Scott Ritter: Trump vs. Zelensky — End of Ukraine, NATO & EU

Scott Ritter is a former Major, Intelligence Officer, US Marine, and UN Weapons Inspector. Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: https://glenndiesen.substack.com/ X/Twitter: https://x.com /Glenn_Diesen Patreon: https://www.patreon.com/glenndiesen Buy Diesen merchandise: https://diesen-shop.fourthwall.com/en-nok 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, everyone. We are joined today by Scott Ritter, a former U.S. Marine Corps intelligence officer, a former U.N. weapons inspector, and also a very prolific author. So, thank you for coming back on.

#Scott Ritter

Well, thanks for having me. I hope it doesn't cause any problems. I know you're getting a lot of heat lately, so, you know, bringing on somebody as controversial as me, maybe we'll get some more heat. But let's see what we can do.

#Glenn

Yeah, you don't help. Anyways, well, I wanted to start off with what has been happening now, this massive attack on St. Petersburg. This was the largest one over the four and a half years of this war in terms of attacks on that city, which makes it interesting as well. For anyone looking at a map, it becomes quite obvious that NATO airspace often has to be used, unless they go on a very inconvenient route. And we see, you know, from footage, drones coming in from the Baltic Sea. We hear about drones being intercepted or going down in the Baltic states. So obviously their airspace is being used. But how do you see this? Because this is, I think it was, 520 drones being used. And I'm assuming, again, I have to add, assuming that most of them entered or came from NATO airspace.

#Scott Ritter

Well, what's interesting is the flight profile. I mean, first of all, it is indicative of the tactic that Ukraine is using now: mass drone attacks. Basically, they use intelligence information provided by the United States and others to identify targets, potential gaps in Russian air defense coverage. And

a gap doesn't have to be an absolute gap. It could be a quantitative gap. What I mean by that is a gap capable of stopping X amount of drones when you count up assets, et cetera. And so they, you know, in the past, they've found a gap and they've flooded the gap, and they have, you know, very little success in this. I mean, we've seen in some of their attacks on Moscow where they've fired, you know, even larger numbers of drones than this.

And, you know, you'll get a handful that'll slip through, but, you know, not a significant number. This attack appears to take a different approach. It's not that they found a gap in the Russian air defense. They found a gap in the, in the logic of this conflict. This is a proxy war, so we know nations like Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, they are active participants in this conflict through proxy in terms of the assistance they provide, just like Germany, France, the United States are. What appears to be happening is that a corridor has been defined right along the border of Russia with Belarus and then going into the Baltic states, Poland, and the Baltic states. Well, the Baltic states that is being exploited.

If the drones skirt this corridor, it makes it very difficult for Russia to physically intercept the drones, because to physically intercept the drones would require, by definition, Russian air defense assets penetrating NATO airspace. And what's interesting about establishing that precedent is that NATO can make the same case. Right now, NATO doesn't shoot down drones inside Ukraine because that would be a violation of Russia's terms. But if Russia sets the precedent by firing air defense assets into NATO airspace, you know, it opens the door for NATO to respond in kind. So Ukraine exploits this. The other thing it does is that, to get this precision of navigation, because this now is more than just going point to point to point, as they've done in the past.

This is a very precise corridor that they're flying. It implies that this is more than just simply programming the Ukrainian drones using intelligence information. This is about specific beacons being set up inside the NATO countries that allow offset guidance, the precision offset guidance. So this is NATO facilitating the attack of the Ukrainian drones, not by necessarily opening up their airspace, but by creating a system of beacons or a system of guidance assists that allow these drones to move. And so the only thing Russia could do in response is heavy electronic warfare. It appears that Russia has used electronic warfare to some impact. We've seen some of the Ukrainian drones deviate off course and fly into NATO airspace, and NATO has to shoot them down.

But then NATO blames it on Russia. But the point is, this is a very—it's a dangerous escalation that's taking place right now, a very dangerous escalation, because it creates a new dynamic, especially at a time when, in addition to providing this—the navigation assist—you see the Baltic states doubling down on their aggressive rhetoric against Russia in the Baltic region. Yeah. You know, Lithuania hosting a conference provocatively entitled "Kaliningrad 2050," with the notion that in 2050 Kaliningrad will no longer be a Russian territory. Good luck with that. And, you know, I think it was Estonia that's talking about the severing of gas lines into Kaliningrad to cut off power, and all talking about the potential of a naval blockade.

