

US Escalates To Nuclear Threat | Stanislav Krapivnik

Pascal Lottaz is joined by former US Army officer and military analyst Stanislav Krapivnik to discuss Trump's threats toward Iran, the claimed rescue mission, risks to Gulf energy routes and power systems, the danger around nuclear sites, Israel's role, and whether Iran, Russia, and China can raise the cost of a wider war. Links: Stanislav Krapivnik YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@MrSlavikman> Stanislav Krapivnik on X: <https://x.com/StasKrapivnik> Neutrality Studies substack: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com> (Opt in for Academic Section from your profile settings: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com/s/academic>) Merch: <https://neutralitystudies-shop.fourthwall.com> Donation: <https://neutralitystudies.com/donate> Timestamps: 00:00:00 Introduction and Trump threats 00:03:11 Failed rescue or covert raid 00:11:20 US limits and losses in Iran 00:14:14 Trump outburst and energy targets 00:22:03 Retaliation and nuclear danger 00:27:19 Can Iran force a US stop 00:29:54 Russia China and wider war 00:33:03 Pressure on Israel and US costs 00:38:30 Deterrence and the nuclear line

#Pascal

Welcome back, everybody, to Neutrality Studies—today again with Stas Krapivnik. Stas, welcome back.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Welcome. It's Fish Thursday—or is it?

#Pascal

No, no, no, no, no. It's Bridge and Power Plant Tuesday as we speak—this Tuesday, the 7th of April. It's the day when Donald Trump threatens to flatten the entire country of Iran if the bastards, as he calls them, don't do as he says and open the Strait of Hormuz and so on—which, by the way, is not closed. So, open something that you never closed. What do you make of this? And obviously, this talk will only go out after the day is done, so maybe it's going to be old news. But can you give us your take on what kind of insanity we watched over the last weekend?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Well, it's partially open. It depends whose side you're on. For example, the Indians can't get their ships out because, you know, they kind of betrayed Iran, and they betrayed Russia. Modi got a nice medal from the Knesset, and they said, you know, screw BRICS and everything else. And all of a

sudden, two months later, everything goes to hell for them. Yeah, it's open for people who are going to pay two million dollars in tolls. Some of them actually don't have to. I think the Chinese can go without it, and the Pakistanis, and those who bought in non-dollar-denominated currency. And what they've said—flat out—is that their goal now is to expel the U.S. from the Persian Gulf. It's like, any country that goes neutral and tells the Americans to get out—yeah, you're kosher with us, we'll go forward. But so far, the Arabs haven't said that. In fact, the Arabs are playing a neutral role, but they're quietly involved. And then you've got MBZ that had...

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Mohammed bin Zayed, who's the president of the entity known as the United Arab Emirates—which is basically seven villages that grew into seven artificial cities—he's, you know, all for it. "Let's go craft some islands." Of course, their military is rather small, about 60,000 to 65,000, and out of that maybe 12 to 15,000 are actual combat soldiers. Most of those are mercenaries, including a lot of American mercs as officers. They're counting on the U.S. Marines to do most of the dying for them. But even then, these entities would cease to exist, because once they're fully involved in combat with Iran, Iran will target their desalination plants—and bye-bye.

#Pascal

No, it's kind of out of the question that they'd go all out in the sense of declaring war on Iran. But at the same time, they're still crying for help from the United States and also from Europe. And they're apparently not wanting to go the route of declaring neutrality and actually kicking out the Americans. They're not going to declare something like that. But over the weekend, we've seen this very bizarre story that all of us are still trying to wrap our heads around—the pilot who got rescued. By now, it's kind of assumed that maybe this was a failed attempt at extracting uranium from Iran. I mean, what's your take on what that was?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Well, I think it was both. A pilot got rescued, and then the guy—he was a pilot, the weapons officer, and a lieutenant colonel—which is kind of odd, that a lieutenant colonel, the XO for this squadron, would be flying on a mission. By the way, just one F-15 Strike Eagle. But okay, so this guy, they said he hid out in a cave, was injured, and climbed 7,000 feet, which is only about 2,000 meters. That's a small mountain, a big hill—and then he got rescued. But then—and I believe he probably did get rescued. I'm sure it actually happened that way to a degree, because here's the—sorry, I've still got a bit of allergies. Spring.

Spring's in the air. So—but here's the interesting thing. We know what was lost: two C-130s, up to four Little Birds—which are the small helicopters special forces use to fly in. They're very small, probably brought in on the C-130s. We know there's at least one A-10 that was taken down, and there were two Pave Hawks—specialized Black Hawks for extraction—that were taken down. Now,

the Black Hawks were damaged; at least one of them was hit that first day, and you can see smoke streaming out of it. People said, "Oh, they shot it down with a missile." No, that wasn't a missile, because if a missile had hit it, that thing would've just fallen out of the sky.

