

Jeffrey Sachs: We Are Now in the Early Days of World War III

Prof. Jeffrey Sachs argues that the world may already be entering the early stages of World War III, as the rapidly escalating conflict involving Iran begins to draw in additional countries and regional actors. The initial strikes and retaliations risk triggering a wider chain reaction across the Middle East and beyond, particularly as allied militias, regional powers, and global powers become increasingly involved. The traditional mechanisms of escalation control—diplomatic restraint, clear red lines, and international mediation—appear to be breaking down, raising the danger that what began as a regional confrontation could evolve into a far broader global conflict. 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. Professor Jeffrey Sachs joins us today to discuss, well, what seems like the unraveling of the world. Thank you very much for coming back on.

#Guest

These are dramatic moments, no question about it—absolutely unbelievable.

#Glenn

We're seeing now that we've entered the second week of the war against Iran, and, well, the regime change operation is obviously not going as planned. What do you see as the strategy of the United States now that they've failed in their initial objective?

#Guest

Strategy is a big word when it comes to Donald Trump. I don't think there is a strategy. We don't really know. And of course, in wartime, we're not going to be told what's going on behind the scenes. But what we can gather is a tremendous amount of confusion—confusion about expectations of what would happen, confusion about war aims, confusion about the real situation on the ground. "Fog of war" is the usual phrase, and I think we are absolutely befogged right now when it comes to Washington. The only public outlet we have is Donald Trump's posts on Truth Social—these are the

ravings of a madman. And that's also part of what we're experiencing. We have a war with great danger and complexity, and we have a president who is, in my view, mentally unhinged.

#Glenn

Well, I'm repeatedly warned that the illusion of escalation control is what could take us to a third world war, because this war is spreading fast and is very much out of control. Indeed, it's not just a war in Iran. We see Iran taking credit for hitting U.S. bases in several countries, yet it also denies the attacks on Saudi Arabia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey, which doesn't seem to make much sense anymore. It could be, of course, the U.S. and Israel attempting to pull in proxies. Well, we don't know.

But we do know that the U.S. is arming and pulling Kurdish fighters in as a proxy to the war. And there are now arguments that Russia is giving Iran intelligence—which I'm not sure is true, but it seems likely, just as the U.S. gives Ukraine intelligence. Also, after the decapitation strikes on Iran, there's immense pressure on Moscow to restore its deterrence against further NATO attacks, while the Europeans talk about more nuclear weapons—both in quantity and in spreading them around. Are we already moving into a World War III here?

#Guest

We're probably in the early days of World War III, and the question is whether it can still be contained. But we're already in a global war, because there's fighting underway in the Western Hemisphere. Even as attention is on Iran, Trump is signaling, in his not-so-subtle way, that the U.S. will take Cuba—and that could very well happen. The war in Ukraine, of course, continues. The war in the Middle East is now spread across the region. The conflict between Pakistan and Afghanistan is perhaps somehow related to this. An Iranian naval vessel was sunk off the coast of India. And for all these reasons, fighting is happening across the world—at least loosely connected.

We don't know how closely linked it is. Part of the American strategy seems to be to corner and control the energy markets. This isn't playing too well, because energy supplies are being blown up by the hour. And so, we're also entering a worldwide energy crisis that's likely to be extremely serious. As they say, it hasn't yet been priced into the markets. This is the usual way that cataclysmic global events get turned into financial jargon. But the point is, we're going to enter an energy crisis that's extraordinarily severe as well. This will hurt Europe considerably. It will threaten Asian countries deeply. It will probably mean spreading war. So there's no doubt—well, I shouldn't say no doubt.

I'd be absolutely shocked if Russia and China were not supporting Iran. Why wouldn't they? They have a strategic relationship with Iran. China depends on Iran for oil. The United States is basically at war with China, and much of what the U.S. is doing is really aimed at China—for example, cutting off Venezuelan oil supplies to China, now aiming to cut off Russian oil supplies to China, though the

waiver was just lifted because of the chaos, and aiming to cut off Iranian supplies to China. So if China isn't supporting Iran, something's wrong with all our textbooks, that's for sure. If China were to stand by and let the U.S. take over the world, that would be quite strange.

