

# The Wars of the Epstein Class | Dr. Aaron Good

Crime in the united states is not a bug, it's a feature. That explains actually a lot also about its illegal foreign policies. The US as a political entity is deeply intertwined with crime syndicates and explicitly illegal acts under international and local law. Epstein was not at all an exception. These shady dealers are part and parcel of how US politics works. Luckily, there are great academics who work on the hidden power structures. One of them is with me today. Dr. Aaron Good, author of American Exception: Empire and the Deep State. Links: [Book] American Exception: <https://www.amazon.com/American-Exception-Empire-Deep-State/dp/1510769137> Aaron Good on Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/americanexception> Aaron Good on Substack: <https://americanexception.substack.com> Neutrality Studies substack: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com> (Opt in for Academic Section from your profile settings: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com/s/academic>) Merch & Donations: <https://neutralitystudies-shop.fourthwall.com> Timestamps: 00:00:00 Tripartite state and deep state 00:11:14 Drugs crime and state power 00:19:00 Capitalism empire and early roots 00:31:22 Israel networks and US power 00:38:13 Indonesia coups and resource grabs 00:43:00 Elite rule and criminalized empire 00:46:34 Blackmail lobbies and covert control 01:08:20 Closing and where to follow Aaron

## #Pascal

Welcome back, everybody, to Neutrality Studies. I'm Pascal Lottaz, and I'm joined today by Dr. Aaron Good, the author of the wonderful work \*American Exception: Empire and the Deep State.\* Aaron, welcome.

## #Aaron Good

Thank you, Pascal. It's great to be here.

## #Pascal

It's wonderful having you. I want to start by talking a little bit about your book, which you told me is going to come out in Japanese pretty soon. So if you're listening to this podcast in Japanese, please stay tuned for the release of the book in your language. In this book, you're making a very fundamental claim—or observation—about the American system, describing it as working through a tripartite distribution of labor, or basically of power, within the system. Could you explain that framework?

## #Aaron Good

Sure. So, it's understood by people who take civics classes in the U.S., or who grew up in the United States, that we live in a liberal democracy where the public is sovereign because they get to choose the leaders themselves when they vote in free and fair elections. There's supposed to be some sort of pluralism, where different groups have power but nobody can be totally in control because of these democratic and liberal institutions that allow for self-governance and so on. But this elides so much about the way the U.S. actually functions. Throughout its history, it's been kind of an imperialist and gangsterish enterprise with, you know, genocide, slavery, westward expansion, wars against Mexico, and whatnot—so on and so forth.

But it's really after World War II that the character of the U.S. regime changes—it becomes an empire built on global dominance, aiming for global dominance of the capitalist system. And to maintain this empire, there are big changes to American institutions and governance. You get the creation of this national security state, and it doesn't operate through debate, transparency, or lawfulness. It has a long history of lawbreaking—CIA operations to, like, steal people's mail when they're not even supposed to be operating domestically at all. They're doing all these things, carrying out all kinds of operations we likely only know half of—MKUltra programs, drug tests, mind control tests on unwitting Americans.

All sorts of horrible things—assassination plots overseas, alliances with drug traffickers, and so on—protecting organized crime in the United States. Just a whole level of statecraft that's supposedly plausibly deniable, but enough of it comes out that we have a big historical record to look at, to understand the ways the U.S. really operates, like Carl Schmitt suggested, in a state of exception. The U.S. regime has actually been covertly exceptionalist since the end of World War II. It keeps posing different emergencies without end—basically, the global communist conspiracy, or after 9/11, the global war on terror, which is this sort of terrorist Islamist conspiracy that we're organized against. So there's a lot of lawbreaking that's institutionalized.

So that's like a kind of duality of the state. This is something people who studied the Nazi regime talked about—it being a dual state. There was the normative state, where things functioned normally under the Weimar Republic and so on. But then there was the Nazi regime, which claimed it could break whatever laws it wanted because there was an emergency and they had to protect the state. Well, that kind of logic gets built into the U.S. regime in the national security state, and it gives it a kind of duality. You have the politicians saying what they say, and then the national security people—spooks and so on—breaking the law whenever they see fit and lying about it. And this is a common thing.

**#Pascal**

And you're not even talking just about international law, right? You're talking about U.S. domestic law and even the constitutional requirements that are regularly broken by something that's not just a crime syndicate, but an integral part of the state, funded by Congress and so on, right? That's what we're talking about.

## **#Aaron Good**

Yes, the criminalization of the state in the U.S. was the main force behind creating the United Nations and the U.N. Charter, drafting it, and ratifying it. It was ratified by Congress, and thus it is a treaty—an international treaty—which, according to the Constitution, makes it the supreme law of the land. And the U.N. Charter states that the U.S. cannot act aggressively, commit aggression against another country, or even threaten aggression against another country. Yet it does this all the time, which is categorically a violation of the U.S. Constitution.

But because the state operates in an exceptionalist way, there's no institution or legal mechanism to challenge the criminality of the United States unless there's a critical mass of people in power who decide they feel like doing it. And this is a problem if you believe in lawfulness and so on. But it would be impossible to run an empire the way the U.S. has—protecting invested capital all over the world, even if it means screwing over local populations. You really couldn't do this lawfully. So we have a system to manage it. But even beyond that, there's what I call a "deep state," a term I borrow from other people.

It really comes from Turkey—the Turkish system and observers of Turkey. But even before that, I think the real antecedent to this is Peter Dale Scott's "deep political system," which he wrote about for the first time in the early '90s. This is a kind of governance that isn't defined by constitutional or legal terms—it's a sort of lawless system where enforcement happens both inside and outside official channels. I think this idea eventually evolves into what we call the deep state. Ola Tunander, a Swedish peace studies scholar, wrote a really great article on this in the early 2000s.

## **#Pascal**

I was on his channel, yeah. A wonderful, wonderful scholar.

## **#Aaron Good**

Yeah, absolutely. And I'm doing a big series with him on the podcast now about the Olof Palme assassination, because I think he's probably the top expert on this—he knows the geopolitical context so well. There were a few people writing about this deep state phenomenon, and Peter is a good friend of mine. I did a big oral history series with him on the podcast as well. But the innovation of the tripartite state, which I describe in *\*American Exception\**, is that beyond the formal bureaucracy of the national security agencies—the FBI, CIA, NSA, the Pentagon, and so on—

and of course way beyond democratic politics, you know, the constitutional politics of how Congress, the presidency, and the judiciary are supposed to function...

