

# Stanislav Krapivnik: Baltic States Attack Russia & Gulf States Collapse

Stanislav Krapivnik discusses the attack on a key Russian post on the Baltic coast, and also why the energy collapse in the Gulf States will likely be enduring, if not possibly permanent. Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glennDiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: [https://x.com/Glenn\\_Diesen](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](https://www.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. We're joined by Stanislav Krapivnik, a former U.S. Army officer born in Donbass, who has since returned. Thank you for coming back on the program.

## #Stanislav Krapivnik

Always a pleasure, Glenn. Always a pleasure. But we're not talking about explosions today.

## #Glenn

Well, I appreciate you coming on. I know you've had quite a few meetings and interviews today. But I wanted to speak with you about U.S. boots on the ground in Iran. Before we get to that, though, it's worth addressing this attack on a key Russian port on the Baltic Sea—more than a thousand kilometers for a drone to fly from Ukraine, even farther if it avoids Belarus, which it did. Yet it appears to have entered from NATO territory through the Baltic states. How do you make sense of what's happened, and what do we actually know?

## #Stanislav Krapivnik

Well, it didn't appear they did. In fact, two of those drones—one hit the chimney of a power plant in Estonia, and one hit some other object in Latvia. So maybe they flew around from Ukraine, through Poland and the Baltics, or maybe they lifted off from the pre-Baltics. I don't know. I'm betting they probably lifted off. Either way, even if they flew through—this wasn't one or two drones; there were about 30 or 40 that flew through. This is not the first time. So either, A, the Poles and the pre-Baltics are absolutely incompetent governments with incompetent security systems—anything can fly

through their airspace and they don't give a damn or can't control it—or, B, more likely, they're in on it. They are in direct military engagement with Russia at this point. It's unavoidable to come to that conclusion, especially with the pre-Baltics, that they are direct participants in this war.

## **#Glenn**

Well, we see that over the past few weeks or months, NATO has more or less identified its objective as putting pressure on Russia. To do this, they've been very explicit—it's about targeting the Russian economy, especially energy. They're discussing seizing ships, and now confiscating oil is the new one. But with an attack coming from NATO territory, how is this affecting, I guess, the sentiment or the pressure on the Kremlin to change tactics? Because there seems to be some concern that, more and more, if it's not red lines, it's at least overstepping lines of what we're not supposed to do. I mean, there are informal rules in any proxy war about what each side should or shouldn't be doing, and it appears that all those rules have essentially been tossed overboard.

## **#Stanislav Krapivnik**

Well, this is the first time this has happened, let's be honest about it. Five months ago, in the middle of Estonia, a drone came down, blew up, and the Estonians tried to keep it quiet. The internet was still filled with leaked photos of the shell crater where the drone hit. It was carrying a large amount of explosives, and the remains of that drone were found. The attack on Skov Air Base did not come from Ukraine—it came from about 47 kilometers away, out of Estonia. I was on an evening show with Vladimir Solovyov, one of the big political talk shows, and Vladimir himself, who's a major figure in this field, was saying, you know, we need to crack the heads of the Estonians, just as an example. I say the same thing—there needs to be an example made.

And Estonia has—to call it anti-Russian or Russophobic—well, that doesn't even describe half of the psychopathic hatred that drives these people. They're corrupted through and through. Consider that Russians make up about 50% of their country's population. Take Narva, which is a 95% Russian city, going back to the 1200s, if not earlier. So you can't say these are people from the Soviet Union, but that's their usual excuse: "Oh, these are immigrants from the Soviet Union forced upon us." Well, no—actually, you're holding Russian land. Get the hell off Russian land, in that case. You know, the pre-Baltics, if we're going to begin with this, are three absolutely artificial countries that didn't exist until 1917. In no form did they ever exist as nation-states. They're artificial entities created by the collapse of the Soviet Union, first and foremost.

Well, I'm sorry—the collapse of the Russian Empire, first and foremost, and then recreated by the collapse of the Soviet Union. If we're going to be honest about it, the land was purchased from the Swedes after we beat Charles the Great at Poltava. Peter the Great destroyed his armies, defeated Sweden, but to make it a little easier to swallow the defeat, he paid for the land that Russia had conquered from the Swedes. And that bill, by the way—there's no mention of population—but the land was transferred as a piece of real estate in those areas to Russia. So if we're going to go down

that road, you can live here if you want, or you can leave, but the land belongs to Russia by purchase from Sweden, if we're going to go down that route. But Narva as a city is absolutely Russian—it's from the early Middle Ages.