I mean, these are acts of war and acts of aggression when coupled with this active facilitation of an attack against Russia's second city. Yeah. This creates the potential of escalation. It's a very dangerous maneuver on the part of NATO. How Russia will respond? I mean, let's be frank. The amount of damage done was not significant from a strategic standpoint. It's embarrassing to have St. Petersburg on fire. But the allocation of resources to do this, this is not a sustainable model on the part of Ukraine. So I don't envision a Russian overreaction. I envision Russia continuing their very severe campaign against the Ukrainians. You know, it's just threatening the existential survival of Ukraine as we speak. But still, it's a very dangerous development. And it just shows how utterly irresponsible the Baltic states and Poland are at this period of time.

I mean, Vladimir Putin, I don't know, were you at Valdai this year? Yeah. So you were there when he made his announcement about Latvia—I mean, about Kaliningrad. And, you know, I don't take anything he says lightly. And when he says that if Kaliningrad is physically attacked, it will result in the totality of Russia's military capacity being brought to bear, inclusive of nuclear weapons, I think people should understand that this isn't a bluff. And yet the Baltic states continue to operate as if it is a bluff, as if they can get away with these escalations. And the danger of Russia not reacting is then, what next for the Baltic states? What's the next step of escalation? And, you know, at some point in time, you tickle the bear in hibernation long enough, the bear will wake up, and the results will be terrible.

#Glenn

Well, I was curious, though, how do you see this attack in relation to this new conflict between Zelensky and Trump? I can never really figure Trump out. If this is Trump's way of realizing that the war is coming to an end, desperation is setting in, and some states will do foolish things to try to rescue the situation, he would like to keep America away from the whole mess. Or is it genuine efforts to put an end to the war? Because this conflict between Trump and Zelensky, it's gone a bit more than what can be dismissed as theatrics, it seems. Because Zelensky, at least, seems to be really trying to take this very far, that is, to mobilize Europeans and the American opposition against Trump.

#Scott Ritter

Well, Zelensky has no choice. I mean, literally, he's at the end of his game right now. I mean, look, I'm not a body language expert, but you don't have to be a body language expert to look at the facial expression of Ursula von der Leyen as Zelensky asked for an additional 70-plus billion euros. Her face said it all. This isn't going to happen. These resources don't exist. And Ukraine is just pushing it too far. And you combine that with ongoing riots in the streets of Europe, in Paris, in Milan, in Brussels, where the people are just fed up with it. They're just saying, no, no more money for Ukraine. It's over. The game is over. Zelensky can't admit that it's over. And so he is doubling down. And, you know, he could have, I believe, gotten away with simply playing the European card.

He's done it before, after Alaska, to great success. Donald Trump is a coward when it comes to confronting erstwhile allies who appear to have the right on their side, at least from the framing of American political perspective. The majority of American politicians feel that Russia is wrong, Ukraine is right. And so it's hard for the president to buck that. But Zelensky made a fatal mistake, and it will be, in my opinion, a fatal mistake. He made this personal. I mean, Donald Trump is a vindictive man, and he will not stand by idly and watch Zelensky manipulate the American voting public. It was a fatal mistake on the part of Zelensky, and I think you're going to see that Zelensky recognizes this.

He has openly acknowledged that he cannot survive without American assistance, and Europe has openly acknowledged that without the American partner, their support for Ukraine cannot be sustained. And Zelensky, I think, made a huge mistake because I don't think Trump's coming back from this. I think the decision has been made, and now we're just waiting for the final action to take place. The deep state could delay this a little bit, but when the executive makes this decision, especially in the current conditions, I think Zelensky made a fatal mistake. I think this is his last months as the president of—

#Glenn

But where would the U.S. put pressure, you think, though? Because at the moment, the U.S. is still providing the intelligence. It's still assisting with the strikes. It's still the weapons, the intelligence sharing. Well, some reports say this had been cut back. Rubio denies it. So again, it's hard to know what is real or not. But it doesn't seem as if that much pressure has been put against Zelensky. Or am I reading it wrong?

#Scott Ritter

Well, first of all, I think the United States and Zelensky have been preparing for the political distancing by Donald Trump from Ukraine for some time now. The signals have been sent. You know, there are people out there who are intimately familiar with the deep state as it regards U.S.-Ukrainian policy, like Joe Kent. And while Joe Kent, the former director of the Counterterrorism Center, can't be very specific because of non-disclosure agreements, et cetera, he is openly saying that there are many ways for the deep state to slow-roll an executive decision. And there are many bureaucratic tricks that can be played. And I think that what we've seen is the deep state, the U.S. military, the pro-Ukrainian lobby, so to speak, build a system that softens the effect of executive directives.