Helicopters don't glide, for obvious reasons. Since it was still flying and streaming smoke, it must've been small-arms fire, and everybody was taking potshots at it. It was kind of funny watching these local tribesmen running around with hunting rifles, and then the police with pistols—everybody just shooting at it while the helicopters were flying in. So, they supposedly got the first guy out, and there were additional casualties—no KIAs, just WIAs among the crew who got this guy out, the first guy out. Apparently, the helicopter was a write-off. Not sure when they lost a second Pave Hawk; that's not very clear. Now, the A-10 got smacked by an anti-aircraft missile.

Now they're saying there might've been an F-16 that got hit the same day. But then you go into the next part of the scenario. See, Pave Hawks can go long distances because they can have a specialized C-130 tanker up in the air. And the Pave Hawks, unlike regular Black Hawks, can refuel mid-air. They've got a boom for refueling, and they'll fly up and refuel—there are videos of them doing it. So they have an extended range they normally wouldn't have, and they're used for getting people out. Now, normally, when you get somebody out, it's in and out—that's the whole point.

Minimal amount of troops. You get in there, grab the guy, and get the hell out. If he's on top of a mountain, you don't need to land—you drop a ladder or a sling down, strap him in if he's wounded, and lift him up. Just like in water rescues—it's the same concept. Land or water, the helicopter doesn't have to land. The whole point is to get in as fast as you can using minimal resources and get the hell out before everybody notices, "Hey, there's a helicopter over here getting somebody out." So it makes zero sense to then have all this equipment coming in, right? Right! You've got 150 guys, special forces having firefights?

#Pascal

Like, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. Hey, very brief intermission because I was recently banned from YouTube. And although I'm back, this could happen again anytime. So please consider subscribing not only here but also to my mailing list on Substack—that's pascallottaz. substack.com. The link's in the description below. And now, back to the video.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

And this guy's on top of a mountain. He's not holed up in some little village—he's exposed, and there are bad guys coming from all sides. I'm sure the Hollywood version would look like that, but the reality is he's on a mountaintop. I mean, these mountains are pretty open if you look at them. There's vegetation and agriculture in the valleys, but the mountains are very dry and barren. So you don't have to fight through trees—he's right there. You bring the helicopter in, strap him in, pull him up, and you're already flying as you're lifting him, getting the hell out of there as fast as you can. That's

rescue. Locate and rescue that guy. Now you've got two C-130s, you've got Little Birds flying in—and, yes, I actually recorded the video I just posted on this yesterday. Then I was on RT America Now, which is a subsidiary of RT that's just starting up.

I was talking to Ben Swann, and he's like, "Yeah, I think it's a mission." I'm like, "You know, the more I think about it, this is a mission." He says, "Well, you know, there's a nuclear facility not very far from where they're at." And you look on the map and go, "Hmm, yes, there is." I think this was under the cover of getting that guy out—which I'm sure they were doing—but that was secondary. The primary goal was to move in there and try to do something with that site. Which, you know, is kind of idiot mode here. It's a nuclear facility; there's a limited number of them. Guess what? The Iranians figure out you're probably going to go for it. You land two C-130s. Supposedly, they had to be abandoned and burned because they got stuck in the mud. But you look at the photos—there's no mud there. First of all, there's no mud there. It's a dry desert plateau where they landed.

#Pascal

It was an air base. But let's give it to them—maybe they got stuck in the sand, right? I mean, let's give them that one. But still... those things can take off in the sand.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Those things can take off in the mud unless it's that thick black-earth mud like in southern Russia or Ukraine. I mean, the fact is, you look at those fuselages and they're full of holes—bullet holes, small-arms holes—because a bullet going through a fuselage while a plane's flying, that makes a lot more damage than if it were just a stationary target. So there's damage in the fuselage, which means they were obviously getting shot at. Which begs the next question, by the way: how did he get the rest of these guys out? You've got two C-130s that were burned on the tarmac.

So there had to have been more planes coming in, because the Little Birds were burned too. So you've just got to wonder—okay, the hundred-plus guys on the ground went where? Did they start ruck marching the next hundred kilometers to get across the Iraqi border, where, by the way, there were militias waiting for them? Well, I guess they could've gone south through the Iraqi border and then a little bit into Kuwait. That's a little risky. So where did they evaporate to? Something had to have brought in even more planes to get them out, obviously. So it wasn't just two C-130s.

#Pascal

Yeah, so what we know is that it crashed and got destroyed. Whether it was burned by the troops themselves or destroyed in the action, we know this was just part of what was used to carry out the operation with hundreds of people. So it was a big operation, obviously. Right.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

And I don't see anybody asking the question. They're all going, "Okay, two planes." Yes, there were two planes—of all the C-130s. Well, wait a minute. If they're C-130s and they're still on the tarmac, they've been blown up. Because what the Air Force will do—like they did with the F-15 crash site—is blow it up. They launch a missile into it, they blow it up. Which, I imagine, if anybody dies in their plane crashes, you get rid of the evidence of the guy's body too—just blow everything up into small pieces. But these were burned. I mean, you could tell the different parts of different planes that were there. So again, how did they get out? So yeah, you're right, there has to be at least twice as much equipment as we're accounting for. So, but what...