It was founded and created by Russians. So now almost 50% of the population of Estonia is treated as, at best, third-class non-citizens, because they're not allowed to be citizens of any sort—not even second-class citizens. They carry a gray passport. And now you have this same Nazi entity that holds yearly parades for the SS, government-sponsored, with officials coming out and talking about it. The same one that arrests anybody who doesn't follow the party line. This police-state, Nazi entity is now launching—or allowing its airspace to be used for—direct drone attacks, not only on military but also on civilian infrastructure. I think it's time that the leadership in that country paid the price they have more than earned to pay.

And look, deterrence needs to be set. I think a country like Estonia is the prime target for deterrence being reset, because what they're hoping for is that no matter what they do, Russia will just hit the Ukrainians. "It's not us, it's some meat down there—they'll just kill off some meat down there—and we'll be able to do what we want." But sooner or later, that comes home, and I think we're at that point. Out in the open now, when the major television talk show figures—these aren't lightweight people, these are very serious—on one of the two major political talk shows, I said, I was just on there filming literally two hours ago, and some of them are saying we should, you know, paint the walls with Estonia.

This is major pressure that's starting to build up—to respond and respond. And I hope Estonians are listening to this, because you've crossed every single red line there is. There are no more red lines. Estonia has earned whatever fate it gets. And the people who support that government—well, the people who are citizens, which is less than half the population of Estonia, because most of the young people have left and haven't lived there for years—but the people who are still there are supporting these government entities that are going to bring Estonia to destruction, at least Estonia outside of Narva, to destruction. You know, each country chooses its path.

## **#Glenn**

Over the past four years, or even longer, when people have argued that once Russia is done with Ukraine it will move on to the Baltic states, I pretty much called that paranoia. But given these escalations, it's almost bound to spread now—this conflict. And of course, once it moves into NATO territory, there are going to be a lot of unknown variables in terms of how the escalation goes from there. That kind of brings me to a comment Lavrov made—he was, of course, referring to Iran—where he suggested that many experts believe we're already in a third world war, given the links between Iran and Russia. I was wondering what you make of those comments. How intrinsically linked are these conflicts to begin with?

## **#Stanislav Krapivnik**

I think they're going to become very linked, especially if China kicks off in one way or another. Look, you know, again—do these conflicts need to be linked? Should these conflicts even exist? No. The West has done absolutely everything it can to foment these conflicts, has flat-out started them—either indirectly through proxies in Ukraine or directly with illegal attacks and the mass murder of civilians, first in Iran, now also in Iraq, and before that, we could say in Yemen, though that might count as a separate conflict. But these conflicts are going to spread. The West is dead set on war. The politicians—except for a few—well, maybe we'll see something like the Austro-Hungarian Empire reemerge in the future, maybe as some kind of Austro-Hungarian Confederation. I could see that happening.

But outside of those countries, the majority of Western leaders are psychopaths. They're the Epstein elites. They're dead set, and they don't really give a damn how many of their own people die. The only way they'll care is if they become the target themselves. But they're not counting on that—they're counting on the little people dying, because the little people don't matter. Just less carbon in the world, as they seem to imply. They're dead set on it. They've done everything they can to make sure these conflicts spread, to make sure they grow. Again, going back to the pre-Baltics—Russia tolerated a lot from these people. You know how many terrorist plots have gone through Estonia, trying to smuggle in explosives and icons? Just recently, through Poland, came a truck with boot insoles containing 1.5 grams of explosives in each.

These are electric boot insoles to warm feet, sent both to the military and to refugees in cold areas. I mean, it's just constant—constant terrorism crossing the borders, terrorism sponsored by these people. Sooner or later, patience runs out, no matter how patient Moscow has been. And I think that patience in Moscow has actually spurred these people on to do even more insane things, probably sooner rather than later, because the spring's been compressed so hard. The response is going to be extremely vicious, extremely bloody. There's a reason they say there are two sayings about Russians: "Ivan is slow to get on his feet, but when he does, blood flows." That's one. Well, Glenn, are you there? Okay.

## **#Glenn**

Sorry, you froze there for a bit. And the other one is—

## **#Stanislav Krapivnik**

Yeah, yeah. The other one is, you know, Russians are slow to get in the saddle, but once they're in the saddle, they gallop very fast. And that's what we're getting to right now. They mistake Russia's unwillingness to expand the war as weakness. Sooner or later, that unwillingness just goes away—and then they suffer. And then they whine: "Oh, why us? Why, oh why us?" They seem to ignore everything they did before that. It's the same thing you hear from the Israelis when they get hit. How are we getting hit from the Ukrainians, who for eight years murdered Russians and have

continued to murder Russians in Donbass? And not only that—why us? Well, you know, it's cry-bullying. It's a good term. It's cry-bullying. They bully around until they get smacked, and then they cry victim. But that's what we're seeing. Unfortunately, that's what we're seeing.