#Glenn

Yeah, just—well, this effort to take over the world's energy markets, it's very blatant. I mean, I just watched a clip on Fox News where they were saying, "Yes, any price we're paying in this war will be outweighed by the massive benefits once we get control of Iran's oil as well." And it made me think about the article you wrote recently, arguing that the U.S.-Israeli attack on Iran is also an attack on the United Nations. And indeed, while international law has obviously been violated in the past, now there doesn't even seem to be a pretense of abiding by it. In fact, there seems to be a kind of pride in ignoring it. For example, Hegseth dismisses the rules of engagement as politically correct and weak. So there seem to be almost direct efforts to dismantle international law, as the Board of Peace makes clear. I was wondering if you could flesh out that argument.

#Guest

Well, the U.S. government under Trump—but I'd say more generally, though to a dramatic extent under Trump—despises the UN, wants to kill it, is aiming to kill it both through a thousand cuts and through a devastating blow. If you believe you are the world's hegemon, as Emperor Donald believes, then anything that tries, in Lilliputian ways, to hold you down is pathetic. So they want to smash the United Nations, and they've been absolutely clear about it. Earlier this year, the United States walked out of more than thirty UN agencies. The U.S. has repudiated fundamental UN treaties and objectives. We've seen the end of nuclear arms control agreements that were part of the UN system. The U.S. doesn't pay its bills to the United Nations. The U.S. doesn't respect the institutions of the United Nations.

And it's clear that at least Trump and this U.S. government—and I would say the CIA and the deep state more generally—aim for global hegemony, and the UN is the opposite of that. Well, maybe not quite the opposite, but it's about co-responsibility with other countries, and the U.S. does not accept that—co-responsibility with anybody. So everything that's being done completely sneers at the UN. And if the topic is raised, whether it's by Hegseth or by the White House, those are, as you said, pathetic niceties in a world of power. We've not really seen this kind of brutality of sentiment, of rhetoric, and of action since 1945—by anybody, by the way—whether it's the Soviet Union, the United States in an earlier era, or any other country. Nothing remotely close to this.

I calculate each year, with my colleagues, an index of UN-aligned multilateralism, which we publish annually in the Sustainable Development Report. And even before this war, the United States—far and away, and not even close, Glenn—was the least aligned with the United Nations of all 193 member states, in terms of engagement with UN processes, including votes in the General Assembly, where the U.S. almost always votes in a tiny minority with Israel, Paraguay, and a couple of other

countries, against the will of the rest of the world. In terms of not signing or leaving treaties, the U.S. is simply rogue—or out to destroy the UN. Let's put it that way.

And this has all accelerated in recent weeks. What's disturbing is—if I can use a mild term, because I'd prefer a stronger one—Europe is completely complicit in this. Europe doesn't show a morsel of support for the UN system, its processes, or, most importantly, the UN Charter. The core of the UN Charter—the very purpose you find in the preamble and in the opening articles—is to stop the use of force and the threat of force by one nation against another. That's the essence of the whole UN system. Article 2, paragraph 4 of the UN Charter, which I encourage people to look up and read, says that no nation may threaten or use force against another nation.

It's simple. As the opening words of the UN Charter make clear, this is to prevent the scourge of war. We now have a U.S. president who believes the U.S. rules the world, that violence is a core instrument of ruling the world, and that if countries don't accede to violence—what Trump calls unconditional surrender, with Trump even picking the new leader of Iran—then force will continue until that outcome occurs. It's in the mold of Hitler or Napoleon or other delusional actors who thought they could rule everything. But even in those earlier cases, they didn't believe they ruled the world; they aimed to rule their neighborhood.