There's an even deeper layer, for lack of a better word, that we could call the deep state, as I define it. I use the term in a couple of ways. One of them is to talk about the most sensitive, even criminal, institutions and practices of the national security state and its relationship—especially with organized crime—which really doesn't have a clear bureaucratic rationale. It's something deeper and more oligarchic. So in that sense, that could be the deep state. The clandestine state is one way to talk about the deep state. But in a broader sense, we could call it the deep state in a systemic sense, or we could call it the deep regime. It's all of those institutions that collectively allow for top-down governance in a nominal democracy. And that's another way to describe the deep state—or, again, the deep regime.

## **#Pascal**

Hey, very brief intermission because I was recently banned from YouTube. And although I'm back, this could happen again at any time. So please consider subscribing not only here but also to my mailing list on Substack—that's [pascallottaz.substack.com](https://pascallottaz.substack.com). The link's in the description below. And now, back to the video. So, in your framework, we've got the official U.S. government with its branches and all the constitutional structure. Then we've got the CIA—kind of the, what did you call it? The security state. And lastly, there's the deep state. The deep state is different from the security state because it's where everything that's basically not funded by Congress happens. Is that a fair way to understand it?

## **#Aaron Good**

Beyond that, I mean, there's overlap here with this oligarchic state, which we could call the deep state, because it dominates democratic politics through the funding of politicians. And it's not something that's explained in the Constitution—as if oligarchs should be able to dominate the system with money. But it also has a lot of power over the grand strategy and the tactics of the national security state. It's also intertwined with organized crime, especially the drug trade, which is extremely lucrative. My understanding is that the three most lucrative international commodities are oil, weapons, and narcotics.

And the deep state, through its partnership with the National Crime Syndicate and its offshoots, has allowed the U.S. and the U.S. empire to instrumentalize and profit from drugs—the international drug trade—which has uses beyond the money it generates for different oligarchs once you launder it and put it back into the financial system. But it also creates the kind of corruption, in the U.S. and around the world, that you need. So some of the best friends of the national security state are these deep political alliances between the security state...

## **#Aaron Good**

And the underworld of organized crime connects to the overworld—the oligarchy of private wealth—which is really, collectively, the formation that controls the U.S. regime.

## **#Pascal**

Yeah, so I think this is really important. I mean, under this view, the drug crisis—or the fentanyl crisis—in the United States is not the government failing, you know, like “we just can’t catch the baddies.” No, it’s about the built-in workings of the system—how the entire system produces wealth on the one hand for a few, misery on the other, and war abroad. So it’s part and parcel of the entire system in that framework, right?

## **#Aaron Good**

Yes. And I know less about the dynamics of the fentanyl problems in the United States and that sort of drug traffic, and who exactly is behind it. But it’s easier to understand how the heroin and cocaine trade evolved in the United States and how it was protected by various CIA operations and law enforcement entities. I mean, the most spectacular—or sort of jaw-dropping—example of this is Meyer Lansky, who was used by the U.S. in World War II. They said, “We want you to help us protect the docks from sabotage, Mr. Lansky,” who ran the National Crime Syndicate, “so that the war effort goes smoothly and you can control labor and everything else, and prevent subversion at the docks using your skills.”

And he says, “Okay, well, you’re going to need to release my friend Charles Luciano—Lucky Luciano—from prison,” which they do. And these guys worked for Uncle Sam during World War II, in the early ‘40s. At the same time, Meyer Lansky had this working relationship with the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and the FBI. Hoover ran the FBI, of course, and Harry Anslinger ran the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. They had both collaborated with Lansky starting, I think, in 1937, when they took down the top drug trafficker at the time—a guy named Louis Buchalter—who, I believe, also ran the Murder Incorporated assassination apparatus of the syndicate. But, you know, that’s a whole separate thing. The point is, they sprang Luciano from jail.

They worked with the guy who ran the National Crime Syndicate. In 1945, Harry Truman gave Meyer Lansky the Presidential Medal of Freedom in a secret ceremony, which isn’t really talked about much. Around 1945 or ‘46, Lansky also set up a drug connection in Mexico City with a guy named Harold Meltzer, who was running it. And to launder the drug money coming in from that Mexico City heroin connection, he created the city of Las Vegas. So Las Vegas, which had all these other mobsters—generally not Italian in this milieu, more of a Jewish or Zionist mafia—people like Moe Dalitz and Nicky Cohen, they established Las Vegas. They corrupted it.

They used Teamster corruption to get loans—Jimmy Hoffa and all that—to build all these casinos. And they created this illusion of Las Vegas, which is what it is. There’s a lot of gambling and showgirls and performers. But the key almost certainly had to be the drug money that was

laundered there. It was an enormous amount of money, and it was protected essentially because of Lansky and the syndicate's relationship with the national security state. This is a huge scandal, really—but it's a scandal so big, touching so many people, that it's too big to fail. And this played a role in U.S. history. It's part of why the U.S. couldn't investigate the JFK assassination—because, on the one hand, it was made to look like it was connected to the Soviets, which could have led to nuclear war.

But Ruby himself—Jack Ruby—was a mobster, but not an Italian mobster. He was more of a syndicate lieutenant, essentially, which was the real structure of organized crime at that time. It wasn't a bunch of Italians; that was a myth that got put out. I mean, there were Italians, there is the Mafia, but they were more like the retail level. At the higher level, you had the Teamsters and the Lansky Syndicate, which handled all the money laundering and controlled the fix with the government, because they were the ones who could get away with it and never be exposed. And so this was a sort of parallel branch of our system of governance—the National Crime Syndicate. And it was so dark and sinister that you couldn't expose it, even if you were against it during the Cold War, because you'd be damaging the U.S.'s standing in the Cold War.

## **#Pascal**

Well, how did you research that? How do you find this out? I mean, I suppose the answer is that it's actually just available. The data is there—it's just that people aren't connecting the dots or not really putting it into political science research.

## **#Aaron Good**

I'd like to say I was clever and diligent enough to have done all this research myself. But honestly, the best academic who's written about this is a political science PhD and retired University of California, Berkeley English professor, Peter Dale Scott. His book *\*Deep Politics and the Death of JFK\** was published in 1992, I think, by the University of California Press—a major university press. It details a lot of these relationships between the Teamsters, the crime syndicate, and the real controversy about the nature of organized crime in the United States.

And even though Peter didn't go further with this—especially tying it more to Israel—he lays out a lot of the information you need to explain many of these episodes. I did a whole oral history series, maybe 30 hours or so; I don't even know how long. Over the course of it, I started asking him more about these threads he didn't pull on, and a lot of them tie to Zionism. It was really amazing to learn about. Another book he wrote around 2010, *\*American War Machine\**, details many of the connections between Lansky's crime syndicate and Zionist intelligence figures and oligarchs—Tibor Rosenbaum and the Rothschild family, for example.