## **#Glenn**

Yeah, you know, I spoke about that earlier. There seems to be a different approach to escalation on each side. NATO likes to do these very small, salami-tactic, gradual escalations, while Russia tends to hold back and then go for massive responses—which often, on the NATO side, results in miscalculations or even delusions about escalation dominance, about how much they can raise or lower the tensions. However, the Ukraine war also resulted in the West cutting itself off more and more from Russian energy. That's put quite a shock into the international energy markets and the economy. But it seems to be nothing compared to what's coming now, given the war in the Middle East. How are you seeing this? Because even if the war ended today—which it won't—it seems like the repercussions of all the energy disruptions, and the disruptions to fertilizers, are going to stick with us for quite some time.

## **#Stanislav Krapivnik**

Yeah, I'm not just a pretty war face. I've actually done supply chain management. As a director of supply chain management, I was with Cameron and Halliburton. At Halliburton, I was the regional director of supply chain management for Eurasia. That's wellheads, that's infrastructure for drilling—it's the above-ground infrastructure for the two. I was also director of supply chain on construction projects for Technimont, where we were expanding a new portion of the Moscow refinery to make E95 petrol, and building one of three phases of a 15-billion-euro project on the LNG plant in Amur. I think this is Lukoil's biggest—sorry, Gazprom Neft's biggest—LNG project or plant anywhere.

So I know the time it takes to order metal constructions for the girders and different designs—the vessels, you know, just for expanding the process in the refinery. It's a very big refinery to make E95 petrol. You're talking about around 120 vessels. Most of those were one to three meters long, but we had a couple that were seventy-eight meters long. These are giant constructions. Using a seventy-eight-meter-long vessel—just handling the logistics is a pain. We literally had to lift a couple of buildings with big cranes to get the truck in. By the way, it's a lowboy, because there's a truck added to it, to get these constructions moved—and it's all done by hand.

And you see how long it takes just to get that in place. By the way, they're not only working on the design—these are giant pipes with different flanges and other sections added onto them, all done by hand. Then it has to be tested, which means putting it under pressure with water. Then it has to be dried, delivered, tested again with water, dried again, and eventually lifted into place. I mean, seventy-eight meters long—you can understand how big that is. It's almost a football pitch in length, especially when you add the trucks onto it. This whole operation took about seven or eight months to complete.

Now, why am I saying this? Because I'm looking at the pictures of the damage from the missiles—those missile strikes on the Qatari refinery. And I guarantee you, not only do you have to clear out the damaged sections—which is the only thing you can do once one of these vessels is punctured—you can't just weld them shut. They're no longer going to hold that pressure. So they go to scrap metal. You clean it, and you take it to scrap. You have to make new ones, again, to order. Each one is made to order; they're not mass-produced. Valves can be mass-produced to a degree—they are mass-produced, both for projects and for shelf sales.

But nobody ever figures on the scope of production—that, oh, we're going to have to rebuild a dozen refineries all at once, rebuild all this other stuff. Nobody makes that many kinds of valves. That's something else that obviously isn't going to be in any kind of stock to handle. So you have to produce. Just to get steel—just to understand—just to get steel out of a steel mill on order is usually about a month to a month and a half of waiting, to get steel that's been forged into big ingots that are then cut up and used for production. Especially if you're doing specialty alloy steel, it'll take even longer because they run in smaller batches. This is everything you should consider. And when you add to that, who's going to be able to produce this type of equipment?

There are only three nations that can produce it in volume: Russia, China, and the U.S. In smaller volumes—and sometimes much smaller—you've got India and Brazil, and minuscule amounts in a few other countries. Europe is out of the picture completely, and I'll tell you why. First, Europe can't produce steel cheaply. And right now, Europe can't produce steel at all, because it takes gas—and Europe has no more gas. Here's the quick point: no matter what you pay, there's literally 20 to 25 percent less natural gas on the market, period. And when people think of what Trump says—something like "drill, baby, drill"—yeah, you're right, you should drill more. But here's the kicker: bringing an oil field or a gas field to economic exploitation takes three to five years.

From the day you start drilling your first wildcat well to figure out exactly where the deposit is, to the point where you have enough piping and everything in place to actually export the product on a consistent basis, it takes three to five years—depending on where the fields are located and other factors like that. But yeah, on average. The crisis is here. The crisis isn't coming—it's here. The second wave of the tidal wave is coming, and that's starvation. That's the collapse of society through starvation. That's coming, coming right down around midsummer, when food prices are going to skyrocket, if not earlier. Right now, it's fuel. But, I mean, look at what we're facing, you know? Just start with the fuel side. It's planting season right now in southern Europe. In two weeks, it'll be planting season in northern Europe.