They aimed to rule Europe. Hitler aimed for living space in the Slavic lands. Trump's rhetoric and behavior show that he believes he rules the world. By the way, he believes it on a personal level as well as a political one. And I'm not exaggerating—it's not "Trump derangement syndrome." It's just the overt behavior. The man's loony, and you can see it. He's got every trait of megalomania, grandiosity, narcissism. And it's quite clear, by the way, that the U.S. governmental processes—where U.S. foreign policy is typically run by the CIA—are being run ragged right now because they can't keep up with this madness.

So there's a lot of unpredictability and a lot of danger in what's happening, because we have a mix of U.S. grandiosity, which is a deep trait of the United States. It was true during Bush Jr., Obama, and Biden. But with Trump, it adds the usual U.S. institutional grandiosity and militarism with a personal-level delusion of leadership. We know this through history. This is not the first time. It is the first time, though, in the nuclear age. We've never had a circumstance like this in the nuclear age, and I would say the world is in a more dangerous situation than it has ever been, period.

#Glenn

You mentioned the European response to this, and we see that Germany is trying to position itself as the number one supporter of Trump, hoping almost explicitly that this obedience over Iran will be rewarded with deeper U.S. involvement in the Ukraine war—and also for the U.S. to make no concessions toward peace in Ukraine. Meanwhile, the UK and France are now looking to enter the war in a more direct way. And this, of course, comes against the backdrop of Macron arguing that the reason they need more nuclear weapons is that, for France to be secure, it has to be feared.

Same with Europe—they have to be feared. This is the path to security, right? How do you make sense of this? This is very different from the peace project that, you know, I was teaching students only 15 or 20 years ago.

#Guest

Yeah, Europe has completely lost any influence, any identity, and any sense. I would say that, just as the UN is dying right now, the European Union project is not coming together in terms of strategic autonomy. The European project is falling to pieces as a vassal of the United States. We have the weakest leadership in Europe in generations—again, the worst German leadership in particular. And Germany is key to the European project. If you think about German chancellors—I've known several of them—if you think about Willy Brandt, Helmut Schmidt, Helmut Kohl, Schröder, or Merkel, these were personalities. They were also decent.

They understood German interests, but they also understood the idea of Europe as a project of peace after centuries of devastating wars. The last two German chancellors have been outside of this approach. Scholz was simply the weakest chancellor—a complete nonentity. People said that the U.S. had something on him, so that he was suborned in one way or another. I have no idea whether that's true. And with Merz, you get the idea that—oh my God—you get the idea that this man wants a reversion to German militarism. I could be less polite, but when you look at Merz, you see someone who seems to know nothing of modern history.

He's belligerent, ignorant—a mix of fawning to the U.S. on the one hand and warmongering on the other. Incoherent, and not in Europe's or Germany's interest in the slightest. He doesn't understand his job, I'm sorry to say. His job on the first day should have been to pick up the phone, call his counterpart in Russia, President Putin, and begin to discuss this vital relationship between Germany and Russia—to head off disaster and rebuild some kind of collective security on the continent. He hasn't lifted a finger, not once. It hasn't even crossed his mind that this is his job.

So between Trump's madness and Europe's subservience, it's really an extraordinarily depressing scene. I was at the U.N. Security Council last week, after Israel and the U.S. attacked Iran, and there were the European ambassadors—excuse me—at the U.N. Security Council, one after another, on the day that the U.S. and Israel had attacked Iran, all of them berating Iran, most of them not even mentioning the Israel-U.S. attack. You can't believe, Glenn, how surreal it was. I was especially perturbed and bemused by the Danish ambassador. Denmark is a country that could be invaded by the United States sometime soon, with a very, very high likelihood. The U.S. will declare that Greenland is America's because of national security.

Watch that space—it's basically underway right now. You might think Denmark would have some notion that international law might be important, because someday they're going to come crying to the world: "Look how unfair Emperor Donald is to us. He's taking away our territory." But there was the Danish ambassador, fully fulminating against Iran without mentioning anything about the war

that Israel and the United States had started against Iran. I went up to her afterward to express my concern about this, but she looked at me, turned around, and walked away. They don't want to engage. They don't want to have a discussion. The pathetic nature of this is really something—sad for Europe to simply, completely fall into line with American and Israeli madness.