And for instance, you know, we had a cell in Wiesbaden, I believe, that was handling the target intelligence that was being used for HIMARS and later on for drones. And then the CIA has a parallel setup. And I believe what has happened is that over time, the services provided by the United States have been transferred to NATO allies so that the United States, through the intelligence-sharing mechanism, can share intelligence with NATO allies. And the NATO allies will facilitate the transmission of this intelligence to Ukraine. As such, if the president gives the order that no U.S.

intelligence can be provided to Ukraine, Ukraine will still receive intelligence information through this cutout.

And I think the CIA operates the same way, using foreign intelligence services to serve as the middleman. And so the president needs to untangle this system, and it's going to take time to do that. But the impact will be, when the United States makes the divorce, it won't just be a divorce with Ukraine, but it'll be a de facto divorce with NATO. And this is the fatal mistake that NATO is making right now, because they're playing games, really stupid games. I'm amazed at the extent to which Europe is willing to commit suicide across the board in defense of failed Ukraine policy. And one of the main mechanisms of suicide is to make this personal to a narcissist president who takes everything personally. I mean, I don't know why they're doing this. I don't know why they feel that they can get away with this.

They don't understand Donald Trump or American domestic politics if they think that outside efforts to manipulate the midterm elections will have a telling impact on Trump's decision-making as commander in chief. All it will do is harden his resolve to get revenge on those who seek to play such games. So I think this is more than just about the demise of Zelensky in Ukraine. This is the demise of a U.S.-European relationship, and it's ultimately going to be the demise of NATO and, by extension, the European Union. Europe needs America's help right now. I mean, Europe's in a state of crisis. Again, I mean, you know this. Just turn on your TV. I'm sure your images are even more vivid than what I get here. Paris is burning. I mean, literally, Macron is like Nero playing the fiddle as Rome burns.

He attends a Celine Dion concert while he has hundreds of thousands of police fighting hundreds of thousands of rioters in the streets who are literally burning landmarks to the ground. If this is left unchecked, this is the end of Europe as we know it. It's something I've been warning about. I mean, I'll put my marker on the table right now. I said on December 19, 2021, that this will be the fate of Europe should they go forward with their Ukrainian adventure and their efforts to sanction Russia. It will be the physical end of the European political and economic elite because their policies will eventually blow back and create revolutionary-like pressures. And we're seeing the revolution right now. So, you know, this was predictable. The United States could help, but we won't, because to get our help, you need the president to be on your side. And right now, the president views Europe as an enemy because Europe is an enemy of this president.

#Glenn

I'm a bit perplexed by some of the actions taken, especially by the European Union. I mean, they erected, for example, a golden statue of a naked Trump to try to humiliate him in the European Parliament. I mean, imagine them doing that in the U.S. Parliament, you know, a naked statue of some European leaders to try to mock them. And I'm not sure what the purpose is of this political immaturity. I'm hoping—well, I'm assuming that they're trying to, you know, humiliate him publicly before the midterms.

Again, I'm no Trump fan, especially after the last two years of watching his policies, but it's very hard for me to understand what the purpose of this would be. Again, this immature way of trying to humiliate not any world leader, but kind of the country that is keeping Europe afloat. It's very, very strange to see. And I mean, again, if I'm right, if this is about undermining him ahead of the midterms, how significant would you think the midterms would be in terms of how Trump can govern over these conflicts of his?

#Scott Ritter

Well, you being one of them. Yeah, we get into the realm of speculation. Look, if I was in Europe and I believed that the United States functioned as a constitutional republic, and therefore, in a midterm election, if the House of Representatives goes to an opposition party whose leader, Hakeem Jeffries, has already said, "If I become speaker, I will enact my revenge on Donald Trump and everybody around Donald Trump," then they would say, well, constitutionally, they can do that. We have a past precedent of the Democrats impeaching Donald Trump repeatedly. And so one could say that will be the future of Donald Trump when the House falls, because I think everybody expects that the Democrats will take control of the House.

Impeachment, impeachment, impeachment. The problem with impeachment is all it does is create paralysis in Washington, D.C. It doesn't end the presidency because you need the Senate to convict. But now we have a situation where the Senate could go to the Democrats, and there could be sufficient Republicans who would align themselves with Democrats to get a conviction because of the animosity that Donald Trump is building up amongst Republicans as well. And so, if I were a European, I would sit there and look at that and say, maybe it's in our best interest to undermine Trump at the polls to get the Democrats in because the Democrats historically have aligned with us.

We would get back to the Biden-like policies. Everything would be great. But then, if I were advising them, I would say, you don't understand Donald Trump, and you don't understand the American political reality. You know, since the time of Dwight Eisenhower, Congress has crafted what are known as President's Emergency Action Directives, PEDs. They're part of the continuity of government that exists on how we survive in the event of a nuclear war. And it was always premised that these PEDs can only be enacted if there was a nuclear conflict. But after 9/11, Congress reimagined threats to include acts of terrorism and the potential of weapons of mass destruction.