And it's really astounding. This connection between the crime syndicate in Israel and the crime syndicate within the U.S. establishment—the U.S. regime—is very explosive. It factors into all these

major political events in the U.S. that are never really explained or fully adjudicated. I'm talking about the JFK assassination, Watergate, Iran-Contra—even 9/11 has serious drug elements involved as well. These are political events that have shifted the U.S. in dark ways, stemming from this deep relationship between the regime and organized crime.

## **#Pascal**

So, you know, any kind of state—whatever it is—if it calls itself a state or if it is a state, then it needs to somehow manage crime, right? And in this sense, the U.S. political system does the same, but not in the way we'd think, which is that it tries to suppress it. No, it's living in a symbiotic relationship with it. They influence each other. And apparently—and we need to go there—it's connected to Zionism and the crime syndicates, or the illicit business, in Israel and with the state of Israel. So unpacking this is really hard, but can we maybe start with how you—when do you see that this form of governance started? Was it always there, or is this something that is...

## **#Aaron Good**

It has its antecedents in different relationships that the organized crime syndicate had with the oligarchs of capitalism—the robber barons and so on—throughout U.S. history. But it's really the era of political machines and the Gilded Age that takes corruption to another level. These political machines are essentially like mini crime syndicates in particular cities—Tammany Hall, the Pendergast machine in Kansas City—these different fiefdoms. Right. So, you had Prohibition, which gave a whole lot of power to organized crime, and these people became legitimate oligarchs in the United States. But if you go back even further, some of the main oligarchs in the early United States were people who made their fortunes in what was called the China trade, which was really the opium trade.

So, like, the Forbes family, the first Lowell Mills—you know, the first industrialization of the United States with the textile industry in Massachusetts—this was founded with opium money. Right? So it's like the foundation of U.S. capitalism. The Yale University campus—the Russell Trading Company gave them all this land and money. You know, the people who founded Skull and Bones were from the same opium trading company. So the Ivy Leagues had a lot of this old heroin money set up there. There was always this criminal element and its relationship with the U.S. oligarchy that's been a foundational part of American capitalism. And in the 1920s, Prohibition came and really supercharged the power of these entities. When Prohibition wound down, the drug traffic became even more of a cash cow for the syndicate.

## **#Pascal**

Prohibition was in force for, what, ten or eleven years, right? '22 to '33, something like that? And was it a deliberate attempt, or is it one of those moments when we can say, "Oh no, this was a real unintended consequence of a purist idea of how society should run?"

## **#Aaron Good**

I like what you're suggesting here, and the truth is, I don't know. But the same thought has occurred to me—were there deep political forces behind Prohibition, people who understood how it would play out and realized they could make a lot of money, and so they convinced politicians to support it for ulterior motives? It's quite plausible, because if so, they would have been very clever. And the one thing about the American system that just never changes is that it's motivated first and foremost—and second and third, and whatever—by the pursuit of money and greed, and by people scheming different ways to make lots of money. So it's quite plausible to me, but I've never seen anybody make that case in a coherent way. I've also never really looked, either. Was it a game specifically for these people to manipulate politics this way? It's possible, I think, but I can't make an argument for it.

## **#Pascal**

You know, one thing that fascinates me about the United States is that a lot of this—especially foreign policy thinking—is done not in silos but in groups, right? Groups that sometimes oppose each other and sometimes go in exactly the same direction. The pre-1945, or let's say pre-1941, United States to me is one in which you actually had a very, very strong group of restrainers. And these restrainers at the time used to call themselves neutralists, right? They thought the United States should remain neutral. After World War II, this was renamed—rebranded—into isolationism. So today we call it isolationism because it's a worse term, right?

## **#Aaron Good**

Which is a nonsensical term.

## **#Pascal**

Yeah, going out and bombing people—that's internationalism. Staying at home and not killing people—that's isolationism. But the group at the time thought about that differently. And there was always, like, since the Constitution, you know, the Quincy Adams and so on—there were people who argued that the United States must not go out and seek monsters. And, of course, the group that won then did exactly the opposite. Yeah. There's a monster in every goddamn corner, and we must go and set fire to it. This trajectory—can you maybe talk a little bit, in your framework, about how that came along, and then also, again, how it connects to Zionism and the cause of Israel?

## **#Aaron Good**

Sure. The first part—and then I'll come back to the Zionist aspect of it. But capitalism is a gangster enterprise from the very beginning. You have these people in England who steal the land of their

countrymen—the commons that people relied on to eke out an existence under feudalism. They at least had that. But then you had these enterprising people who wanted to create a textile industry. So they steal the land from the people so they can raise sheep for that industry and make a lot of money. This causes dislocations in society over there, and imperialism is the result. You have this surplus population and this desire to get more land—uh, resources for commercial enterprises. So the first place they go is Ireland, and they just brutalize the hell out of the Irish people.

But Ireland's, you know, not so big. I mean, what they do ends up causing the potato famine. And, you know, you have these ghoulish figures like, uh, Humphrey Gilbert, who would line the, uh, the sort of sidewalk or path out of his military tent on the frontier—he would line it with Irish skulls, Irish severed heads. Right. Uh, they were just really vicious imperialists. And then you see policy papers written for the crown or for Parliament saying, you know, we could go to the New World and colonize it to the great unburdening of the realm at home. And there's basically infinite land there. And so they go and colonize North America. But they don't colonize it for, like, subsistence farmers who need food—it's commercial enterprises. It's capitalism.

The first successful commercial enterprise in North America for the English was tobacco. Yeah. And so this is what they—they don't grow tobacco to eat it; they grow it to sell it and get rich. And so this is what they do. It eventually leads to slavery because the indentured servants were problematic—they wanted the land they were promised when they didn't die off during their indenture. And so they start to rely on slavery for their source of labor. But the tension between the colonists and England is especially that the colonists want to go west, but that causes expensive wars—like the Seven Years' War. And so Britain doesn't want them to fight these expensive wars, so they station these redcoats there. I mean, redcoats, I should say, not Red Guards. That's very different.

Redcoats. And then they try to tax the population to pay for them. But the population doesn't—especially the oligarchs who wanted to expand west. They didn't want to pay taxes to the British, who also indebted them and kept them in, you know, bad straits. And so they have the Revolutionary War. They go west, stealing land and killing the Indians all the while. They keep pushing farther and farther west. They buy the Louisiana Purchase from Napoleon, then they take California, Texas, and Arizona from Mexico in different steps. First there's the Lone Star, you know, hoax or rebellion thing, and then there's the Mexican-American War.