Maybe three weeks if there's suddenly a cold front. But either way, April's right here. You know, this is April already coming. What do you need for planting season besides fertilizer? I'm not even going to get into fertilizer—you need lots of diesel. When you've got a hundred acres, you're not going to take your cow or your bull and go plow a hundred acres. That's a huge amount of land. Small family farms could plow a couple, maybe a dozen acres. But when you've got hundreds of acres, you just

can't do it by hand. You need tractors. That's how we got modern agriculture. You don't have enough people on the farm, and you don't have enough farm animals.

You don't have enough plows—those kinds of plows—if you can even find them anymore. So what do you need? You need diesel. You need relatively cheap diesel in large quantities, which is why Russia, by the way, has a ban on exporting diesel until the end of the planting season, somewhere around mid-May. And it'll probably last longer than that, considering the state of the world. So, without diesel, you just can't plant as much as you want. Sorry, but it doesn't work that way. And then we get to fertilizers. Russia produces about 40% of the world's chemical fertilizer. Qatar produces around 30% of it.

Guess what Europe doesn't produce a single ounce of, because gas is too expensive? Potash is too expensive. Europe no longer produces fertilizer. In fact, America doesn't produce enough fertilizer either. Last year, America bought about half a billion dollars—\$569 million worth—of Russian fertilizer. This year, it's probably closer to a billion, all things considered, because the market's much tighter. Europe's not going to be getting that. One, because Europe lost Qatar; two, because Europe cut itself off from Russia; and three, because Russia, by the way, isn't that interested in Europe or doing any business with Europe to begin with.

The very countries that are pumping equipment, money, and, you know, these psycho mercenaries into Ukraine to kill Russians—the same people whose politicians nonstop talk about how evil Russia is and how we have to destroy it—well, Russia hears that. Except now you're looking at an absolute crisis. Food—so, a friend of mine, he's a professor of politics in northern Italy—and, you know, four months ago I was talking to him, and he told me that lower-class families in Italy can't afford to feed themselves by week four. The money's run out. They struggle to feed themselves and their families by the fourth week. Now, what happens when food prices skyrocket? You get class starvation.

It may not be a whole nation starving, but the lower classes, the lower middle classes start to starve—literally starve, not just skip meals. This is the point where, you know, it's literal starvation. And on top of that, behind that, comes the third wave, and that's called winter. There's a good Russian saying: "Winter is not beyond the mountains." You know, winter is always on your mind. Spring comes, and you're already getting ready for winter. And when that winter comes and there's no gas—because this is going to last a year and a half to two years, in my opinion, just to get the Qatari gas fields up—oh, and that, by the way, I'm sorry, I've got this tirade I'm pouring out.

When I was talking about infrastructure plus steel constructions to hang all this on, that's not even mentioning the wellheads. If the wellheads are damaged—now, you have the wellhead above, you have the Christmas tree, or the fountain depending on where you are and what it's called—that can still be replaced. The valves and subcomponents are often produced in large quantities, but each one is individually designed for that specific setup. So, okay, you could replace those. But if the well itself is damaged—if there's pipe that's been broken or pieces have fallen down the well—they have to be fished out, usually using magnets, or you bore into them, grab them, and pull them out.

Then you have to put new pipe in and cement it. That all takes time. If the well is seriously damaged, you cap it and drill a new one. Now we're talking additional months upon months to get all of this done, depending on how widespread the damage is. So quite literally—because I only have the satellite photos, the high-altitude drone photos, and the videos of the fires to go on—in my opinion, that's a one-and-a-half to two-year delay before anything gets going. And then there's the question of how much damage has been done to fertilizer production, because a lot of times, by the way, they take ammonia out of the gas that comes up with the natural gas. But there's another step to this.

That's the human step. You have to get workers in—high-quality, skilled workers, engineers. A lot of those people aren't going to come back because they don't want to return to a possible war zone. Then there's the problem that the desalination plants are destroyed. They physically can't come back because they can't survive in that environment without water. And that whole area depends on those desalination plants. Qatar and Bahrain—almost 100% of their drinking water comes from them. You start to see that this process has a lot of moving parts, and all of them are now out of whack. So this could be a very long-term issue that could last multiple years, if not a five- or six-year problem.

And then there's another point to consider—and I don't know, we'll live and see how this goes. You've got to remember that a lot of these artificial Gulf, southern Gulf countries, Arab Gulf countries, are more like corporations run by a single family than actual nations of any kind. So the question now becomes, for these sheikhs: they've made their trillions from this, but now they're going to need those trillions to rebuild everything. I mean, we're talking massive investments of money—clearing up, rebuilding—depending on how much damage, of course. This could mean three, four, even five years of investment with no money coming in, because there's no gas or oil going out.