And then after the pandemic, we have that issue as well. And so PEDs have been rewritten so that the president of the United States can, at just about any time he wants, declare a national emergency and enact legislation that has already been written into law that effectively makes him a dictator and invokes military dictatorship on the United States. And I think the Europeans need to understand that Donald Trump is the kind of man who would use the PEDs if he lost a midterm

election that put his legacy at risk and put his personal well-being at risk. We've seen this with Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel, where he's willing to sacrifice the nation in order to sustain his political viability.

And I honestly believe that Donald Trump is this kind of man that we... If he loses the midterms, he may enact or declare a national emergency and enact presidential emergency action directives that will block the Democrats from taking their seats on January 1st. And then the revenge he will exact domestically and globally will be mind-boggling because he will now be a dictator with no constraints. And so go ahead and play games, Europe. Play silly games. As I said, I honestly believe that Europe's on its way out as it's currently manifested. I don't give the European Union long to survive. They can't survive. They have no money. They have no—Europe is breaking apart. You know, the two hearts of the European Union, Paris and Berlin, are to go south from a European Union perspective, and the rest of Europe will follow.

So I think that this is a case of, you know, the captain of the Titanic, after striking the iceberg, somehow believing he's patched the hole and everything's hunky-dory. And so he says, "Keep playing, keep the dinner going, keep the music playing, keep the people dancing." No, your ship's going down. The European ship's going down. And it's going to go down faster because they're alienating a man who has the ability to literally unplug from Europe and shut it all down. And that's Donald Trump. And if Europe thinks they can survive without America, good luck. Because the reality is, you can't. And I can go point by point by point by point about how the European continent cannot function without the foundation of economic, political, and military stability that the United States has provided for the past 50-plus years—or 80-plus years.

#Glenn

I think this has been a mistake, though, because how I interpret Trump, though, some of his negotiation tactic is that in academic literature, it's referred to as a swing strategy. That is, you don't want to wed yourself to either one of the sides, because if you do, then both can take you for granted. So pretty much by being able to one day show empathy for the Russian position, the next day go to empathy for the Ukrainian position, this creates an uncertainty on all sides, which means that they don't know where he's going to be tomorrow, which means there's an incentive to accommodate him today, to make some concessions.

You can call this a high risk, you can call it foolish, whatever it might be. But from Trump's assumption, if this is correct, it would be that he might swing back again and criticize Russia tomorrow. But by having this fierce reaction to Trump on the part of Zelensky, and of course Europeans piling on, I, as you say, I think they're making Trump vindictive because now, you know, he already had some very negative views on Europe and Zelensky.

#Scott Ritter

And I think that only intensifies now. But in regard to the Russian posture, which is very receptive, very respectful, open to negotiation, and I think this is on purpose by Russia because the Russians know the academic literature as well as you do. They understand swing strategies, and they've seen it in play. I mean, look at Anchorage. You know, Trump swings and then swings back to Europe. The fatal mistake now, though, is that Europe is not coming crawling to the White House and, you know, treating Trump as daddy. Europe is erecting golden statues showing him as a fat, pompous, you know, ass. I think Europe made a fatal mistake because there won't be a swing. Trump will stay where—and again, the swing happens because Trump is susceptible to political pressure.

But if Trump were to enact these presidential emergency action directives, there's no more political pressure that could be brought on him. And he will be liberated to act based upon what he feels is best for him. Because remember, this is all about Donald Trump. This is the danger of electing an extreme narcissist into the most powerful position in the world. We now have a cult of personality, not a president of the United States. So the chief, you know, the figure of admiration for the cult, is now going to act without limits. And it's going to be a very, very dangerous thing for American democracy, but from a European perspective, for European survival. Because again, I just... Europe cannot survive without the full support of the United States. That's just a statement of fact. And if they think they can, good luck. I will enjoy sitting back watching you sink like the Titanic.

#Glenn

Well, I don't think it's a very big secret that the European economic model has been very much dependent on the United States, as well as Russia, by the way, for energy and exports. But mostly the U.S. The political model has been dependent on the partnership with the U.S. And of course, security has also been more or less completely dependent on the U.S. over the past 80 years as well. And if you add the role of the U.S. as a pacifier in Europe, yeah, I would be worried about the future of Europe in a conflict with the United States. I thought we had to renegotiate the relationship, how it would work in a multipolar world with the U.S. having other priorities. But we're erecting this golden statue, so as you said, a fat, slobby Trump. I mean, what the hell? I don't see the point, though.

