself.

Remember, the ships around the carrier really exist to protect the carrier. They're the ones with the air defense missiles designed to destroy whatever is incoming. How many missiles do they have? I'd hesitate to say, but I'd guess what they have could be exhausted very quickly. Then you have to go back to port to reload. Now, back to the Chinese aspect of this. The Chinese are being given credit for putting on the ground a new radar that can actually look out to 700 miles or more. I don't think it's miles—I think it's kilometers. So you're looking at 450 miles, something like that, maybe 500. I don't know how many of these radars they have.

I don't know exactly where they'll be positioned, but conceivably, when you look at the probable routes of attack that will be used by air power and missiles, they'll be able to focus on those more likely attack routes. Now, when can they actually target something, even though they may have acquired it? When is it targetable? In other words, when can you acquire it as a target and link it to a missile? I don't know. I don't think any of us do right now. What's the degree of granularity in the radar performance? In other words, how much can we really learn from this radar picture that's 400 or 500 miles out there? I don't know. I think a lot of people are saying, "Oh, well, our goose is cooked now."

The Chinese have missiles that can reach out and take down our aircraft before they ever get within range to launch their munitions. Remember, one of the things we did last time—and I'm sure we'll want to do again—is fly up to the edge of the air defense zone and then launch joint attack systems. In other words, missiles designed to destroy integrated air defenses, radars, and anti-missile systems. I'm sure we'll try to do that. But what this new radar capability and these new missiles from China suggest is that our aircraft may not get close enough to release their weapons—that they could actually be shot down if they get that close. This is all speculative, Glenn. None of what we're talking about on the Chinese side has been tested in combat.

We just don't know. Whatever the claim is, it may or may not be accurate. We're going to get an education—let's face it. If this stuff is as lethal as advertised and can reach out as far as it does, we're going to get an education. There's no doubt about it. One thing we can say with certainty is that we are going to lose people. Now, someone asked, how many losses can we take? I don't know. Somebody said, well, we can take 10,000 casualties. That seems a bit extreme to me. I'd be surprised if we would tolerate that and keep on fighting. The issue here—there are several possible outcomes. One is that we don't lose that many people, but we have little or no impact on Iran. I mean, that's a possibility. What do we do at that point? Can President Trump spin this as some sort of victory? Not without a submission by Iran.

Then the next possible outcome is that we're very successful. We destroy much of the integrated air defense, but we're still watching missiles land on Israel in great numbers, doing irreparable damage and killing people. How do you spin that as a success story? I don't know. And then there's the one I think is most likely: we take losses, Israel takes losses, the Iranians take losses—but we get the worst of it, and the Israelis get by far the worst of it. That's a distinct possibility. I think that's why you're hearing in Washington now all these things like, “Well, you know, perhaps we need to look at a different approach. Maybe we should reconsider.” The problem is, how can Trump reconsider anything? He's threatened Iran consistently, and he's put down this marker.

You know, the Israelis want the ballistic missile arsenal trimmed and constrained. The Israelis want no interaction between Iran and its allies in the region. Those things aren't going to happen. So the only thing that President Trump has said consistently is that they can't have a nuclear weapon—which is fine, because the Iranians have said they don't want one. But then he says no enrichment. We went from no enrichment to maybe 60%. Well, we're back to the Joint Comprehensive Plan that was developed under President Obama. How can President Trump go backward and readopt something that, in his first term, he threw away? I don't think it's possible. So the bad news here is we're going to have an attack. We're going to strike Iran. And those possibilities that I outlined are all valid. I mean, they could all happen that way. And I don't have a definitive answer for you.

#Glenn

Well, you're saying that the decision to go to war has most likely been made, and that Iran, for good reasons, sees this as an existential threat. I very much agree. I don't think there's any regime change coming—I think it would mean the balkanization and destruction of Iran. But how do you expect Iran to respond then? Because the last war was primarily between Iran and Israel before the United States joined in, which was a very different kind of threat for the Iranians. The U.S. is a very different fighting force. It's much greater, and its objective seems to be not simply to degrade, but possibly the complete destruction of Iran as a nation. So... how do you expect Iran to respond to this?