By the time they fight the Mexican-American War—around the midpoint of the 1800s—as soon as they do that, instead of just stopping and saying, "OK, we've achieved our manifest destiny," they send Admiral Perry over to Tokyo Bay. This is before the Civil War is even fought. And he's there because they just keep going west. It was this imperialist vision of pushing farther and farther west, and even reaching California didn't stop it. There was more money to be made in Asia, and this was the early attempt to do more of that. So it's been an imperialist enterprise from the beginning. By the time you get to the end of the 1800s, there are forces in the U.S. that are more populist, and they don't want more empire.

They wanted the U.S. to have a more managed or sort of planned economy—not a planned economy like a full-on socialist state, but something trending in that direction. And then there were others who thought, no, the U.S. should go out and seek markets abroad and so on. Those are the people who won. You get the takeover of Hawaii and Guam, and then the Spanish-American War. At that point, there was a controversy about it. People opposed this—people like Mark Twain and Andrew Carnegie. They opposed U.S. imperialism. There was a big Anti-Imperialist League, funded by a major oligarch, Carnegie. Right.

But the imperialists win, and the U.S. eventually enters World War One, which is an imperialist kind of enterprise as well—really a war between empires. And then they eventually enter World War Two. I mean, I'm skipping over a lot of things, but I assume people sort of know this history. By the time World War Two is about to break out, you have imperialism. Henry Luce, who is part of the Council on Foreign Relations, and Roosevelt tasks the Council on Foreign Relations with coming up with a strategy for the U.S.—and the strategy is basically the “American Century,” that the U.S. would defeat the enemies of freedom and then establish an empire—not an empire of freedom.

They would establish an American Century—not an empire, but a century of American leadership and free enterprise—which would be, uh, the model for the world. And democracy, instead of colonialism, would represent freedom and democracy, which was essentially going to be neocolonialism, but they didn't package it that way. This was the moment the U.S. decided to go for global dominion over capitalism—that they would be, instead of having all these different, you know, French Empire, Dutch Empire, and British Empire, the U.S. was going to be the imperial hegemon, and it was going to manage capitalism. And that's how the U.S. becomes a global empire. And to do that, they had to create things like the CIA and all these other agencies to manage it.

## **#Pascal**

Yeah, the CIA is, of course, the outcome of the OSS, right? That was already very important during the Second World War. So we do have a shift after 1945—also when it comes to the structure of the U.S. political system—because that form of the tripartite state setup was different before the Second World War. But of course, it morphed, and today we have that system and it works, though it also creates all these internal problems. And we're going to talk about Israel in just a second.

I just want to point out, you know, this history of how that exploitation happened—it continues even today. And even now, Europeans believe that colonialism and all that is long gone, that we don't believe in it anymore. And that's, of course, utter BS. It's still baked in. Just yesterday—well, six or twelve hours ago—they had a vote at the United Nations, a resolution urging reparations for slavery to correct historical wrongs. Three countries voted against it.

## **#Aaron Good**

Do you want to guess which three? I know which three. And the thing they all share is that they're white people living in places on the globe where white people aren't originally from. Right—Argentina, Israel, and the U.S.

## **#Pascal**

Exactly—Argentina, Israel, the United States. They voted against it, and fifty-two abstained. And surprise, surprise, it's basically all the Europeans plus Japan. Right. The only one that surprises me is, I think, Cambodia or Colombia—one of the two. I think Cambodia actually abstained, but maybe the guy just wasn't there. Anyway, let's get back to this. It's just to say this mindset is not over at all. We're still living in the midst of it, right? But if we now turn our attention to what Mearsheimer calls the U.S. and Israel being joined at the hip—if I understand you right, it's not just the U.S. government and the Israeli government joined at the hip, it's also the crime syndicates joined at the hip, and everybody's joined at everybody's hip.

## **#Aaron Good**

Yes. The issue of Israel and Zionism is a very contentious one in the U.S. There was an embargo in 1948—that was the official policy when Israel was established. But people like Meyer Lansky and Jimmy Hoffa, they were two of the main figures. And I believe Moe Dalitz and Mickey Cohen were also involved. The crime bosses, yes, were some of the main people supplying weapons to the Zionists, and they would also sabotage shipments that were supposed to go to the Arabs as well.

## **#Pascal**

And these weapons were also used to fight the Brits, right? I mean, those terrorist groups in Palestine started blowing things up—well, that was in the '20s and '30s—but they were blowing up police stations, British hotels, and so on. So was this already funded by the U.S. connection? Yeah.

## **#Aaron Good**

I would guess so. I mean, I know more about the efforts to fund things in the years immediately around the establishment of Israel. But you had a schism between what the official U.S. wanted—which was not to back the Zionists over there, basically to keep a balance between the Arabs and the Zionists, you know, a policy that wouldn't make it hard for them to have a good foreign policy in the region—and the people who were hardline Zionists. And Harry Truman is a pivotal figure here. He was critical in some of his letters about what the Israelis were doing, but ultimately he takes a huge bribe in 1948 that may have been decisive—from a Jewish Zionist oligarch—maybe one or two million dollars, like on a train when they were doing a campaign tour or something like that.

And this is when he recognizes the state of Israel. So this is already kind of a coup, because other people, like the Secretary of Defense, James Forrestal, were dead set against it. But the Democrats—

especially Truman, more than Roosevelt, because Roosevelt was kind of old money—people like Harry Truman and LBJ represented the more corrupt side of the Democrats. And the Democrats were the more mobbed-up of the two parties, which made the Zionism of the labor unions, especially the Teamsters, more relevant in Democratic Party politics. They had to deal with their sources of power—part of which came from labor unions and so on—that were corrupted by the mob and thus by Zionism, more so than the Republicans.

The Republicans were more of the WASPy, basically conservative business people—that's where their oligarchs came from. And this helps us understand why, in 1956, when Britain, France, and Israel tried the Suez gambit, Eisenhower wasn't having any part of it. He came to office on a wave of Standard Oil cash, and Standard Oil, Aramco, the Rockefellers—they represented a different political formation, not super pro-Israel. So that's why, in 1956, they stopped the attempt at an Israeli land grab. But in 1967, with LBJ in there, he was their man, and the '67 war goes off. They occupy more of Palestine—the West Bank and Gaza, most notably—which they still occupy to this day, and where they're trying to commit genocide, you know.