It's something you would not have thought of Schuman or Monnet or the other architects of Europe—people who knew what World War II had meant and who aimed to stop a World War III. They would have behaved differently, as would generations of leaders in Europe. Again, whether it was Willy Brandt or Helmut Kohl or de Gaulle or Mitterrand, you would have had a completely different idea—a Europe that's Europe, that is the heir of thousands of years of civilization, that knows a thing or two, that has seen war and wants peace. But this is not at all what we see. We have von der Leyen, we have Merz. You just can't make this up right now, how this project has collapsed. And that's why we're in the early days of World War III—because nobody has the sense right now to say to Emperor Donald that this is not a good idea.

#Glenn

Well, not only is it becoming more warmongering, but we also see, as in many wars, that the rule of law weakens. I want to ask how you see the rule of law and the division of power being weakened. Because, again, unlike continental Europe, the U.S. has strong traditions of democracy and separation of powers. I ask because democracy and freedom don't tend to fare well during wars. As we saw during the Cold War, that wasn't great for liberalism either. During times of external threats, governments often develop authoritarian tendencies—and we've had this now for more than a decade. It went from the Russia–Georgia war to the Ukraine war; we have the economic war with China. None of these things actually stop—they just stack on top of each other. And now, of course, the Middle East is set on fire. Under these conditions, one would expect the rule of law to weaken. Certainly, I see that here in Europe as well. We have the EU sanctioning its own citizens.

Any dissent or criticism of the government's wars is essentially, well, “then you stand with the enemy,” and you'll be punished accordingly. But how do you see it in the United States, though? Because if it's game over there on the rule of law, it doesn't bode well for Europe.

#Guest

I think in the United States, foreign policy has been in the hands of the CIA as the lead for many decades. And the CIA is convenient because it can operate completely in secret. It works through a network of so-called intelligence agencies—but these aren't really intelligence agencies; they're off-the-books militaries. This has been true for many decades, especially if you look at the U.S. government, where foreign policy is essentially an imperial policy of regime choice and regime change. Trump just says out loud, and in a crazier way, I have to say, what has long been U.S. policy. Trump, because of who he is psychologically, says that he'll pick the next supreme leader of Iran. Okay, that's rather startling.

Of course, I have to add, no European leader murmurs a word that this is at all strange—that this is a good way to have a war escalate and continue on its way to getting us all killed. Not a single European leader scratches her head or his head to say, “Oh, that’s our ally saying the weirdest goddamn things you could possibly imagine.” No, they don’t say that. But in any event, that mindset—you might think it’s a little odd—but remember, the CIA has always had that mindset. And in 1953, without public scrutiny, without explanation, the U.S. did choose who would lead Iran. They installed the police state that overthrew a democratic government in 1953, and the U.S. backed that police state until 1979, when, lo and behold, the public revolted against it as that police-state leader was dying of cancer.

That's where the Iranian Revolution came from in the first place in 1979—not out of the blue, but out of a U.S.-imposed police state. Well, you look all over the world, including in Europe, and the U. S. imposes governments of choice. That means the rule of law in the United States, when it comes to foreign policy, has always been a veneer. I find it very notable. I think it's very important for historians and analysts to reflect on the famous farewell address of Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was the Supreme Allied Commander, the top general of the United States, and who became president from January 1953 to January 1961. In his farewell address on January 17, 1961, he famously warned of the military-industrial complex. We should understand that farewell message in a different way.

What Eisenhower was saying to the American people is that it’s already happened. This is already a military state. The institutions of government have already been fundamentally weakened. I think Glenn—and, you know, not to take us too far aside—but I think the evidence is quite overwhelming that the CIA killed Kennedy in 1963. And that’s not meant as a flamboyant remark or a conspiracy theory or something else; it’s meant in an explanatory way. No American president since Kennedy has taken on the security state. Johnson reversed all of Kennedy’s peace initiatives, and every president since has essentially gone along with the agenda of the U.S. security state, including Trump—nice people like Obama, who came in and then presided over several regime change operations.

