

# Einar Tangen: Age of Irrationality - Global Economic Crisis & Nuclear War

Einar Tangen is a Senior Fellow at Teihe Institute and a Senior Fellow at CIGI. Tangen discusses why the war against Iran can trigger a global economic crisis and even nuclear war. The destructive path we are going down is predictable, and there are no clear off-ramps. Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glennndiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: [https://x.com/Glenn\\_Diesen](https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen) Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glennndiesen> Support the research by Prof. Glenn Diesen: PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glennndiesen> Buy me a Coffee: [buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng](https://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. We're joined today by Einar Tangen, a senior fellow at the Taihe Institute and CIGI, to discuss what's happening in Asia and Iran and, of course, how these issues are interconnected. Thank you for coming back on.

## #Einar Tangen

Thank you for having me. I'm sorry we have to meet under these circumstances. It's a sad situation—sad, weird thing. As we were discussing before we got on, you have people acting with no idea why they're going in, what they're going to get out of it, or how to get out. It's just unbelievable.

## #Glenn

I thought we'd start off with a bit of a wider picture before we get into how this is being received in Asia or how it's impacting Asia. Sitting in Beijing, how do people there—and you—make sense of this war? You know, why did the U.S. get involved? And how do you make sense of Iran's policies in all this?

## #Einar Tangen

Okay, so there's a lot to unpack here. It depends on who you talk to and what level they've studied this on. Some people I've talked to say, look, you have two timelines at work here—oh, actually three. The first one starts in 1996, when Richard Perle put out this report, \*A Clean Break\*. He gave it to Netanyahu, and it outlined that the future of Israel should be based not on a two-state solution, accommodation, or trying to negotiate a peaceful settlement, but on actively undermining all the

nations around them in an effort to establish dominance. And that, in essence, is what has happened, although Netanyahu said publicly, "Oh, well, I'm not going to go along with that."

For 30 years he's been claiming that Iran has nuclear weapons—or is about to have them within two weeks, two days, two months, whatever. And that's been very consistent. What does Iran represent to Israel? Well, after the fall of the Shah, Iran became very bellicose toward Israel. They took up the Palestinian issue and said, "You're an enemy." And that set the stage. Israel isn't capable of attacking Iran. There are seven and a half million Jews, ninety-two million Persians or Iranians, and a thousand miles in between. So it's just not feasible to have boots on the ground and do anything with serious intent. They've always needed the U.S. on their side for that. And the question is how to get the U.S. there.

Obviously, he was crying wolf all the time over these nuclear things. But presidents in the United States were very loath to get involved in a war with Iran, which is a sophisticated country—the 17th largest in the world by population and also by land size. It's a very difficult place to invade. As you saw in the Iran-Iraq war, they have mountains basically surrounding the country. Once you get into those mountains, you're in a nightmare. It's very difficult to get through with machines, tanks, and troops—perfect places for ambushes and things like that, much like Afghanistan. So the timeline there, though, is that Donald Trump is facing real problems with the Epstein files, the failure of his domestic policies, blatant corruption—the list goes on and on.

And his typical response is to try to divert attention. He does that on a daily basis—walks into offices, releases what I call dead cats and white rabbits—and the press dutifully looks at the dead cat on the table and says, "Oh, what's that?" Then they follow the bunnies around the room as they hop. These are the lies, the untruths, the outrageous statements that get made. But that wasn't working until he got to Venezuela. That actually managed to turn the narrative away from Epstein, even if only for a short while. So he was convinced by people around him. And Netanyahu, remember, was in the middle of the month—just two weeks prior to the invasion, or whatever you want to call it, the attack.

He was at the White House for four days, plotting, and they had set the date when they intended to go in. Trump was convinced by Netanyahu, probably by Hegseth and the people around him, that you could run in there, do a decapitation strike, and it would be just like Venezuela—you'd be a hero, putting your stamp on the world. Well, the only problem he had was that the CIA said, "No, that's not what's going to happen." First off, there was no imminent threat. He hadn't prepared the United States for an imminent threat. Even in Iraq, which was completely fictitious, they at least spent the time to whip American public opinion into a frenzy that they were about to be attacked by a nuclear Iraq. In this case, they didn't do that. The military also told them, "This is a no-go."