## **#Pascal**

And expand into Lebanon—expand. I mean, the name of the game is so clear by now that it's really fantastic to me that there's still such a large part of the West that pretends it's all because of October 7, because they were attacked. It's all just because of that.

## **#Aaron Good**

Nothing would have happened if it hadn't been for that.

## **#Pascal**

But okay, right—back to the political analysis of how we got there, or...

## **#Aaron Good**

Right. So this issue of Israel is contentious. And one aspect of it that underlies the power of Israel, as I was saying, is the crime syndicate and the protected drug traffic. It's this radioactive element of politics that cannot be exposed. And this is part of how they were able to get away with the JFK assassination. JFK was the figure who sought to go even beyond what Eisenhower would have done, which was to stand up to the Zionists. JFK supported Third World nationalism. He was a Cold Warrior, but he wanted—he tried—to end the Cold War. He tried to stop Israel from getting the bomb as best he could because he knew it would be very destabilizing and bad for the region. He supported people like Nasser. He wanted to resolve the Palestinian refugee crisis, and the Zionists opposed him on that. He wanted the Zionist lobby to register as foreign agents, because they were. And this was another very important battle that he fought.

## **#Pascal**

So he angered these—AIPAC, which to this day isn't registered as one, right? It's not registered as a lobbying group.

## **#Aaron Good**

And it was the American—I believe it was the American Zionist Council—that he and Robert Kennedy were going after, trying to force them to register. But AIPAC is the direct descendant of that organization. Yeah. And this wasn't the only group that Kennedy angered. The oilmen, the big oil crowd, wouldn't have liked him either. The Rockefeller constituency, the Standard Oil crowd, wouldn't have liked him because his policy toward Indonesia would have resulted in Rockefeller interests—Freeport Sulphur—losing this unbelievably lucrative gold mine that only, uh, Allen Dulles and the Rockefellers really knew about.

JFK and Sukarno didn't even know that on the island of West Papua was the richest deposit of gold in human history—the Grasberg mine. It's this amazing store of mineral wealth, really. And Sukarno, the head of Indonesia, didn't even know it existed. The Dutch knew, and they tried to fight to hold on to it, but they lost that fight. The plan that Kennedy and Dag Hammarskjöld had was to use the U. N. to administer West Papua and allow it to be independent, not part of Indonesia. But neither Dag nor JFK knew about all the gold there. Then Dag Hammarskjöld gets killed, and it's questionable—yeah, they both died. Those were motive enough, motive enough to kill either of them, though the Indonesia stuff wasn't the only motive.

## **#Pascal**

Holy Jesus. And then, of course, the Indonesia stuff is sold to us today as just one of those instances where the United States went kind of bonkers about fighting communism. Right. Which is a wonderful, wonderful excuse for this kind of neo-imperial resource extraction. How did the story end? I didn't know. I had no idea.

## **#Aaron Good**

The story ends—on the gold? Yes. The story ends with—well, it doesn't really end, but a key point is you kill JFK. And then, in 1965, LBJ apparently authorizes the CIA. I think British intelligence is involved too, and even some Japanese figures like Kodama and other shady operatives connected to the U.S. They orchestrate a sort of coup that goes wrong, called the Gestapu movement, or the 30 September movement. It allows Suharto to take power and then launch this purge of all the communists there. They murder between 500,000 and 2 million people to put Suharto in power. And Suharto is a U.S. puppet.

## **#Pascal**

And also eradicate a good part of the intelligentsia of Indonesia—kill the academics. And Sukarno was part, of course, of this kind of nationalist, sovereignist movement, together with the others who founded the Non-Aligned Movement and so on. But that guy was overthrown with the help of the United States, supposedly to fight communism, but also, on the other hand, to get their hands on this gold mine. And did they get the gold mine? I mean, did they get all of that stuff?

## **#Aaron Good**

The Freeport Sulphur Company, which is a Rockefeller-aligned company—it's a Rockefeller-interested company—they end up getting that. It's the Freeport-McMoRan mine, and they have a partnership with the Indonesian military now. But it became a big issue—it's become more of an issue and discussed more—what actually happened there in the 21st century, thanks to a film by Joshua Oppenheimer called *\*The Act of Killing\**, which everyone should see. I was lucky enough, when I was teaching, to have a tribute class for Peter Dale Scott, and he came in over Zoom. Daniel Ellsberg was there too, and Joshua Oppenheimer was there, and he thanked Peter. He said, "Peter, your poem about Indonesia was my inspiration. If it wasn't for that, I don't know that I would have made this movie."

And that movie changed history—it made Indonesians look at this for the first time. But the way it's understood in the U.S. now, some people have read Vincent Bevins' book—uh, I forget the name of it—but his book on Indonesia talks about the killings there and how the CIA and the West were part of it. But he doesn't get into the more explosive material that the Australian historian Greg Polgrain has written about, which covers how the West—there's every reason to surmise—actually organized the coup that failed, which then served as the pretext for the killings. It wasn't just an opportunistic thing of, "Oh, we've got a chance to kill a bunch of people, let's do it." They set it all in motion. And Greg Polgrain has written about this very well in a number of books.

## **#Pascal**

He's been sort of obsessed with this case for decades, which is really fascinating.

## **#Aaron Good**

He has a new book coming out on it too. So this is a part of the Cold War that really tells you a lot about what the U.S. is as the head of capitalism. I mean, it's essentially maintaining colonialism and colonial economic relationships without formal rule. It's neocolonialism. That's been the system since the end of World War II.

## **#Pascal**

Why does this system exist? What are some of the things it relies upon? Is that part of how power elites maintain their primacy—by making sure nobody else can rival them in this area? Because, you know, it's all centers of power that either oppose each other or work with each other. That must explain this, right? And then that's how it creates the foreign policy we see as a symptom of the way the forces inside work.

## **#Aaron Good**

Right. I mean, the U.S. is a system where the rich are really the ones with power. There's a study by two guys at Princeton and Northwestern—Gilens and Page, I think—that came out in 2016, where they used standard political science methods to basically show that it's just like C. Wright Mills said in 1956: the average person doesn't really have any power over politics. Right. Of course, it shows you how bad political science is, that it took them sixty years to catch up to C. Wright Mills. But, you know, they like their regression models and all that. Right. But this is the U.S. So if you have rich people controlling foreign policy, and you're the most powerful country militarily and economically in the world, then you're going to want all the things around the world that are worth owning and that are really lucrative.