And Obama thought, yes, I'll choose who leads Syria. I'll choose who leads Libya. They didn’t put it that way—they had manners. Trump has no manners. Trump has grandiosity. But it was the same. Obama and his deputy, who’s now my colleague, Victoria Nuland, and Hillary Clinton, also my colleague at Columbia University—and I say that with interest—they decided who would lead Ukraine. In February, actually probably late January 2014, Victoria Nuland was picked up by the Russians on a phone call, on an open line to the U.S. ambassador, talking literally about who would lead Ukraine. And she picked a man named Yatsenyuk, who became the leader after the coup. So when Trump says, “I’ll choose who the supreme leader is,” it sounds outlandish—and it is.

And it is a step toward World War III. But it’s also U.S. behavior—it’s just the usually unsaid part of U. S. behavior. So I’m unfortunately not very impressed with the so-called checks and balances of the U.

S. system, or with the Constitution. We've had a military state for decades. I often think that, just as the Roman Republic became the Roman Empire, the U.S. Republic has become the U.S. Empire. What is the actual date of that happening? In normal discourse, people point to Roman history as a warning to the U.S.—don't let this happen. But I think it's quite arguable that not only has it happened, but that it happened several decades ago. And I wonder, if we were in Rome in 27 B.C., when Augustus declared himself *princeps*, whether we would have felt that that was a dividing line.

That's historians' dividing line. But there was still the Senate. The senators still wore togas. There were still consuls. It looked like the Roman Republic's institutions were still intact. And I have a sense that this is the U.S. situation—that maybe the U.S. Republic ended in November 1963 with Kennedy's assassination, and since then we've been in the U.S. Empire. I don't know, but I just raise the point to say that Trump is, uh, outlandish. He's, uh—he has this dark triad personality of extreme Machiavellianism, malignant narcissism, and psychopathy, which we can see when he shows an absolute lack of interest in who's dying. There's no feeling there. So we know that this is a very unusual psychological experience, but he's on top of a machine that already existed.

#Glenn

Well, on this issue—this is the last question. This insistence on choosing the leaders of other countries, and the reluctance to find peaceful solutions with adversaries, primarily other rising powers like Russia, China, and Iran— to what extent do you think this is linked to the unwillingness to let hegemony go? Because the Europeans, at least, really bought into the whole idea after the Cold War of a world order based on the collective hegemony of the political West led by the U.S. I remember that whole "unipolar moment" when it was introduced as a concept by Charles Krauthammer back in 1990. He framed it as the distribution of power—all power being in America—but he was also making a point in that article: once the world shifts to a more multipolar international distribution of power, then we move away from that, as if it would be a rational decision that could simply be made.

After 35 years of having this political class raised on the ideology that the dominance and perpetual hegemony of the West would essentially be, you know, this democratic peace theory—that it would stabilize the world, transcend the chaos of the past—hegemony was seen as humanity's salvation. After 35 years of politicians like this, there won't be a peaceful transition to multipolarity. Do you see this as the reluctance to even accept the idea of other powers that the West won't dominate anymore? Why is there no alternative to plunging the world into World War III? Because, you know, a lot of people criticize Marco Rubio at the Munich Security Conference, but I don't see—this is essentially the logic I hear from political leaders across Europe as well. Well, not all, but many.

#Guest

Well, I think this is another case where a profound process has been underway for about 80 years. The idea of multipolarity was both born and died in 1945 for the following basic reason: the brainchild of the United Nations was also the brainchild of the victory in World War II. That was Franklin Roosevelt, who understood that he, Stalin, and Churchill—and, at Roosevelt's insistence, Chiang Kai-shek, who was head of a struggling and invaded China in the 1940s, invaded by Japan, of course—had to work together to defeat Hitler. It was a collective enterprise.