#Scott Ritter

There's a difference between negotiations, Glenn, and being dictated terms of unconditional surrender. But what Europe doesn't understand is that—and they should—I mean, even go back to World War II and the special relationship we had with the British. How really special was it? Because, you know, Roosevelt destroyed the British Empire. He basically took all of their gold and took all of their territories and leveraged everything because we were in a position where we could dictate terms. Europe needs to understand that when the time comes and there is the collapse—and there will be a collapse—that you're not going to be negotiating with America as an equal for what a post-collapse Europe is going to look like.

America will dictate the terms to you. And the terms aren't going to be to your liking. For all the Europeans out there that are holding their nose, saying, "We will never buy Russian energy," let me tell you what your future is right now. You will be awash in Russian energy because that is your only avenue to get energy—affordable energy, sufficient in quantity to save your pathetic continent. And America will be in control of this. So whatever profits are being made, the profits aren't going to come to Europe. They're going to come to the United States. We own you. We will always own you.

And you've made a fatal mistake in alienating the man who could have at least alleviated the conditions of your collapse, because you are in freefall right now. You are in freefall. And, you know, the other thing is, no one in the world is mourning this loss. You would think that people would say, "Oh, this is a shame to see, you know, the bedrock of global culture." Well, that's the Eurocentric point of view, that everything revolves around Europe. But today, in a multipolar world, people are scratching their heads, going, "Huh. Europe was sort of a colonial continent that went around the world and did horrible things."

There's a lot of resentment to Europe around the world, and it's playing out today in the streets as the immigrant populations come in, and they don't want to assimilate. And Europe—there's that biblical term, you know: you sow the wind, you reap the whirlwind. And the whirlwind is coming through Europe right now. And, yeah, you put up a statue. All Europeans should go gather around that statue and get their photograph taken while they can, feel good for a moment. Because hell hath no fury like a woman scorned, except a narcissist scorned. And if you scorn the world's most virulent narcissist, you're going to pay the price. It's a stupid thing to put that statue up.

#Glenn

Yeah, no, it's—well, it's a common theme, this moralism. That is, they do things that make them feel virtuous and superior, but it results in a worse outcome for themselves. And this has also been part of the problem, the way they have engaged with the Russians. They feel like they have the moral superiority, they have justice on their side, so they behave in a way which is so destructive, and it makes no sense. But how do you see this war playing out now, though? I mean, because things seem to change in a great way from day to day. In Europe, the logic is, well, again, still from this idea that they have right on their side, that the only way to get peace is to show strength, so Russia will back down. And, you know, this is a NATO slogan, peace through strength, which means let's dictate to the Russians. But we're not really in a position to do so. You know, alienating the Americans, that doesn't help either.

#Scott Ritter

Well, I mean, you know, if you were to take the rhetoric, just the rhetoric alone, of Europe—you know, Sikorski's bravado, the commanding general of England now: “We must have a conversation with the British people.” I mean, he's almost Churchillian. “We will fight them on the beach. We will fight.” You know, okay, God, I'm scared. And Macron, every time he gets on TV, I just imagine him

boxing. You know, that photograph of him hitting a heavy bag, scowling as he hits. And I'm like, my God, the French are terrible. This is horrible. The British are ready for war. The Germans are getting ready for the Fourth Reich. Poland is rising. Oh, geez. Then you take the words away and look at the reality.

England getting ready for war. You know, you could take the totality of the British Army, put them into a major soccer stadium, and still have 30,000, 40,000 unsold seats. They have no capacity. England doesn't have the ability to buy new weaponry until 2030. They keep talking about preparing for war, but their military is actually shrinking because every year they don't have a budget to sustain it. So, literally, the words mean nothing. And here's the danger of England. Take a look at France, what happens when you have a demographic imbalance and you have deep resentment building up on both sides. England is a broken country because of the immigration policies.

There are many cities in England where the immigrant population is a majority, and they aren't happy about the government. So I dare this British commander-in-chief to go have a conversation with these people about the sacrifices they need to make so that England can stand strong against Russia and help out Ukraine. And there will be riots in the streets. You think France is burning? Wait till you see England burn. It's a conversation that will never happen because it can't happen. The prime minister won't survive this. And so it's meaningless. Look at Poland. I mean, Sikorski's statements. I mean, if you read them, you should be, you know, literally—if you're Russian, go buy diapers, because you should be relieving yourselves out of panic.

But the reality is Poland's got nothing. Their army today, what, 167,000 strong, can't fight, literally can't fight. So they have to redo it. And they're going to now have the 500,000-strong Polish army. I mean, 300,000 will be regular soldiers and 200,000 will be ready reserves, ready to fight at a moment's notice, including special guys literally can fight tomorrow. And then they say all this, and then at the end they go, "Except we don't know if we can afford it, and we don't know if the Polish people will support it, and we don't know if..." Which means it's fantasy. It can't happen. Germany. Fourth Reich. We're going to do this, baby. 800 billion euro. Let's go. Send out letters to the combat-age men.