And so the most lucrative things—they try to control those. And if these countries, for whatever reason, elect nationalists or socialists of a nationalist bent, like Salvador Allende or Mossadegh or Sukarno—if these people come to power, they get overthrown. Because Sukarno, for example, nationalized oil and this massive gold deposit; or Mossadegh in Iran with the oil; or Lumumba and the enormous mineral wealth of the Congo. And on and on. Or Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana. All these people were nationalists who wanted the resources of their countries to serve their own people. Allende in Chile, right? Even mild liberal figures like João Goulart in Brazil—the U.S. just gets rid of them. I mean, you could have a necropolis of leaders and people killed by the U.S., and the total population would be in the millions. You could say.

## **#Pascal**

And Siddhita Kushi and her colleague also wrote about all of this, and we have data sets on it. They showed that U.S. foreign interventions actually started increasing after 1989, after the end of the Cold War. You have twice the number of interventions after '45 than before, and then again a doubling or so after '89. So this going out, meddling, doing everything to other countries, and then crying wolf—even when there's really nothing—about anyone supposedly doing something similar to the United States, like Russiagate, it's quite symptomatic, isn't it? One more thing about Zionism: do you understand these political outcomes we're seeing as part of how these states work, including the criminal elements but underlined by religious motivation? Or is Zionism itself—the religious motivation—just a placard to show everyone when there's other stuff going on behind it?

## **#Aaron Good**

I don't know how many of the American Zionist oligarchs are actually practicing Jews in any meaningful way, or how attached they really are to the Torah and all that.

## **#Pascal**

Or Evangelical Christian Zionists.

## **#Aaron Good**

Even them. The rise of evangelical Christianity in the U.S. comes around the same time as a shift—an upsurge, really—in the right wing, and the rise of Zionism and evangelical Christianity seem connected. They're also tied to big oil people who promoted these megachurches and so on. So someone could take a deeper look at how the oligarchs created evangelical Christianity and its connections to Zionism. But the Zionism issue in the United States—the power of the oligarchs is one thing, and then there are these lobbying organizations, like what Walt and Mearsheimer write about. In America, everything is for sale, and if you throw enough money at something, you can dominate any particular area.

Politics is pretty obviously like that. Back in the day, starting with people like Senator Fulbright, and even Barry Goldwater later on, they were saying Congress is controlled by Zionists, and that this is really bad for U.S. foreign policy. We need a foreign policy that's good for the United States. The problem is that the Zionists are so intertwined with the American deep state and all this criminality. There's something Peter Dale Scott calls the "Gray Alliance," which is the institutionalized relationship between the national security state, law enforcement, and organized crime.

What exists at the beginning of World War Two and basically up until 1970 is the Gray Alliance, which was characterized by the crime syndicate—the Lansky syndicate, or what we could call the Lansky–Teamster–Mafia syndicate. This goes back to, let's say, the late '30s or so, and it lasts until 1970. Then something happens in 1970: they indict Meyer Lansky. And before that, in 1969, there was an article—I think by Anthony Lucas or Lukacs, I can't remember his name—he's the guy who wrote about Watergate. The article was about the Council on Foreign Relations.

He says that in 1969 there was this meeting of the Council on Foreign Relations, and these old WASPy guys are saying, "We really need to change the covert policy, the foreign policy apparatus, because it's getting a little too—it's causing us some problems, and we need to rethink it." Right? And then Lansky gets indicted a year later. But I think what happened was that this relationship—the syndicate and how close it was to people like James Angleton at the CIA, Hoover at the FBI, and Anslinger at the Federal Bureau of Narcotics—was understood to have become more a part of U.S. foreign policy than it should have been.

And the 1967 war—the war in Israel and Palestine—where they steal the moral land from the Palestinians, they start the war. It's basically an unprovoked, preemptive war, a war of aggression.

This is preceded by a bunch of strange things in 1967, around February or March of '67. You have an article in *\*Ramparts\** magazine about the CIA funding national student groups and also funding pro-Arab civil society groups, right, in conjunction with IESIS. The Rockefellers and Aramco—they're potentially manipulating politics on behalf of the Arabs. The CIA is, at this point. Right. And so this gets exposed, and it really embarrasses the CIA. It's the biggest scandal they'd faced up to that point.

And it appears in *\*Ramparts\** magazine. It's very weird if you stop and look at who wrote it. The guy who wrote the exposé was named Sol Stern. He was born in Mandatory Palestine. And very shortly after this article comes out—this is the first article he's ever written—it's this bombshell that changes history. Then later he becomes a right-winger for the rest of his life, a neoconservative writing about how terrible the Palestinians are, and so on and so forth. So that's very interesting. You also have the Jim Garrison indictment of Clay Shaw in 1967, and he's blaming the CIA. He's trying to take the CIA to court for conspiracy to kill the president, essentially.

And this is also a shock to the CIA, for it to be in the papers this way. The person who told Jim Garrison to investigate this case was one of the most Teamster-corrupted people in the U.S.—Senator Russell Long, the son of Huey Long. And Huey Long, you know, his political machine had ties to Lansky and all sorts of corruption, and so on and so forth. And the third thing that happens in 1967, around this time, is a Jack Anderson article. He was this big syndicated columnist with Drew Pearson, one of the top columnists in the U.S., where they said the CIA was working with the mafia to assassinate Castro. And this may have blown back on JFK in some sort of way, right?

All of these things together end up flat-footing—or wrong-footing—the institutional CIA, which in 1967 was still more Arabist-friendly. And as a result, Richard Helms, for whatever reason, you know, feels that—oh, another thing LBJ does when this article comes out about the Cuban business and the mafia and JFK—is he orders the CIA to write an inspector general's report confessing to their crimes, essentially. That report could really have destroyed the CIA if he'd wanted to. So he had them in the palm of his hand, and he's a super Zionist. And this is happening on the eve of the Six-Day War, just months before it breaks out.

And the other interesting thing that happens at this time is that Howard Hughes takes over management of a lot of these Lansky, Jewish mob-run casinos in Las Vegas. The significance of this is that Hughes has all these contracts with the government—you know, with the CIA, with the Pentagon, the aerospace industry, and so on. So by fusing that organization with the Vegas mob and the syndicate, it sort of insulates them even further from scrutiny, at least that's how I would interpret it. This is written about in Peter's obscure book *\*Crime and Cover-Up: CIA, the Mafia, the Dallas-Watergate Connection.\** It's a really hard book to find.