We don't have the wherewithal to do this. It's a simple matter of math. We have X amount of time, and we have enough missiles and countermeasures to protect ourselves against X number of missiles. And by the way, Iran has ten times that number of missiles. So if they start firing at us at

some point, we either have to withdraw, or our assets are going to be sunk—or our bases are going to be destroyed. So that was two timelines. The last timeline is Iran itself. Iran was in a situation where, for the last 20 years, it has been anticipating an attack by the United States. They had a warm-up during the 12-day attack last year, and they've basically been calibrating how to respond asymmetrically to this military situation. And they hit on—well, what do we have?

We cannot fight the U.S. toe-to-toe in terms of armies and things like that, but we can keep them at bay. We can delay—and while we delay, we're going to bottle up the Strait of Hormuz, which, of course, as everyone knows, handles 20 percent of the world's exported oil. It would have a devastating effect on everybody involved. And that's where China is looking at this. They're saying, "OK, we can't prevent the blunders Israel and America are making." They're puzzled. They don't understand if there was ever an exit plan. It appears now that Netanyahu thought that by getting the U.S. involved, he could draw them into a kind of forever war.

And then Israel could kind of sit back and watch the destruction of Iran—the piecemealing of it—and therefore it would be less of a threat. I would disagree with them. I think the pieces of countries become very radicalized very easily, and their natural enmity would be toward Israel. So I think they were, and have been with Gaza and this type of action, ensuring that Israel is going to be the subject of attacks by terrorist organizations, new and old, for the foreseeable future. So then, moving ahead, what is China thinking about while they're looking at the economic damage? During the last two months, China has increased—well, they must have had some feeling that the U.S. and Israel were going to attack—they increased their buying of oil, extra oil, by 16%.

By different estimates, they have somewhere around 10%, almost 1.1 billion barrels of reserve oil. But reserves run out—and that's the issue. It's a matter of time. China is trying to figure out whether this war is going to last for years or just a few more weeks. No one seems to know. Donald Trump definitely doesn't seem to know. His problem is, in fact, tied to this math: the number of missiles the Iranians have outnumbers the number of defense missiles we have. You can see them transferring missiles from South Korea—much to the dismay of the South Koreans—in order to do that. They wouldn't be doing that if they had any other option. And that brings up a whole bunch of issues: where are these going to be replaced?

Do they really think China is going to sell them the rare earths necessary to produce these kinds of missiles and weapons? I don't think so. The U.S. is digging itself into a deep corner. Trump has responded by, you know, one minute being bellicose—saying he's going to wipe everyone out and throwing out warnings that he's going to get really tough if they do this or that—to then saying, "Victory, we're going to be out of here in no time." Right now, there's no clear path, because even if the U.S. left five minutes from now, it's not over. Iran doesn't trust the U.S., because it used the supposed peace negotiations as subterfuge for attacks. As a result, they really don't want to sit down with the U.S. as it's currently put together.

What they're interested in is seeing the U.S., which is severely weakened now, come to the table and be rational and reasonable about how this is going to be settled. Their supreme leader, who was also their religious leader, has been killed along with many others. This is not something that's going to go away. He's been martyred. He was 86 years old and was killed in his compound along with several family members. Now one of his family members is the new supreme leader, and he's already saying that their only choice is nuclear weapons and that they're going to fight this to the bitter end. The situation is rapidly deteriorating. It has engulfed the Middle East.

China has partnerships with all of them, and that threatens their supplies. In all likelihood, they'll turn to Russia—but everyone will be turning to Russia. They're going. Right now, Iran says \$200 a barrel. We're really around that \$100 level. But as time goes by and the reserves run out, you're going to see that number go up somewhere between \$200 and \$300. That's four to five times higher. And I'm not just throwing numbers out there—go back to 1973. Between 7% and 9% of the world's available oil was cut off by what would soon become OPEC, and that resulted in a fourfold increase in barrel prices. So \$10 one day was \$40 the next. If you have that kind of thing now—and that was only 7% to 9%—you're talking about 20%.

## **#Einar Tangen**

Oil is not something you can do without. If you're running an airplane, you can't say, "I'm going to run it on air or alternate fuels." Yes, you could gin up some corn fuel and things like that, but that would take a tremendous amount of processing, and there just isn't enough to do that right now. So there are very few alternatives. If you're running trucks, you need diesel, and this is going to affect countries all around the world, especially those that don't have reserves in the short term. But long term, it's going to have a tremendous effect. We're talking about over 20 million barrels a day.

That kind of capacity doesn't exist. It can't be ramped up. Trump has already been told by the frackers in the United States that we can't cover it. We can increase production by maybe one, two, three million barrels, but we'll never get to twenty. And that's going to take time. Then you have the logistics costs. So this is going to spark an economic crisis that could literally lead to a worldwide depression. And if that happens, it's not good for China. It's not good for the world. China is probably in a better position than most because it's the low-cost provider.