It was an enterprise of the United Nations—a term that was used early in World War II. Roosevelt believed in that unity, that these nations together had to stick together to defeat Hitler and then, afterwards, to make the world safe. He really believed in world peace and security. On the ground, the Soviet Union bore the brunt of defeating Hitler, losing 27 million people and being the key to breaking Hitler's war machine—and Roosevelt knew that. The United States played its particular role as the industrial backbone of the war effort, providing weapons, airplanes, technologies, radar, and so forth that made this possible. But the Soviet Union bore the brunt of the war.

Roosevelt was absolutely intent on, and capable of, cooperating with Stalin throughout the war, often pushing Churchill to the side. Roosevelt wasn't much taken with the British Empire. He saw that there would be major powers after the war—particularly the U.S., Britain, Russia, and China. France was let in late in the day for tactical reasons. But the idea was that these countries would cooperate—not fight each other, not veto each other in the UN, but work together to keep global peace. Roosevelt also believed that the lesser powers, the rest of the world, should have their place. He was the opposite of U.S. arrogance.

He had, from the first moment he came in as president, introduced the Good Neighbor Policy toward the Americas. He said, "We've got to stop invading the Americas," like Trump has done recently in Venezuela and is about to do in Cuba. So that's how the UN was born. Just one problem: Roosevelt had untreated high blood pressure, and he died on April 12, 1945. That was the end of the American multipolar vision, because Truman, his successor, was a much lesser person—less experienced. FDR was a gifted individual, but Truman bought in immediately to the idea that this was now a war with Bolshevism. FDR wasn't much impressed with those labels, I have to say. He was just a great pragmatist. He didn't care who called whom what—what labels, titles, ideologies.

He was going to get along, and he was going to be practical. But already in the second half of 1945—uh, that's why the bomb was dropped twice on Japan, to impress Mr. Stalin. The U.S. was now at war for global control. The idea of shared responsibilities was already out the window in the American mentality. And this was, of course, put most vividly in NSC Memo 68 in 1950—that this was going to be the U.S. battling world communism for dominance. I say all of this, Glenn, because when the Soviet Union fell in 1991, the insanity of a country with 4 percent of the world's population deciding it would run the world went into overdrive.

And it went into overdrive, and it's been in overdrive since 1991. The U.S. has viewed itself—and by “U.S.” I mean the CIA, the military-industrial-digital complex, the ones who make the war decisions that have brought us nonstop into conflict, that allocate the trillions of dollars, and so on—as running the world. When China rose in power over several decades, that was noticed by the United States sometime around 2010. This freaked out these would-be hegemonists. Now there was an enemy. Russia was dismissed as, anyway, useless—so not really a concern. We don't have to listen to anything Russia says anymore.

But the attention turned to China, and we have to defeat China the same way. That's been U.S. foreign policy for the last fifteen years. Just quickly, a couple of flies in the ointment. First, all of this is delusional—that's the starting point. The idea that the U.S. runs the world, rules the world, dominates the world, can have its way, is madness. It's been madness for decades, but it's a repeated madness that's led to millions of deaths all over the world, whether in Vietnam or across the wars of the Middle East. Second, the misjudgment about Russia is the reason for the Ukraine war.

The U.S. never expected Russia to resist NATO enlargement, never expected it to stand up to the United States for even a moment. This is both a denigration of Russia and a profoundly delusional exaggeration of American power—both go hand in hand. The war in Ukraine is fundamentally the result of an American delusion, spelled out quite clearly by Zbigniew Brzezinski in 1997. In **The Grand Chessboard**, he explained exactly what that delusion was and concluded that Russia could not resist the eastward enlargement of NATO and Europe. And then the other fly in the ointment is Israel.

Israel is a crazy, rogue state, with half its political leadership stuck in the mindset of the 5th century BC—reading some text from King Josiah and acting on it. Israel has just plunged the world, if not into a Third World War, then into a phenomenal economic crisis. The timing, the instigation—that's Israel's. The fact that the U.S. goes along with it is because it's completely coherent with the U.S. hegemonic project. But this is Israel—complete madness. And because of the hold of the Israel lobby in the United States, that madness isn't even examined. Excuse me, we had to have an ambassador in Israel.