They need 300,000 men to volunteer. They got 250 responses. The rest of the German males don't want to fight. It isn't going to happen. France is pathetic. There's going to be a civil war in France if this continues. There is no NATO. NATO doesn't exist. It's a fantasy. They don't have any military power whatsoever, and they are incapable of ginning it up. Even the United States—we have a heavy brigade in Poland sometimes. I don't know where it's at right now. We shut it down, but I think we brought it back, and we're going to send a battalion up to Lithuania, and the Lithuanians feel really good. But again, Poland, look at a map. The only border you have with Russia is with Kaliningrad, okay?

You got to go through Belarus to get to Russia. What do they think is going to happen if they do this? They're all going to die. There's no military power. There's no ability to build up military power.

And the last thing is drones. I'm in the process of doing a documentary on drones. I was just there in June. I know a little bit about drone warfare. I know a lot more about drone warfare than anybody in NATO knows about drone warfare. NATO doesn't know how to do drone warfare. The Russians do know how to do drone warfare. They know how to do it very well. NATO won't even get out of the starting blocks. This war will be over before it begins.

And this is even before Russia brings in its ballistic missiles and long-range drones to destroy the totality of NATO defense industrial infrastructure, which NATO doesn't have. They have a handful of facilities that do very specific things. Those facilities will cease to function, and there is no redundancy. I mean, NATO just isn't ready for any of this. And so I've given up taking seriously anything that NATO says. I judge them by their actions. That's why I'm more concerned about what's going on in the Baltics than I am about anything else, because the Baltics right now are pushing things to the extreme. The war in Ukraine is lost. Simply, you can't continue the funding model.

Again, President von der Leyen's face said it all. There ain't 70 billion euro going Ukraine's way. That isn't going to happen. And when that doesn't happen, Ukraine collapses because it cannot be sustained. Everything we've been told about the front line from the Ukrainian perspective has been a lie. Everything. I mean, literally everything. The Russians are, you know, controlling the battlespace and advancing at a pace that the Russian government is satisfied with because they understand this war doesn't end on the battlefield. This war ends with the collapse of Ukraine as a modern nation-state. And that collapse is going to happen very soon. Kyiv, Klitschko, the mayor, he's already telling people to evacuate the city.

When the freeze comes—and, you know, there's already been snowfall in Chelyabinsk and in other areas, so it's coming—when the freeze comes, tell me what happens to the high-rise apartments. I mean, just get any civil engineer. Just bring on a civil engineer and say, what happens to high-rise apartments when there's no electricity? What happens to the water system? What happens to the sewage system? Basically, it fails, and the sewage will come all down, and you'll have one giant cesspool. And that's all it is. And then sewage running in the streets. The city will become unlivable. Nobody can live in these apartments. Nobody can live in the city. They will have to evacuate. And so Klitschko has already said, you need to evacuate. Start evacuating.

This is why Zelensky now has declared war on Klitschko, blaming him for a failure to be ready for the wintertime. No one in Ukraine is ready for the wintertime right now. Russia is specifically targeting those sites necessary to produce electricity. There won't be much electricity produced in the wintertime. The ability to warehouse food—where are they going to get their food? Russia has destroyed almost 70%, 80% of warehousing capability. How do you transport it? The rail lines are being taken down. The bridges across the Dnieper are being destroyed, shut down. We're looking at the collapse of Ukrainian society. And with it goes the collapse of the Ukrainian government. And that's the Russian objective. A lot of people keep saying, you know, Putin should take Zelensky out.

Why? Zelensky is the best weapon Putin has. Zelensky is the best friend Russia ever had, because Zelensky did Russia the biggest favor ever. Zelensky destroyed the Ukrainian-American dynamic more than any Russian political maneuvering could ever do. Zelensky destroyed the European-American dynamic more than any Russian. Russia doesn't have to do anything, and everything falls. Russia needs not to have Zelensky killed or replaced in a way that can be traced to Russia, because then you create a martyr, and then you're not in control of who replaces Zelensky. Russia right now, I believe, has a plan. And they will enact the plan rapidly when the vacuum of leadership takes place in Ukraine—an uncontrolled vacuum that can only be filled by Russia.

And when that happens, Russia comes in, installs its government, and starts to take control of the situation. And that's the direction we're heading. We're looking at the total collapse of Ukraine, the unconditional surrender of Ukraine. Europe will have no say whatsoever in what happens, and the United States will stand by and let it happen. Because the United States—look at the recent phone call between Putin and Trump. Yes, everybody focused on the Ukraine aspect of it, but there was a big part of it that just said, "Let's just talk about U.S.-Russian relations. What other economic things can happen outside the framework of Ukraine?" The U.S. is already thinking past Ukraine. And that's bad news for Ukraine. That's bad news for Europe.