He gave me a copy of it a while back, so I have an original one. But he doesn't write about this Israeli angle—he just writes about all these strange things happening. And he has one throwaway sentence where he says there are a lot of things happening in the world around this time, like the

Six-Day War. But then he doesn't interrogate it any further. So all of these things show that it's not just the lobby. The reason I'm going into this—and I hope it's not more detail than people can process—is that it's not just what Walt and Mearsheimer are talking about with the Israel lobby, political donations, and think tanks.

## **#Pascal**

Institutional and overt kinds of funding of the U.S. political process. There's also an entire covert part—the funding of the hidden side of the political process in the United States.

## **#Aaron Good**

Yes. And a number of politicians—like, the sexual blackmail exists as a key part. Yes, pre-Epstein. So by the time you get to 1970, I think some of the U.S. establishment wants to alter this. Nixon declares war on drugs. Meyer Lansky gets indicted, flees to Israel, and hangs out there until late 1972, after the Watergate burglars have been arrested. And the Watergate burglars are arrested and sitting in jail. But if you actually investigated these guys, they probably track back to the Kennedy assassination. Some of these figures, like Frank Sturgis, for example—as soon as Kennedy gets killed, Sturgis is down in Florida planting disinformation stories to make it look like the Cubans, like Castro, were involved in the assassination.

So he ties a lot of, you know, hanky-panky or whatever dirty tricks to the U.S. side. E. Howard Hunt seems to have been involved in the Kennedy assassination in some way. James McCord as well—he's the spookiest of them all, in a way. He seems to be directly reporting to Angleton. But you ended up with a similar situation in the JFK assassination and in Watergate. In the JFK assassination, you have Jack Ruby in jail, and he's a syndicate lieutenant connected to the drug traffic. He's an FBN and FBI informant. He knows all the cops. He's really tied into the protected drug traffic in Dallas.

And he has ties to the Vegas mob, makes all these calls to Vegas mob figures in the weeks before the assassination. And if you were to investigate it, you'd just expose an insane level of corruption. So he ultimately dies in jail, even though he'd been granted a new trial. He told reporters he'd been put in that position by people who were really powerful, who didn't want the real facts to come out. He was basically saying there was a conspiracy, and that he was part of it. And that's why he killed Oswald.

But then he dies of this fast-onset cancer in jail. And he'd been declared insane after a psychotic episode. But the person who evaluated him was Jolly West, this notorious MK-Ultra CIA psychiatrist, who seems to have dosed Jack Ruby on the eve of examining him and then declared him insane. I mean, that seems to be what happened. So it's just—it's unbelievable, the level of corruption in this country. I've been studying this for a while, but I feel now, with the Epstein stuff that's on the surface—there's a reorganization once Lansky goes to Israel.

I think you could go from the syndicate era to what you might call the octopus era, which is a new arrangement for this kind of apparatus. Nixon ends up going down, being taken out because of the things he was trying to do. So there's kind of a peace made between these different factions—more WASPy, conservative Americans like George H. W. Bush and the Rockefellers, and what would become the neoconservatives. And there's an uneasy alliance through the rest of the '70s and into the '80s.

And I think it shifts in the late '80s, because Reagan—people like Reagan, H. W. Bush, and Barry Goldwater—conservative Americans, right, American imperialists, not people I agree with, but they were saying categorically that there has to be a Palestinian state, that they have to deal with this issue. And that's when they start talking this way—when the Iran-Contra scandal breaks out. There's this whole period of political warfare and leaks. It's kind of like another Watergate, because that's what Watergate is—they're all leaking things on each other. Nixon fires the CIA director and has his new director dig up the “family jewels” so he can really have the CIA by the family jewels, you know, because he thinks the CIA is behind Watergate. This is all political warfare during both of these periods.

And what ends up happening after H. W. Bush loses is that Bush specifically sent his secretary of state to AIPAC to say, “No greater Israel.” Right? James Baker, March or May of 1989. And Reagan's last act in office, essentially, was to recognize the PLO on his way out the door. So the stage is set to really give the Palestinians a state and defuse this neocon-Israel problem in U.S. politics, because that's really what it's all about—it's about Greater Israel. And what happens? There's a ton of scandals that come out. They start talking about Israel, the October Surprise of 1980 during this period, Iran-Contra, the cocaine dealing. There's the Franklin scandal, which is like a precursor to the Epstein scandal. This appears in the news. The Gladio documentaries appear on the BBC, which is now suddenly interested in exposing the secrets of the CIA and its crimes, for some strange reason, right at this time.

## **#Pascal**

No, no, no. Journalistic standards, right? Because holding the powerful to account—that's what they do. Anything else is a conspiracy theory.

## **#Aaron Good**

Yes. Here's a crazy aspect of it—and this one really bums me out—but it's pretty mind-blowing when you realize what it is. Oliver Stone's movie \*JFK\* is a brilliant film, but it comes out in 1991, right when these issues are big. And it's financed—the executive producer is Arnon Milchan, who's notorious as an Israeli asset. Yeah. So why would they want to pass the JFK Records Act, get Oliver's movie out there, and get people thinking about JFK? Because Israel was probably a participant in the assassination, but at the behest of the Pentagon and other oligarchs, and so on.

Exposing these things is like the Epstein operation of blackmailing people, except you're blackmailing the whole U.S. regime for its crimes and the JFK assassination—which, if you examined it, would lead to the drug-trafficking alliances as well. This is what's going on at the time. It seems to be a big part of how Israel has the power to blackmail the U.S., because the U.S. empire is a criminal enterprise. They wouldn't be able to do this if it weren't for the gangster essence of U.S. imperialism, Western imperialism—or just capitalism, if we're going to be candid.

## **#Pascal**

This is fascinating. You know, Aaron, it's very hard to follow you, just because you know so many names and so many events. But this framing of the United States as a political actor—where crime is baked into the system and this covert way of doing politics, even against very clear laws, is baked into the system—is essential to understanding how the entire animal moves. And unfortunately, with the exception of your book and a couple of others, that's just not part of political science. That's not how people look at it, because those things, those figures, are obviously not in data sets, and therefore they're basically ignored as determinants of the U.S. political system.

## **#Aaron Good**

The control of the fix—or the meta fix, or the deep fix, whatever you'd call it—the ability to have your lucrative illicit profits protected, and your operations protected by the state, is very important. It becomes a tool of foreign policy. Notice that when the U.S. becomes involved in Southeast Asia, it turns into the heroin-producing capital of the world. After Vietnam, heroin production drops drastically, and then it increases in Afghanistan, because that's where the U.S. goes. It's the same dynamic.

## **#Pascal**

Now, under the Taliban, that stuff is gone, because everyone locally knows you have to get rid of it. This goes back to the 19th century, to the opium trade and the Opium Wars in China. The European empires—and the U.S. as an extension of that—that's how they see their systems run.