#Douglas Macgregor

Again, I think that whatever we do—no matter what kind of attack we launch—Iran will go to total war, and it will stay on a total war footing until we give up and go away, we're destroyed, or they can't fight anymore. Now, the advantage the Iranians have is that they're on land. They can resupply quickly, they can keep manufacturing, so they can build more missiles and more weapons. There's also another thing we have to take into consideration: at what point do the Russians and the Chinese decide enough is enough? I think the Russians are taking a backseat to the Chinese in Iran right now.

I think that's because the Chinese have said, "You've got to finish up the war in Ukraine. We'll take the lead in supporting and assisting Iran." I think that private discussion has occurred. So what will the Chinese do? Their greatest concern, of course, is to keep Iran intact. They don't want it fragmented, divided, destroyed, or occupied by the Israelis or our surrogates, or to lose control of their oil fields to the Israelis and us. That's the last thing they want. They also don't want the Strait of Hormuz to be blocked. So they have a small flotilla of destroyers in the Indian Ocean, and they've put submarines to sea. I don't know where they are, but they do have some submarines out there.

So do the Russians. And I think they'll have to take stock of where things stand. The ideal outcome for the Russians and the Chinese is that they've given Iran enough support for it to withstand us and survive the attacks without direct intervention. But if that's not possible, it's not impossible that you could see Chinese pilots in Iranian aircraft, flying the most modern planes—just as we have pilots, apparently, along with the Dutch and some other NATO nations, who are voluntarily flying F-16s for the Ukrainians. So we could see that happen with the Chinese, potentially with the Russians. But again, I think the Chinese will take the lead here.

#Glenn

Well, this is a problem when you have a war between such large and strategically important countries. You don't really want to see either one decisively win, because then you could see some very desperate actions being taken. So, of course, I very much agree—if Iran seems to be losing, you might see some very desperate acts from Russia and China to rescue the situation. But if the United States struggles and essentially exhausts itself, and the Iranians manage to deal what could be a knockout blow against the Israelis, or if the U.S. takes intolerable casualties—you mentioned 10,000 deaths, something along those lines—what does a desperate United States do? Because it can't be defeated by Iran either. Do you think there's any chance the U.S. could move to nuclear weapons, or is that one bridge too far? Well, remember, we also have a problem with our financial system.

#Douglas Macgregor

We're broke. The fiat currency system is at high risk of imploding. The currency we use isn't backed by anything except, as we say, faith and confidence in the American government, its armed forces, and its economy. Well, the economy isn't doing all that well, contrary to what our president said last night. And if you take that into consideration, the real question is: if this doesn't work out, do you cut your losses at home? Do you do that? And if you do, are you admitting defeat? Do you ask for Russian mediation with Iran to bring an end to the conflict? That's possible—but that's rational. We Americans are not terribly rational; we're very emotional.

I think President Trump is in a position where, if he has to admit defeat in any way, shape, or form, that's not going to be well received at home. And remember, most Americans oppose this war—the

latest polls say 70%, 75% opposed, maybe higher. So what are they going to say if we're seen as losing? "Well, we shouldn't have gone there to begin with. What are we doing there?" You could see everything collapse. But you're going to get the war because of what you saw during the State of the Union last night—the entire Congress, Democrats and Republicans on both sides, standing up and saying, "God bless Israel."

That's effectively what they said. And we're going to support a war with Iran. Why are Americans not in the streets? Why are they not objecting? Well, it's a long way away, and most Americans assume that Iran is like any other state in the Middle East—they're not that strong, they're weak, we can bomb them into submission. Some Americans have swallowed all the propaganda about "evil Iran" and the "medieval society" and all that kind of business. There aren't that many paying much attention, but most are just dismissing it out of hand. So if things go badly, they'll be very surprised—extremely surprised.