Are they going to do this, or are they going to cut bait and run—sit in whatever country they're in right now with their trillions or billions they've pulled out of these holdings—and just forget about those countries, those pseudo-countries? You know, there are a lot of factors at play. And the fact is, the damage isn't over. We don't know where this conflict is going to go next. If the Americans this weekend, or early next week, strike the energy infrastructure in Iran the way Trump was threatening, it could be about a decade before anything gets fully rebuilt and up and running. I mean, these are oil fields and gas fields and infrastructure that took decades—30, 40 years—to get to the point where they are right now, sometimes longer. It could all be destroyed in a very short period of time.

## **#Glenn**

When you refer to the Gulf states as corporations masquerading as nations, it's not an exaggeration. If you look at countries like Qatar, I think only about 10% to 15% of the population are actually

Qatari. The remaining 85% to 90% are foreigners. So it's basically oil in a desert, and they build up real estate around it, they build up the energy markets. The problem is, if things start to go south, the people themselves would leave, and that makes everything very difficult. So it's not just the technical issues you mentioned, but if Iran's goal now is to expel the American bases, and the Gulf states are unwilling to decouple from the US, then Iran will essentially go after the survivability of these states. As you said, there are many ways.

Attack a desalination plant and there's no more water. Again, it's a desert. If the workers start to flee, the whole country shuts down. It just shows how much of the global economy depends on these corporate states—it's quite incredible. But it kind of begs the question: how do you see NATO or Russia linking themselves to Iran here? Because I guess what's on many people's minds is that, after years of NATO using Ukraine as a proxy against Russia, it seems Russia could end up in a similar position—if it hands over some missiles, or maybe targeting data. Do you see things moving in that direction, or does it depend on how much the Europeans get involved in the Iran war?

## **#Stanislav Krapivnik**

Look, Russia's already there. I mean, let's talk realistically. This isn't a question of whether Russia will give targeting information—it is giving targeting information. So is China. And China's now becoming... Well, what you just said doesn't apply to Russia, because Russia was already there from day one. The Chinese now are starting to look at it differently. The Chinese, they're mercantilists—they always were. They're not a military culture; they never were. They're more of a trader culture. They like to trade. They're not big on military conquest. They've been conquered many times, and they just assimilated those people and continued business as usual.

But now they're looking and going, hmm, I think the Iranians are going to win. And success breeds success. Now they're saying, well, you know, we could invest—maybe we could push this forward. Russia's been there from day one. I mean, there were complaints coming in from the second day about Iranian drones—when they opened them up, they found Russian chips powering the computers, with Cyrillic writing, company names, everything. Russia—well, the Russians—okay, I'm not going to say this straight out one way or the other, but it takes about a year, a year and a half, to train a MiG-29 or Su-35 fighter pilot.

Not four months, not five months. It takes a year to train an officer to control and command the S-400 command block—not three or four months. So right off the bat, you can see these things are being operated. You know, everybody's smart enough; I think they can draw the conclusions they need to. Russia has supplied Iran with a lot of upgraded equipment over these six months that's made their systems much more lethal—avionics, propulsion, targeting, heads-up displays for legacy aircraft. They've added jamming systems, modern jamming systems.

We've seen these are all field-tested variants. I mean, Russian missiles have heat flares on them—if you ever look at them. Russian ballistic and cruise missiles have heat flares like on an airplane. So

whenever the Ukrainians try to shoot them down, they just start firing off heat flares as they fly. It's an interesting sight to see. At first, I thought, oh, that's an interesting advance. The Geran-3s are basically—well, you know, Zelensky is complaining. Apparently, Russia's production is big enough that it can afford to ship them to Iran. Israel hit the Caspian Sea, where Russia gave a very stern warning not to try to get involved there.

Otherwise, there'll be bad consequences for the Israelis, because now they're messing with the Russian-Iranian trade. And a good chunk of that trade goes without transponder signals. You can put two and two together to figure that one out. So Russia's already there. Yes, of course Russia's going to be proxying the U.S.—the U.S. has been proxying Russia for four years and admitted to it. Even though Trump then comes out saying, "Oh, it's not our war." Yeah, it is your war. It is now your war, Mr. Trump, because you haven't divorced yourself from Biden's war for the last year and a half. So it is your war now. Where it goes from here, I don't know. But for Russia, the fall of Iran is an existential crisis—just a bit less than Ukraine.

Because if Iran falls, it absolutely opens up Central Asia and the Caucasus to the import of NATO and U.S. destabilization, Islamic jihadists, and so on. And that directly threatens Russia's borders and Russia's integrity, especially along the Kazakhstan border, which is 3,000 kilometers long. There's no way in hell Russia is going to tolerate that. Sorry, they'll fight to the last Iranian and Russian while they're at it. And the U.S. is not going to win there. In fact, everybody's waiting for the U.S. now to put ground forces in for the massacre to begin. I mean, the Iranians have flat-out said it. There was an interview with—I can never remember the guy's name—the foreign minister of Iran.