#Glenn

About the Churchill quote, you know, when Churchill said, "We will fight on the beaches," what Sikorsky said was he's ready for conflict because he was making jam from fruits that he had grown in his garden, which is not exactly the same as Churchill. I don't understand how this is supposed to— you know, the Churchill speech was quite excellent. Sikorsky's, I feel that it probably failed to build up morale and the fighting spirit in the country. Not that, you know, I'm sure he makes good jam from his garden fruits, but nonetheless. But again, I agree with how all the pressures in Ukraine appear to be coming at the same time, though. That is, the economy's failing, the infrastructure, the military, the political stability, the social aspect, the fact that people have to leave the major cities.

And, yes, but as things begin to fall apart, do you see the United States looking to cut a deal over Ukraine with the Russians? Because, you know, I think if the whole thing falls, yes, the Russians will be able to dictate the outcome. But again, from the Russian perspective, the reason behind this war is a broken European security architecture. And they would like to see some kind of a deal. Otherwise, we're just going to have similar conflicts over Moldova, Belarus, Georgia. Again, this whole idea after the Cold War that NATO will just continue to expand further and further east. All the shared neighborhood will essentially become a proxy conflict or a way to draw the new dividing lines. They would like to put an end to this whole thing. Do you think something like this could be made with the Americans, or do they just assume that NATO will die as a consequence of this war?

#Scott Ritter

Well, I mean, I think both, to be honest. I think NATO is going to die as a consequence of the war. NATO can't survive the consequences of this war. I don't think the European Union can survive the consequences of this war. You know, again, it's hard because we're talking about something that hasn't been defined by the United States or Russia right now. We're in uncharted territory. Previously, we could fall back on the December 17, 2021, security framework agreement that Russia put out there. And I don't think that that framework agreement is viable anymore because that Europe no longer exists. That scenario no longer—too much has happened that you can't fall back on that.

But look at what is being said in the United States, based upon conversations that appear to be taking place between Kirill Dmitriev and Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff. For instance, the Nord Stream pipeline—the idea that it could be opened up and gas flow back, but under American control. There's the thing. And the profits go to America. I think we just identified the deal. America is going to let Europe break itself. And then America will come in and say, "I can fix you, but we're going to be using this Russian energy to fix you." And that becomes the new security framework: America making bilateral deals with sovereign European states that involve Russian energy.

I think we're starting to see that's the future. Not with the European Union, not with Brussels, not with Strasbourg, but with Paris, with Berlin, with Copenhagen, with the various countries. I think we're going to see the United States walking away from the European Union model and embracing instead the model of sovereign states. First of all, that provides, you know, the facilitation of divide and conquer. It allows the United States to weaken the euro and get a dependence on dollars, meaning that now, let's say you're purchasing Russian energy using dollars because the United States needs to prop up the petrodollar. Saudi Arabia just walked away from it.

And which might be one of the reasons why the United States is also abandoning Mohammed bin Salman. Don't mess with a vindictive narcissist. It's not good policy. But I think this is the direction we're heading: a redefining of what a security framework looks like. And the irony is, what may be happening here is the facilitation of the very thing that the United States claimed they never wanted to have to begin with, which is Russian energy dictating outcomes on the European continent. But the way the United States is going to control this now is to be in a partnership with Russia so that the Russian energy flows through an American middleman into Europe.

And, you know, I guess that makes it all okay. But that's the direction I see this happening. Again, that's very speculative because, I mean, there's not too many dots to put on the board there. You know, some offhand comments about Nord Stream and that relationship. But again, just chart out the trajectory that Europe's on right now. I mean, take the map of the European Union and then outline each individual constituent state, and then evaluate the trajectory that they're on. You don't see the nations coming together. You don't see, you know, the centrifugal power of bringing it together.

You see the opposite of it pulling it apart. And then you say, okay, can that be reversed? And you look at the global gyroscope spinning around, you realize, no, it can't be reversed. Europe is spinning apart. It's breaking apart. And I just think that that's the trajectory that we're on. And I think that Russia and the United States are going to start to have negotiations on how to deal with that reality to get that new European security framework. So you don't have to worry about drawing lines and doing all this. You resolve that problem by making it go away.