To the extent that you have to have things, you're going to buy them at what you hope is the cheapest price possible. So China has an advantage there. But, you know, the global turmoil this will cause as economies fail—you're going to have civil unrest as people try to blame one group or another, or it becomes a kind of "I get it or you get it" zero-sum game. These are dangerous times, but that isn't the end of it. The problem here is that you have two nuclear-armed nations: the U.S., with about 5,000 warheads, and Israel, undeclared, somewhere between 110 and 120 nuclear weapons. Israel is, for the first time, getting pummeled.

## #Einar Tangen

It's a suffering damage, and this is not something the Israeli people expected. They thought the Iron Dome made them impervious—maybe a rocket here, maybe a fatality here and there, but nothing really serious. Now they're experiencing the kind of war they've brought to other nations. The danger is that you have somebody like Netanyahu, fearing that the U.S. might leave, concocting some idea or reason to start using nukes. If that happens—depending on how many he uses—this turns from a regional conflict into a global one. Iran sits at the intersection of the Eurasian jet stream, which means that if you blow something up and it's nuclear, that fallout is literally going to go around the world.

It's going to hit all the stands. It'll affect India, and then it will affect everything along that area, and eventually it goes around the world. So there will be climate change. They estimate about 10% less productivity in terms of crops. You're going to have severe climate differences—droughts in areas that usually get rain. You're going to have toxicity spreading, things like that. Now, China's concern is that things don't go off the rails—that there has to be some way of controlling Netanyahu from doing this. He's obviously under threat domestically from all the lawsuits and criminal cases against him because of allegations of criminality, theft, deceit, and so on.

There has to be some sort of offer for him. So at this point, China is saying it's time to go to the table. The question is, what has to be on that table to make something happen? Neither party in Iran has any reason to trust the United States. Sitting across from the U.S. is just pointless from their point of view. But if you can bring together regional middle powers—for instance, the BRICS, along with Turkey, Egypt, the Gulf Cooperation Council, and of course Israel—get them around the table, and make it clear: Israel, if you set off a nuclear bomb, the consequences will be severe.

You'll be cut off completely in terms of economics, and your nation will suffer. But they have to provide a carrot. My guess is that the carrot is going to have to involve both Netanyahu and Trump. This is not going to go down well in the annals of history, and it's not going to go down well with the populace. As long as you win, you're invulnerable. Once you lose, things get tough. So they'd have to be given some sort of alternative to being incarcerated or prosecuted as criminals, or something like that. I don't know how that would all come together—I'm not the most imaginative person, not that smart—but there has to be some way of keeping this from going nuclear.

That's why I think China has not closed the door, despite very strong comments about Iran, to a visit by Donald Trump—because they believe the only way to deal with Donald Trump is to keep him at the table, to have him, you know, looking at little bits and pieces, transactions. He understands transactions; he doesn't understand promises. He doesn't understand what you did for him yesterday—he only understands what he can get from you today and tomorrow. So, I think they're going to try to continue to engage with him and figure out some way to keep this ill-advised war from turning into a conflagration that would literally ruin the world.

## #Glenn

I think what makes this all so dangerous is that it's happening as part of a wider, larger phenomenon—not just the end or change of the world order, the end of the hegemonic order—but also the much bigger picture of the end of Western dominance. Because under such circumstances, when countries, especially great powers, feel they're in an all-or-nothing strategic position, they're willing to take great risks and do foolish things. For example, in the United States, the objective is to reverse the relative decline—to restore U.S. hegemony or make America great again.

And so, you know, either they achieve this by succeeding countries like Iran, or they'll drive the country into the ground. So this, again, all-or-nothing mentality—and the actions, you know, not just the rhetoric but the actions—reflect this as well. And indeed, it's not just Trump; the United States, with Biden as well, you see it in Europe now, in terms of the war with Russia, with Iran, possibly with China. And I would even say it extends to Israel, because Israel's had this "Clean Break" strategy since '96—or at least, you know, the document that was written for Netanyahu—suggesting that peace shouldn't be achieved through compromise and negotiations.

It's about defeating rivals—just knock them out. There's a reason I think this came up in '96. That was at the beginning of the hegemonic era. And why would you, if you're backed by the world hegemon, make concessions? Why would you compromise? Essentially, you can just do what you want. Now we're at the end of that cycle. Hegemony is over; unipolarity is over. And the Israelis all seem to be in that position now: either this is your final moment, your final opportunity to knock out Iran, or you're going to have to learn how to live with it. So again, it's a very dangerous strategic moment, where they have the willingness to do absolutely crazy things.