## **#Glenn**

I don't know if you remember his name. I always forget it.

## **#Stanislav Krapivnik**

Yeah, I can see his face, but I'm terrible with names—no offense to anyone in Iran. They said, "Aren't you worried about the Americans coming? They're going to send ground forces." And the response was basically, "We're waiting for them. Please, come to us so we can start destroying you with our hands." Well, not literally with their hands—but maybe with their hands. They're prepared. They're waiting. It's a fortress. Iran is gigantic—it's the biggest fortress in the world. Just look at the map of it, look at a relief map of it.

If you don't understand that this is a massive fortress that the U.S. military is absolutely incapable of taking—maybe a few islands, and then they'd be hit by drones and missiles nonstop, day and night, while casualties mount—sure, they could do that. But anything significant? Oh, we're going to march in and attack Iran? Really? Look at a map—see where Tehran is located, how many kilometers of mountains you'd have to march through. Good luck with that. You know, this isn't a Hollywood movie. This is real life. And that's the point. First of all, the logistical strain would be extreme, and

the U.S. just physically does not have the capability to do it. It is not a land power. It's a sea and air power. It is not a land power.

The U.S. Army plus the Marines is about 550,000 men, but that's not all combat troops. It's maybe about 120,000 combat troops, and that's counting the National Guard and the reserves. The rest is what we call "ash and trash." It's combat support—intelligence, engineers, military police—and combat service support, which is everything else that, a hundred or a hundred twenty years ago, wasn't considered part of the Army but is now. The teamsters, the mechanics, the cooks, the finance guys, the medics—you know. If you look at history books, what changed was, when it said someone brought an army of 100,000 men, you'd figure those were all either pikemen, spearmen, swordsmen—whatever—infantry of some kind, or musketeers, cavalry, and artillery, or catapults, whatever.

It depends on the decade or the century you're looking at. Back then, they were all combat soldiers. But now, what we call an army isn't made up entirely of combat soldiers, because each of those old armies came with a long train of civilians—what they called civilians or contracted civilians. Those were the people bringing in supplies, fixing damaged armor, or repairing a musket or rifle, what have you, because armies always traveled with that big train. By the way, the prostitutes came along, and their wives came too, to wash their clothes.

I mean, this whole human train that came—Napoleon came with the same thing into Moscow. Behind his army came a giant train of humanity that did all the jobs needed to keep that army in the field. Now it's all considered part of the military. It's military jobs. But again, they're soldiers, but they're not combat soldiers. They have minimal, if any, training to do combat. They go to the range once or twice, maybe practice bayonet tactics once or twice, maybe some basic infantry skills. They don't remember it. They're not good at it. They're not made for that.

But this was all part of the U.S. Army. So when they say, "Oh, we have half a million men," no, you don't. You've got maybe 100, 120 thousand you can throw into this meat grinder. There are over a million and a half Iranians waiting for revenge on their home turf. And these are actual combat soldiers. They have the rest of society right behind them to do all the other jobs that need to be done. I mean, you're outnumbered ten to one, they're on the defensive, and they're in the mountains, in prepared defensive positions. I mean, that's suicide. And for the U.S. to start recruitment for—what's it called, good Lord, what is it called?

## **#Glenn**

It just flew out of my head—what's it called...

## **#Stanislav Krapivnik**

Well, okay, every man at 18 has to sign up for Selective Service. That's it. For Selective Service—I mean, I had to sign up, register with it. And what I've been told by people in the know is that it's in such bad condition, it's going to take four or five months just to get it all organized—computerized, organized—and then start calling people in. And then, you know, you have to prepare these people. You start getting people in, you have to prepare yourself. But then you get to the fact that 40% of Americans are obese, 30% of Americans are fat but not morbidly obese, and the 30% that's left doesn't mean they're all physically fit. It just means their weight category isn't counted as fat.

You can deal with some of the fat and run it off, but that, by the way, takes more time. The U.S. Army last year—in 2025—had an obesity rate. Well, not just the Army, the whole U.S. military had an obesity rate of somewhere around 22 or 23 percent. When I served—I left in the middle of 2004, in July, the 18th of July to be exact—there wasn't even a 1 percent obesity rate. It wasn't tolerated. But now, when your recruitment is down as much as it is because you've sent people through six or seven rotations, or six or seven years, into Iraq, into Afghanistan, into places like that, you've used your human material up. And that human material went home and said, "Don't join the military."