And here's one other factor to keep in mind—and this is something you were implying, and you're right, Clint—we will be embarrassed on the world stage. Right now, most people in Europe, most people in Asia, almost everywhere you go, think that the United States Armed Forces are invincible and invulnerable. If it turns out we're not invincible and we're not invulnerable, will this encourage others to take positions opposed to us? I'd say yes. And we're not just talking about the Eastern Hemisphere. What will be the impact in the Western Hemisphere? Americans right now are watching from a distance what's going on in Mexico. It's horrific.

Mexico is a large organized-crime state, governed and run by drug and human-trafficking cartels. They're extremely well armed. Everybody points to Venezuela, but frankly, Venezuela shrinks to insignificance next to Mexico. A lot of Americans are very concerned about that because we have not stopped the flow of drugs—we've reduced it, but not stopped it. We have not stopped human trafficking—we've reduced it, but not stopped it. And the gangs and the cartels are extremely well armed, and they're in close contact with our potential opponents. So there are all sorts of bad possibilities that could result. But no one has sat down in Washington—in this administration or on the Hill—and said, "What do we do?" They're just looking at what they can gain from this.

They never look at what they might lose from it. And we could lose a lot and get very little for our investment if we're not careful. This goes all the way back to something else we've discussed, and most Europeans need to understand this: we are not a land power anywhere except in the Western Hemisphere. We are primarily a maritime and aerospace power. And maritime and aerospace power has, I would say, a limited dwell time. They come in, they stay for a while, and then they leave. They do not make a permanent, strategically irreversible impact. That can only be done by large numbers of ground forces. We don't have them to send. It's not a question of should we or could we.

#Douglas Macgregor

We can't.

#Douglas Macgregor

Our army has been reduced to a fraction of its former self. It's a shadow of what we had in 1991. So you're not going to see that. How much can you realistically achieve with bombs and missiles falling on people? I mean, we should have learned this from the Second World War. We bombed the living daylight out of Germany, killed hundreds of thousands—over a million civilians—in those cities, firebombing and destroying things. It didn't change much. It took armies to go in and finally suppress and occupy Germany.

So that's not going to happen. I don't know that anybody has sat down, because remember, right now the chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs are both airmen. The senior advisor to the president is an airman. And I'm sure he's a very intelligent and thoughtful man—at least I hope so. But the air power community very rarely misses the opportunity to bomb, on the grounds that they're trying to demonstrate that's all you need. It's never been all we needed, and I don't think it will be now.

#Glenn

Yeah, I guess this is why the war is so dangerous now. You can see all the pitfalls and all the disasters that could happen. And yet, there's no off-ramp to get away from it. Otherwise, I would have loved to ask you about Mexico, because I don't understand why Mexico isn't trying to accommodate greater U.S. cooperation—they seem to be losing control. But we're out of time, so maybe we can cover that next time.

#Douglas Macgregor

Just remember, in Mexico the government is a facade. The president is irrelevant. She controls about 40 square kilometers of Mexico City. The rest of the country is in the hands of organized crime and the drug cartels. That's the truth. So when you talk about Mexico, there's very little the government can do. The army is the most powerful institution, and the army is also involved in organized crime. So when you see something break out between the army and a cartel, like we saw recently, that usually comes down to a struggle for power, money, and people. It's not evidence of the government controlling anything.

And by the way, if you listen to the press conference where Mrs. Scheinbaum spoke, along with the minister of defense and the attorney general, they said, "It's over. We're back to normal now. There will be no more fighting like this." And actually, they have gone back to normal—but normal is organized criminality. It's not a country or a nation-state in the sense that Europeans think of it. So when you look at the tourist areas—and they're very concerned about that right now because cruise ships and airlines are turning around and not going into Mexico—the cartels will be very interested in restoring some measure of calm in those areas to keep the money flowing into the country. But it's not the Mexican state.

#Glenn

Fascinating. It's a different part of the world. Anyway, thank you very much for letting me pick your brain. Let's hope there won't be a war. Thanks again.

#Douglas Macgregor

Bye-bye.