The U.S. has an ambassador named Mike Huckabee, who is, let's just say, a minor Protestant evangelical theologian—if I can put it that way, and that's being very polite. He said two weeks ago, “Yes, Israel owns the land from the Nile to the Euphrates.” And when Tucker Carlson asked him, “Excuse me, they own the land—could they take it?” he said, “Sure, yeah, sure, they could take it.” This is what psychologists or psychiatrists sometimes call a **folie**—a shared madness. It's the craziness of Israel matched by the craziness of the United States. Israel wants to be the hegemon from the Nile to the Euphrates, or beyond. The United States wants to be the hegemon of the world. That's a long-standing project.

And here we are, in the early stages of World War III—unless somehow somebody stands up and stops the madness. The ones most likely to do it in the end are China and Russia, because they're mature, aware, and not really so happy about this U.S. hegemonic project. If India would recognize its own interests clearly, it could also play a major role in this. But India has signed on to the U.S. project to some extent, and that raises a big question: what is India thinking? What are the Indian leaders thinking? They had the British Empire for a couple of centuries—that should have been enough. They should have the instincts to know: don't follow the U.S. Empire into this kind of madness. Yeah.

#Glenn

Well, I think pragmatism, as you say, is what we need. In 2003, Condoleezza Rice made the comment that multipolarity—she called it a theory, not a distribution of power about competing interests and competing values—was something no one should want at all. Because, she said, if you value freedom, you don't want to put a check on it. So the logic is: we need to have dominance. Without dominance, there can't be freedom. And I think this applies to the Europeans as well. We buy fully into this. When I listen to our politicians and journalists, this is why they're willing to go to war with Russia, willing to go to war with China, willing to go to war with Iran and burn down the world—because otherwise there can't be freedom. There has to be dominance. This is the so-called virtue of dominance that's being sold to us as freedom.

#Guest

Absolutely. And incidentally, you know, I've been thinking about this—especially the Anglo-American mindset—because Britain and the U.S. have done the most to wreck things for a couple of centuries in this way. The mindset goes back to the philosophy of Thomas Hobbes, who said that in the state of nature, life is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. And Hobbes said that to get out of the war of all against all, you need a Leviathan, as he called it—you need a superior power. That was his theory of national government: that people would give up their freedom to kill each other to a sovereign who would then keep order, and everyone would be better off because they wouldn't be killing each other.

Then you turn that logic to the global order. The way that gets applied by the CIA, MI6, and other Western intelligence agencies is to say, well, we don't have a supreme ruling Leviathan, so it's a war of all against all. And we have to be brutally realistic—it's us or them. Sometimes you have to strike first, like Israel and the United States striking Iran. That's the mindset. But another part of the mindset is that the United States says, "We'll be the Leviathan, thank you." Britain was the Leviathan in the 19th century. The only way to be safe is if we are the Leviathan. In other words, there can only be one that runs the world—and we'll be the one that runs the world.

Now, there is another way, which is that you get along with each other. You make some common rules. You share the sandbox. We teach our five-year-olds to do this. It's not impossible—you don't

need one ruler of the world to have peace. And this is what the American hegemonists or supremacists cannot understand. But I think it's partly that they're trapped at an emotional level, maybe before age five. I don't know. They don't really see that there is another way—that in a multipolar world, we actually could get along. We could make some rules of the road. We could have some cooperation. The one who understood that, as I said, in the United States was Franklin Roosevelt.

Another one who understood that, more recently, was John F. Kennedy. And probably he died because he held that belief—he was killed from the inside because he held that belief. So this is a tough struggle, and we're in an extraordinarily dangerous moment in the world. If this continues—if Mr. Trump continues to believe that he will pick Iran's next leader and that this is going for unconditional surrender—of course, things will then depend on military outcomes. But one real possibility is an economic crisis globally instigated by Israel and the United States, the likes of which we haven't seen for a long time.

#Glenn

I wish you could have finished on a more optimistic note, but thank you very much for taking the time. I know you have a busy day in Rome, so try to enjoy it in these perilous times, and I hope to see you soon.

#Speaker 03

See you soon. Thanks.