It's not worth it. You can't get enough people, so you start dropping the standards. And they drop and drop and drop, and now you have an obesity rate of 22 or 23 percent. It's insane. So every fourth soldier—if he runs 10 meters, he might collapse from a heart attack. I mean, you look at some of these people. When Trump called up the National Guard out of Texas, it became painfully obvious because they were all fat. And these were infantrymen. They were coming out, and they were this big. And you're looking at them, thinking, what the hell is he going to do except soak up bullets if something goes wrong? He's a big target. He's not combat capable. You look at these guys.

Seriously? The only thing they're combat-capable of is taking out an all-you-can-eat buffet. I may say mean things, but this is the reality of combat. Combat is mean. It's as mean a thing as a human being can do to another human being—opening up their guts or blasting their head open. But that's what it is. And quite literally, if you're not fit, you don't survive. You might not survive even if you are fit. There's a massive element of chance—whether that piece of shrapnel comes flying through your head, takes out your buddy's head, or just misses you both. But if you're not fit enough to handle that kind of pressure, you just die off.

I mean, that's what it is. That's the reality of it. And this is the U.S. military at this point—just to be absolutely, brutally honest about it. And this is the military that Trump, by the way, commands, and not a single general says anything in opposition because they all want their careers afterward. None of them will ever be held responsible. They want their million-dollar careers after their generalships are done, when they retire. And these are the people that Trump wants to throw into combat against those who want revenge for their dead women and children, who are fighting on their own turf, and who come from a civilization that's lasted 5,000 years.

**#Glenn**

Well, I think when you call Iran a fortress, that's a very good description, because people often forget the country is almost four times the size of Iraq. It's mostly mountains and, again, populated by about 90 million people. And then you have the sea on the outside, just to make it even harder to storm the walls. So yeah, I think that's why the foreign minister, Araghchi, was making the point: "Yes, please do send your troops. The closer they come, the easier it will be to take them out." But as the U.S. is sending a few thousand troops, it begs the question—what exactly are they good for? And Karg Island seems too problematic, too difficult, unless they're sent over from Saudi Arabia. But even then, they'd be sitting ducks.

But I was thinking, if Trump really wants to open up the Strait of Hormuz and gamble a lot on this... You also have these islands—especially three islands near the Strait of Hormuz: Abu Musa, and then the Greater and Lesser Tumb Islands. It's interesting because they've been claimed by the United Arab Emirates ever since Iran took them in 1971. And suddenly now we see the UAE saying, "Oh, we might step up in the fight against Iran." Given that they're so—yeah, I know, with what army—but where does this enthusiasm come from? It just seems that this might be a trade-off if the Americans are promising them these islands back. You know, the U.S. gets control over the Strait of Hormuz, or more control at least, while the UAE gets its old islands back. Again, speculation—but what do you see otherwise? What can a few thousand boots on the ground achieve here?

## **#Stanislav Krapivnik**

Well, no, I think they'll go after those small islands. But here's the problem—or maybe the northern coastline of Iran. In a lot of places it's relatively flat, but it runs into mountains not too far inland. The problem is, whether you're on the islands or the coastline, what's the width of the entire—sorry, at the narrowest point, what's the width? Thirty-six kilometers. You know what goes fifty kilometers? Especially if you have a relay drone sitting up there—the FPV drone. You can take an FPV drone with a big battery pack that carries up to twenty kilograms of explosives, basically a couple of RPG rounds strapped to it. And you can go hunting Americans or UAE soldiers on those islands. You can do that day in and day out.

And especially, those islands aren't even 36 kilometers wide. You can take out any ships going through. First of all, around the tip—the dredged canal—because these waters aren't deep. The supertankers can't go through here; they'd beach themselves. The dredged canal, which by the way has to be maintained and constantly dredged—of course they do it, but you've got to consider that—that canal is about 2,700 meters wide, right down the middle. So, about 18 kilometers in, right down the middle at the narrowest point. And believe you me, a supertanker is a gigantic target. You put one or two of those out of commission, and then they've got to be dredged out of there, because nothing else is going to pass.

I'm not sure whether an American destroyer can pass into the shallower waters or not. I'm not quite sure how shallow the water is, but the supertankers can. So right off the bat, you can easily close

those gates that way. But those islands in the north—they're all within 15 or 16 kilometers of the mainland, or less. They're all within FPV drone range. You could set up 200 or 300 teenagers who've lost their families or their brothers and sisters and want revenge. Hand them VR goggles, give them a quick course on power and control—half of them probably already know how to fly these drones—and then give them a dozen drones. "Go play Hunt the Americans, or hunt the UAE." It becomes one big game, and they could be under every tree or rock, you know, trying to find these guys.

## **#Glenn**

They're all separated out, maybe in teams of two. Usually, they're running in teams of two.