## **#Aaron Good**

I mean, the slave trade is a hugely lucrative part of capitalism—and the history of capitalism—the drug trade. There's just nothing that these economic actors won't do, because it's the way human civilization has operated, and the way imperialism has operated. Until some sort of lawful, peaceful internationalism reaches a critical mass internationally, this is what we're stuck with. But this is also a source of a little bit of optimism for me: the system is so insane that it's allowed such insane actors to become really powerful—especially the Zionists, you know, after what I call the "octopus era," which comes after Lansky is put into captivity.

And then you have this “octopus era” that runs from around 1970 up to George H. W. Bush. Right. But I think what happens after that is a kind of Zionist triumph, when they defeat George H. W. Bush—which was a strange election. I think Ross Perot, the third-party candidate, was likely a plant by Israel, specifically to help them win. And I say this often, by logic, but also because I discovered recently that Ross Perot Jr. had this extremely lucrative oil concession in Kurdistan—in the Kurdish areas—where stolen oil from Syria would be smuggled through Turkey and given to Israel. So to me, that’s like, OK, he’s part of that milieu.

I would guess. But regardless, we could call this the Epstein era, because Epstein was involved. People like Epstein and Wexner were part of those Iran-Contra networks, but they became even more powerful afterward. The sort of neocon lobby, or Zionist network—it’s like a syndicate 2.0, or we could call it the Epstein regime. If we wanted to, we could describe it that way. And that’s what we’re stuck with up to the present day: this evolution from the syndicate up until 1970 with Lansky and his CIA, FBI, FBN protection, and then the octopus era, where it’s the Saudis and BCCI—the BCCI Bank. You’ve heard of that bank, right?

## **#Pascal**

No, what is BCCI Bank?

## **#Aaron Good**

BCCI Bank is the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, and it was created in 1972 to replace Castle Bank, which was more corrupted by Lansky, you know—Zionism, etc.—intertwined with the CIA, right? So Castle Bank goes down, but then you get these two new CIA banks: Nugan Hand and BCCI. BCCI is more connected. It involves people linked to Israel, but also Saudis and Pakistanis. So it’s American, right? It’s a replacement. But in 1992, the bank gets taken down, and the person who takes it down is Robert Morgenthau, from one of the top Zionist families in the United States. He goes after it like he’s Captain Ahab trying to take down this bank.

And he’s also involved—well, that family is involved in other strange aspects of the U.S.–Israel relationship. Like, they were involved in the Israeli acquisition of the bomb, for one thing. And my friend and mentor, Peter Dale Scott, in the 1970s, when he was trying to investigate the assassination and get it reopened—you know, a new investigation, which eventually happened in Congress—he was being paid by a family that was allowing him to work at a think tank in Washington. And the people paying for this were the Morgenthau family, to expose the Kennedy assassination and bring it back to public consciousness, and eventually get congressional hearings.

So these are the same actors who want to expose the CIA’s involvement in the JFK assassination, I think for political blackmail reasons. Then they shut down BCCI in the early ‘90s, I think to damage H. W. Bush and associate him with criminality like Iran-Contra. And the kicker to the whole George H. W. Bush thing is that just days before the election, the prosecutor indicts Caspar Weinberger, who

was Reagan's secretary of defense, as I recall, and he's involved in Iran-Contra. It lists George H. W. Bush as someone who was aware of all the crimes of Iran-Contra, which he had denied up until that point. So this happens right on the eve of the election, and it damages H. W. Bush's chances.

And I would have to guess that the reason something so unusual like that happened is because there were political actors who really were against H. W. Bush. And I don't know what powerful interests would have preferred Clinton over H. W. Bush besides the Zionists and the neocons, because he opposed the neocons. He said, "Get rid of Greater Israel," and he also wouldn't go all the way to Baghdad to overthrow Saddam Hussein. He had a different idea of how the U.S. should handle these things. And after that, it's like the Zionists and the neocons rule—there's a consensus in U.S. politics beginning with the defeat of George H. W. Bush.

## **#Pascal**

Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson is the one who told me on this show, you know, the ship that H. W. Bush ran was a very strong one, a well-organized one. And he sent memos back to "the crazies," as he said, like, "No, we're not going to do that. We're not going to bomb all these people. We're not going to risk a war on that level. No, we're not going to do that." So he was a no-man in the sense of not going to escalate. And that's, of course, A, against the neocons, B, against the Zionists. And, well, that's... same thing. Yeah. Aaron, there's just so much history to unpack and so many of these connections. I really want to have you back on again. Maybe we can also do a panel at some point about this, maybe with Jeffrey Sachs or a couple of others.

## **#Aaron Good**

Sachs has been amazing in terms of—and Larry too. I've done a number of interviews with Larry, but he is amazing as an advocate for peaceful, lawful internationalism, and he has the courage to say things that are very, very similar to what I'm saying. I really have the greatest respect for him, as far as Western academics go.

## **#Pascal**

Nothing but respect for him, also for Mearsheimer and the others, even when they don't necessarily agree on the theoretical foundations. But the courage to actually say what your studies lead you to understand—that's something a lot of people lack, unfortunately. But I'm glad you're one of those who do. And for people who want to follow you and hear your work, your podcast is the American Exception, right?

## **#Aaron Good**

Yes, on Patreon. Yeah.

## **#Pascal**

American Exception, the podcast on Patreon. Any other places where people can find you?

## **#Aaron Good**

I do run a Substack, and I try to release the newer podcasts there as well. If you're not on Patreon and you want to hear or see them on Substack, you can also check out the articles I occasionally write. But really, the American Exception podcast is on Patreon. Or, if you don't want to pay any money, we release a fair amount of stuff on the American Exception YouTube channel. But yeah, Patreon is how I earn my living. My dissertation is too radical—I don't think I'm likely to get any tenured positions—so the podcast has been a lifesaver for me. That's where people can follow the work. We've got about 300 episodes or so, so there's a lot of material there.

## **#Pascal**

Yeah, and ladies and gentlemen, just like critical journalism, critical academic work now really needs public support directly, because the institutions won't necessarily fund us anymore. That's not entirely true—there are still places we can go where it's welcome. One of them is actually Kyoto, Japan, and Japan in general. Funnily enough, academia is extremely free over here, but we all live in different parts of the world. Get yourself a copy of Aaron's book, *\*American Exception: Empire and the Deep State.\** Aaron, good—thank you very much for your time today.

## **#Aaron Good**

Thank you, Pascal. It was a pleasure.