And this is why I think, as the war with Iran drags on now, it's also dangerous. I mean, what are the U.S. options at this point? The regime-change attempt through decapitation failed. The idea that they can collapse the Iranian army doesn't work. As Trump said, they don't really have any good military targets left. Ground troops aren't really an option. They can't get proxies the way they were able to get the Ukrainians, for example, to fight. They don't have that here. They couldn't get the Kurds either. So all you have now is destruction to compel capitulation. But as you said, the Iranians are fighting asymmetrically. They have to go after U.S. bases in energy-producing countries and also block energy exports. But this is just—I don't see anyone climbing down.

And so, not just a long war, but a war that will keep escalating, with very unpredictable consequences. Which then begs the question: how will this security dimension affect East Asia? Because we've already seen not just the alliance system in the Middle East being undermined, and also in Europe, but now in East Asia as well. We saw the THAAD and Patriot missiles being pulled out of South Korea to be sent down to the Middle East. I mean, these are all symptoms of a hegemonic Arab system breaking down. How will this rattle East Asia? Because if you're in South Korea, you'll have to start challenging some of this. If you're in Japan, you're going to have to start questioning whether what existed for the past 35 years will still be here tomorrow.

## #Einar Tangen

Well, exactly. I mean, you've already heard complaints from Saudi Arabia that their shield—these American bases—turned into targets, and then they weren't defended. And what they're doing now is reassessing whether they have the money to invest a couple of trillion dollars—not them individually, but collectively—into the United States. You know, in terms of East Asia, this is a huge shock. You haven't heard much about it, but what is a country like Japan going to do? Ninety-five percent of their oil comes over the sea, from the Persian Gulf. They don't have huge reserves that can last two or three years.

And I think they have a couple of weeks, or maybe a couple of months, depending on whether they're able to secure additional supplies. But any oil they get from now on is going to be extremely expensive. This completely upends the efforts of the current Takahashi government to change Japan's oil-dependent economy. Those plans are out the window. Inflation is going to be rampant, and the cost of everything will go up. You have Japanese people who feel like Americans, like Europeans—it seems to be a common malaise among developed nations—that they don't have any money, that they're living kind of hand to mouth. Things are not good.

And now you have something like this going on where, you know, the price of gasoline and everything connected to it is rising. People think, "Oh, gas is up—well, don't drive your car so much." Nonsense. They depend on fish. Fishing boats, last time I checked, burn a lot of diesel. They can't just stop using it. I mean, already you've seen Thailand say that half their fishing fleet isn't going out. That means the boats that do go out and pay for the expensive diesel are going to charge more for the fish they catch. Fertilizers—about 40% of them come out of the Middle East. Now they don't. So you have a situation where you need fertilizer in order to grow the crops.

If you don't, you're in big trouble. Your yields will go down. So, as a result, the price of food is going to go up. We run on an energy economy. You know our mutual good friend, Warwick Powell—he's written a book about how important energy is and how it's a deciding factor the more you advance into a digital economy. But it's still a massive factor when you're dealing with a conventional economy. As a result, there's not enough time, in terms of global reserves, to soften the blow so that you can switch over to renewables like sunlight and wind. In the U.S., obviously, Donald Trump would fight them, as he already has.

Other countries might want to do it. But, for instance, Europe is clutching its pearls and saying, "Oh, we don't want cheap solar and wind power. We want to build it ourselves, even if it's two or three times more expensive." The question is, will they feel they have that luxury in the future—or in the near term—or will they feel they have to react? But, you know, Glenn, going back to one of the things I always think about when we do our shows, it's the evil that's created when people set up false dichotomies: it's either this or that, you're either with me or against me, you're either good or evil. This is what's unsettling the world.

In political systems around the world, voters are being driven by fear and by hatred, because that's easier to do—especially when times are not good and you're making simplistic claims that you can solve everything with the wave of your hand, your magic chainsaw, in the case of melee and things like that. It just doesn't work that way. You can change governments, but you can't change the problems they face. And, you know, how are we reacting to it? I mean, you were flummoxed—how is it possible we're acting so irrationally? And I say it's because we're in an irrational age. People are feeling their way through life emotionally. They feel that they're victims emotionally, and as a result, they're more likely to victimize others. And this is the sad reality of human nature.