#Glenn

Yeah, I think the former prime minister of Italy made a similar point, that at some point the Russian energy will be restored to Europe, but it will be the Americans who will be controlling it. But it doesn't change the calculation in Europe. They don't seem too averse. But what you're suggesting, though, that the U.S. might try to break up the EU as a result of the defeat now in Ukraine—I mean, this would not just be consistent with what Trump has been saying, but the U.S. National Security Strategy in December last year, where it pointed out that Europe will not survive, or it will not be the same Europe in 20 years. It's essentially dying, and the U.S. will save Europe by removing its leaders, I guess, taking control of it. So it all kind of fits in well there. But yeah, so I'm not sure. Do you have any final thoughts before we finish off?

#Scott Ritter

I mean, I know that your audience incorporates a lot of Europeans. And I have to be honest, I have mixed emotions here. Do I want to dance on the grave of the European Union? Yes. Do I want to dance on the grave of NATO? Absolutely, absolutely. But does my heart go out to the European people? Absolutely, too. You know, I live in the United States, where we have an uncertain future ourselves. You know, the prospect of military dictatorship does not thrill me. The prospect of a bubble economy that can burst at any time, making the U.S. dollar next to worthless, is not my thrill factor.

So why should I sit back and be gleeful that, you know, the European people are going to be going through some pretty difficult times? I'm not. This is a tragedy. And I know that people like you have recognized the possibility of such a tragedy, and you've been working hard to articulate the reality of the situation and create the possibility for people to think calmly and rationally on solutions. This didn't need to happen. That's the irony of it. I mean, if Europe had taken seriously the Russian proposals for a new security framework agreement back in December of 2021, we would not be where we're at today. Millions of people would be alive, the European economy would still be growing and thriving.

You know, this didn't need to happen, but now it's happened. And so I just wanted to say that this is not good for anybody, really. And for people to think that Russia wanted this outcome—look, I can't speak for you, but I, you know, like, I hang around similar circles to what you associate with in Russia, and there's not a single Russian that's really happy about this. Russia likes stability. Russia

likes predictability. And what's happening in Europe right now is extraordinarily destabilizing and unpredictable.

It's the exact opposite direction that Russia wants to head. So all the propagandists out there—and this is where the Europeans, you know, there's the old saying, I think it comes from the Bible: "Physician, heal thyself." Europe, heal thyself. There needs to be an accounting for the people who have been promoting Russophobic policies that have gotten Europe into this situation. They need to be disenfranchised economically and politically. They can no longer be in charge of your defense industries. They can no longer be in charge of your economic policies. And they certainly can't be in charge of your foreign policies. This doesn't mean that you become servants of Russia.

Russia, first of all, doesn't want to be your master. Become your own master. But that means that you're not prisoner to an elite that uses you, because you can be critical of America and say that we're using Europe and all this. Yes, but the European elites are using Europe too. That's the saddest part. It's just like the tragedy of Ukraine, where the Ukrainian government is willing to sacrifice the entire nation for the corrupt schemes of a few. The European leadership today is willing to sacrifice the European people for their corrupt schemes. And I'm hopeful that, in all of this chaos that will be generated, the European people can heal themselves and come together and create a Europe that stands for something real.

I mean, you know, we are past the colonial age. So it's time that we can reflect on the beauty of European culture. And Europe has so much to offer culturally, historically, and even their potential today—their intellectual potential, their industrial potential. Europe could be one of the shining centers of gravity in the new world order. But they have to get rid of the people that have accumulated power. And I will also say this: for the people who have opposed you and criticized you, they could go to hell in a handbasket. You've been a sane voice, a rational voice. And if the Norwegian leaders and European leaders had taken your counsel, they wouldn't be in the situation they are today.

#Glenn

Well, thank you. No, I do appreciate that. And, well, I just keep thinking we wasted such an opportunity in all the years of having Russia as a neighbor. This was the golden era in order to form a relationship which would kind of fit all the conditions we kind of had. And, you know, if you go through the whole process: in '75, with the Helsinki Accords; '89, Gorbachev wanted a common European home; 1990 was the Charter of Paris for a New Europe; 1994, we created the OSCE. When we began to break away from all of this by expanding NATO, you had both Yeltsin and Putin suggesting, "We could join NATO." In 2005, they thought that a deal with the Europeans, that a common spaces agreement, that we would harmonize integration with the common neighborhood.

And we walked away from that almost right away. And, you know, the Russians suggested a common European home, like a common European security architecture, the Medvedev proposal in

2008. You had Putin suggesting the EU-Russian Union in 2011. Just time and time again, we had these proposals to try to find some kind of a common European framework, and nothing. And, you know, this is what's frustrating: this insistence on making an enemy out of Russia, portrayed as being in our interest somehow. And as you suggest, it will end up breaking Europe. So anyways, thank you so much for your time. I always appreciate it.

#Scott Ritter

Okay, Glenn, good luck. Thanks.