## **#Stanislav Krapivnik**

But that's the point. I mean, you're talking, what, an investment of 400 or 500 people, and you could have 3,000 or 4,000 drones flying down—or a couple of drones for every Marine that landed there. How do you get the wounded off? How do you supply them? And here's the other thing—MI6. Because, you know, it wasn't the Ukrainians. I'll call it what it is: MI6 attacked a Russian—well, a "Shadow Fleet," if you want to call it that; I don't consider them Shadow Fleet—a non-Lloyd's of London-insured ship off the coast of one of the Aegean islands. Using what? This was, what, about three or four months ago? And they did it using FPV drones with RPG rounds attached to them.

And they swarmed in, hit it, damaged it, and set it on fire. Yeah, that could be used on any ship. No American ship would survive a hundred drones flying in a wave. It's dumb—they'll get through. You don't even need that many to get through, especially with that much explosive power behind every single drone. And once it's damaged enough and burning, what do you do when that Aegis destroyer is on fire with a crew of 350 people? You know, this is something that could cascade very quickly. So... will they get used? Probably—that's where they'll get used. Will it be a suicide mission? It'll be just as much of a cluster as if they went after Karg, maybe even worse.

And the Iranians are going to be within easy shooting range, with everything they have, to just keep lobbing into those islands. It's even easier to hit those islands than Karg Island because they're much closer to the mountains and the mainland. So there's no good solution for Trump on land—only massive failure, casualties, and a cluster, unless it's massive. The best thing is not to do it at all. More than likely, he's going to do it. That's my opinion now. I was hoping not, but he seems dead set on it because he doesn't know how to get out, and his only theory on how to get out of this is to double down, triple down, quadruple down—and do stupid down.

You know, Mr. Wynn Bigley—because he "wins bigly." Those are his own words. He wins so big, he wins bigly. Mr. Wynn Bigley is going to send a lot of men to their deaths. He'll leave behind a lot of orphaned children and widows, and parents without their sons and daughters, because the moron

can't just stop and take the punishment he's got for doing something stupid like starting this war. Instead, he's going to expand it. Unfortunately, I'd like things to be different, to go differently—but that's what I think we're facing, unfortunately.

## **#Glenn**

That's the problem with him—trying now to fix the narrative by overselling the successes in this war. It makes it so much harder to walk this one back and accept something less than a victory.

## **#Stanislav Krapivnik**

Well, Glenn, there was a story that came out from an inside source just recently that said Trump's war briefings—pardon my French, I shit you not when I say this—it's a crude saying, but I think it's very effective for this. First, a little bit of background. I remember Tulsi Gabbard talking about how they had to reform the daily security brief for Trump. Normally, the standard is, "Here's five or six pages of information, please read it, Mr. President." But Trump doesn't like to read, so they had to reform the national or international security brief down to something that looks like a Fox News break—just little pieces—so Trump doesn't have to read something that would take about fifteen minutes of watching.

Well, having said that—and Tulsi admitted this about a year ago—what the insider is saying is that Trump's war briefs are about three minutes long, and it's just strike videos: U.S. Army, Navy, or Air Force blowing stuff up. Nothing negative, no reality. I mean, what are you going to take out of an entire day's worth of war, in a flexible environment, in three minutes? We're dealing with a very shallow human being who is not well educated, no matter if he finished Ivy League schools. My God, his own mother—there was an interview with her when he was young, obviously—and what she said was, "I know my son is an idiot and he's awkward socially, but he's my son, and God help me, I love him. And please, if he goes into politics, it'll be a total disaster."

That's a quote from his mother in an interview in the New York Times about forty years ago or so. But, you know, his mother knew him best, obviously. And I've heard this from other people who've known Trump closely—very closely—including being in his entourage in the '90s when they were doing party drugs every couple of days, staying up all night, and throwing these wild parties in Atlantic City and New York. I've talked to these people. I'm friends with one of those former Navy SEALs who was in Trump's entourage. So, you know, they all say the same thing: he's not a deep person. He's a great marketing person, which is what this is about. This is why all republics die. Democracy—or, well, mob rule—but republics all die for the same reason: marketing.

It's a feel-good popularity contest in elections. You don't get the best people—it's human nature. You get the guy who sells himself better than the other guy. He may be as dense as a brick, while the other guy is a genius who could save you, but he's not as popular. It's a popularity contest. And then Trump won that contest. He's a marketing guru. It doesn't go much deeper than that, though.

Once you get into the White House, or the Kremlin, or wherever you are, now you have to start working. And if all that person has—in this case, Trump, and a lot of the EU leaders, we see the same thing—is that they can campaign well, they can sell themselves well, but there's nothing behind them: no knowledge base, no firmness, no concept of where they want to go. You get the message you get.

## **#Glenn**

Well, this briefing consists of videos showing explosions. It could explain his confidence—why he thinks things are going better than they are. Anyway, thank you so much for taking the time.