So if you go to other areas—South Korea is also in deep, deep trouble. Indonesia has some oil, but not enough. Malaysia, all of these areas. Vietnam is going to be very hard hit. They were an alternative kind of place to set up shop and produce things with inputs mostly from China, and then sell them off as "made in Vietnam." You can look at a chart and see that the amount of imports from China is roughly equal to the increase in exports going to the United States, Europe, and everywhere else. Higher oil and gas prices—energy prices, period—are going to hit them very, very hard. India is in a horrible situation. Despite the green light to purchase more Russian gas and oil, guess what? It's going to be more expensive.

They're going to be looking at a situation where they need fertilizers and diesel and all these things to run the generators. They're going to be in very, very deep trouble. They can tell people to work from home, but this is a country that has regularly scheduled brownouts, sometimes blackouts, depending on how bad it gets. Energy is something that we all use. Iran is not just bottling up the Strait of Hormuz; they're also attacking facilities that process oil. So no matter how much oil you have, if you can't process it, it's useless—it's just a bunch of dust, like rare earths. This is really hurting them, everybody. But, you know, Iran has taken the position that they don't care.

We've been attacked. No one came to our defense. We therefore will go and do what we think is necessary to solve this—and the only way we can solve it is to bring America down to its knees, to collapse it, create a global depression, get Donald Trump out of there, and get somebody else in. But the damage being done to others is incalculable. I mean, this is not something that's going to go away within six months. This is something we're going to be dealing with for the next ten to fifteen years, let alone after that, when you start dealing with the terrorism and extremism that this is causing. I mean, that's the part I don't understand. If you read history, you understand that doing these things doesn't help. So the question is, why are you doing this?

## **#Glenn**

Well, this again goes back to the idea that when countries face something existential, what they're willing to do when their backs are against the wall—one should never put any country in that position. That was more or less the peace speech by John F. Kennedy as well. So you can see, I can understand what the Iranians are doing, because they see this as an existential threat. And I agree with that. If the U.S. and Israel didn't get regime change and the destruction of Iran last time, and

they can't get it this time, then they'll have another go at it. The fact that they can't keep this status quo going—just being, you know, under this—how long has this pressure been going on in Iran? These crippling sanctions, these threats of attacks?

I mean, it's... 1979. Yeah, so 47 years, and there's never been any proposal for how we can learn to live together. The only game on the table is how can we knock out the Iranians. That's it—and not even just the government, because ultimately, if you want regime change without a replacement government, they're now talking more or less about balkanizing Iran. So when you call this the age of irrationality, I think that's a good description, because I see it here in Europe as well. We're now facing this massive energy crisis, which is going to result in an economic collapse. And of course, we might face a nuclear war. Yet they don't want to get any energy from Russia, which could stabilize the energy markets and the economy. And they call this energy security.

### **#Einar Tangen**

It'd still be expensive. Yeah.

### **#Glenn**

Yeah, and they don't even want to talk to the Russians. They don't even want diplomacy. I mean, if you see where we're heading now—even if the war ended today—the consequences would already be immense, and there's no way this war will end any time soon. And yet, there's nothing, nothing that can be done in terms of rational discussion, talk, diplomacy—nothing at all. Let me just ask you more.

### **#Einar Tangen**

I just want to ask you—do you see the possibility of a Westphalian moment, when Europe, like it did between the Catholics and the Protestants, reaches a point where the slaughter is so great and the bankruptcy so deep that they simply can't keep prosecuting a war—whether it's in Ukraine by proxy or anywhere else—and they suddenly say, "Okay, you be you, I'll be me. We'll just keep our borders and move forward"? Do you think that's possible, or is that the only rational ending? And why hasn't Europe learned from its own history?

### **#Glenn**

I don't know, but I think this is the only rational solution—if we don't destroy ourselves—because that was the only rational solution back then, during the Thirty Years' War from 1618 to 1648. This was...

### **#Glenn**

This is what they discovered—that no single power would be capable of establishing dominance over all. So there would be no hegemonic solution. All we did was kill each other in huge numbers, and the balance of power would just shift if it looked like anyone might actually be able to dominate. Then there would be a rebalancing, and at the end of the day, the only solution was, again, the Westphalian system. That is, let's just agree to have several centers of power based on sovereign equality. As you said, you be you, I'll be me. And we're not there yet, because the Europeans don't have the political imagination to envision anything besides dominance. That's part of the problem in Europe.

We've had a whole political class over the past 35 years raised on the idea that as long as the West dominates, liberal democracy and human rights will thrive—we'll enter a kind of golden age of peace, even perpetual peace. That's what they built their ideology on. So the idea that Western hegemony might decline means, to them, a return to a ruthless old time when countries compete for power, values, and ideas. But why? They think, "When we're dominant, there's prosperity and peace for everyone, and our values are superior." So, you know, there's no good alternative. That's the mentality: there is no alternative to Western dominance. This is why the Europeans, I think, are betting everything on it, and they're just becoming more ideologically entrenched the more they're challenged. And, yeah, they're heading toward a massive disaster, with no room at all for course correction.

## **#Einar Tangen**

But what I don't understand is that they're repeating the same mistakes of colonization. I mean, we had a period when the West dominated everything—literally, because it took it over. It didn't work out. And in theory, we're trying to recover from that, from colonization. That's why the Global South holds a bit of a grudge—because they were used and abused for so many years, their legitimate governments deposed, you know, their resources interfered with and stolen from them. It confounds me that we understand we're supposed to be emerging from that.

And then you have Rubio saying, "Hey, you know, let's bring back the good old days. Together we can colonize—recolonize—the world." I've always thought of Europe as being more sophisticated than, you know, somebody like Rubio, that they understood Westphalia. They understood what they had done in colonizing the world. They didn't want to give the money back, but they certainly said, "Well, we shouldn't do that again." And now we're on the cusp of them, as you just said, maniacally holding on to an idea that is, in essence, colonization.

## **#Glenn**

I'm glad you mentioned Marco Rubio, because that's more or less literally what he said at the Munich Security Conference back in February. That is, you know, Europe and the West—we used to be great. For 500 years we had empires spanning across the world. And then, of course, World War II happened, and we had, you know, communism and decolonization—essentially portraying

decolonization as a communist plot, implying that we have to restore this dominance. And in order to restore it, we should be unapologetic. We shouldn't have to pretend as if we're serving higher goals. It's quite extreme.

## **#Einar Tangen**

But how can you have a sociopath like that out there in front of people, and then half the room stood up and clapped because he wasn't as nasty as J.D. Vance was the previous year? I mean, is this a case of Stockholm syndrome—where Europe has been, you know, kind of under our heel for so long that, if they don't get hit too hard, they're happy?

## **#Glenn**

Well, the Europeans—they can't, again, they're only now seeing their only path toward being relevant, prosperous, and dominant as a partnership with the U.S. So, you know, as I said, he wasn't J.D. Vance. As long as he throws the Europeans a bone, they'll be very, very excited. But there's something powerful about ideas. If you have ideas that link your power and dominance to some sublime values, that's very attractive. Your dominance becomes a force for good—which is essentially what the NATO slogan was: "We're a force for good." That means if you dominate, it's something everyone benefits from. And there are a lot of similarities between the past 35 years and the colonial era, because under colonization you divided the world into two groups to promote sovereign inequality—that is, sovereignty for us, but not for you.

Now, what that meant was, you know, some of the world is civilized. If you're civilized, then you have the right—and also the responsibility—that comes with being a sovereign. If you're a barbarian, uncivilized, then you don't qualify for sovereignty. So you create a world of who's sovereign and who's not, and essentially where dominance is seen as good. Because not only would one side be dominant, but it would be—uh—you can go out to the jungle and civilize them, so your dominance and intervention become a force for good. But what's so different in the post-colonial era is that we said, well, we have, you know, civilized and barbarians, so now we have liberal democracies and authoritarians. The liberal democracies should enjoy full sovereignty; the barbarians, or the authoritarians, should not have it. And this is a force for good—as long as you dominate.

And also, if we can intervene in the barbarians' territories or help them rid themselves of authoritarianism, then this is a force for good. And we should do it—it's not just a right, it's a responsibility. And this is the rules-based international order in a nutshell: humanitarian ideas that create an exemption from international law. This is what we're talking about, and we want this back in Europe. There's a sense of hypocrisy at every level—it's hard to deny, but yes. Anyway, thank you so much for taking the time. Do you have any final thoughts before we wrap up? Oh, any time.

## **#Einar Tangen**

Yeah, I'm hoping that people—I mean, I think your audience probably agrees with you—but I'm hoping that others who watch this understand that we're on the brink of a precipice, and beneath us lies nuclear ruin. If we don't start pressuring our governments to be rational, they could very well just jump off, thinking it's better than the alternative—and they'd take us, unfortunately, with them.

## **#Glenn**

Well, thank you again for your wise words, and I hope to see you again soon. Yeah, same to you. All the best.