#Pascal

I mean, we wouldn't know, right? Up until now, we still don't have exact figures for the casualties in Ukraine or in Russia. States are really, really good at keeping casualty numbers secret, right? So there's no hope of getting those numbers anytime soon. But what does this tell us about the situation? On the one hand, we now know that the whole rhetoric of "Oh, Iran is now open skies for us, we have absolute maneuverability" is BS. On the other hand, we also know that the U.S.—in that case, special forces—has the ability to get far into Iran, but at very high risk, very high cost, and probably this operation just failed and they had to abort midway. That's about it, right? Yeah.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Well, far is not that far. I mean, realistically speaking, they were about 50 kilometers in from the Persian Gulf—maybe about 100 kilometers inside Iran. Iran's huge. So to say they went far... I mean, it's pretty deep in there, but it's not really far. Iran is like France, Germany, and Italy put together as one big block. So they'd gone in—and this is the other thing—when they're talking about American planes or Israeli planes, most of them are still flying standoff. And if they're flying into Iran, they're not flying very deep. We saw one A-10 destroyed, another A-10 damaged, and there was a Chinook. A Chinook's a huge helicopter—one of the biggest in the world, troop-carrying or cargo-carrying, big and long. And it was damaged by a drone on the tarmac. Well, "damaged" is a very loose term. You know, I've been injured.

I've stubbed my toe, or somebody's chopped my arm off—I've been injured. You know, what does "injured" even mean? By the way, the U.S. military does the same thing with equipment: "It's been damaged." And then the photos come out—it's a write-off. The whole front end is gone, so it's scrap metal. I mean, they could use it for spare parts—the back two-thirds with the rear rotor could be cannibalized for other Chinooks—but it's a write-off. You're not going to repair that kind of damage. It's the same with a lot of the planes. The second A-10 was "damaged." How damaged? Is it a write-off? Just because, by the way, it lands—you can get it back and land it—doesn't mean you're ever going to take off in it again. So, you know, it's a one-way trip. We don't know. And how many casualties? We don't know. I'd say a lot more than one or two.

#Pascal

So again, I mean, this would at least explain why Donald Trump, while declaring victory—"we got the guy, best operation ever"—then, half an hour later, has this tirade, this temper tantrum, like threatening to bomb a bridge and a power plant on Tuesday, calling the Iranians bastards, using the F-word—really the kind of worst language you can imagine from a U.S. president, kind of unheard of. Do you think this is him just being really, really mad that, in the end, he's not able to do what he promised he could do? Or is this him planning, I mean, the heavy intimidation part? But then again, people who are forced to swear and whatnot are usually not on their strongest feet, are they?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Well, sometimes you swear just to make a point, but sometimes you swear because you can't control your temper. You know, I understand he's the president of the United States, but there should be a manager walking behind him going, "Let me see that. No, we don't want to say it like that. Let's re-edit that, sir. Now we can hit send." He really needs a filter between him and that freaking smartphone of his, because he's talked himself into so many war crimes—just from his own language, the threats he's used. It's already, I mean, a war of aggression. Iran was not about to attack anybody. There's no immediate danger. I mean, Iran's been "developing nuclear missiles" for forty-plus years now. It's always just a week away or a month away—for forty years. So, you know, that's obvious enough that that's not a pretext for immediate action, because forty years—yeah, it's just not. If anybody didn't hear that: forty years. Two generations they've been "developing nuclear weapons," apparently, and they still can't do it.

#Pascal

That's the accusation, yeah. But Dean, do you— I mean, if they— do you think— I mean, America probably has the capability to still do massive damage to civilian infrastructure, especially if they go after the power grid. That's probably the biggest threat, isn't it?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Yeah, there are different ways to go after the power grid, first of all. Without actually blowing it up directly, you can use graphite bombs—they release strips of graphite and aluminum, and when those come down on the wires, they short-circuit them. Oh no, on the transformers. That's mean. Yeah, it's mean, but it's not massive damage. I mean, you're not blowing them up. They can be cleaned up. But I guess it's a kinder version, because you could—well, you will spark fires, but it's not the mass damage of a rocket hit. That's one way. But I think they're going more for the mass kinetic damage version.

You know, "let's blow everything up because it looks pretty, and I can watch it in a two-minute briefing in the morning." That's— But Iran's, you know, Iran's told them flat out, and I hope their—

well, you could call them allies, but really they're not even clients. Their meat shields in the Middle East, in the Persian Gulf, are listening to the fact that Iran said it does what it says. It's going to go after everybody's— You start going after their electric infrastructure, their desalination, they'll go after everybody else's electric plants and desalination. And there are going to be mass die-offs if they do that. So I'm hoping that these countries, these sheikhs, are listening.

#Pascal

But I'm starting to have this problem that, you know, the United States striking Iran and then Iran striking back at the Gulf states is a bit like the big bully hitting the small guy, and then the small guy, in return, hits the even smaller guy. It's like—it doesn't really hurt the United States if the Gulf countries go to... I mean, even if they go to hell, if they completely burn, the United States will still run the way it does. So, in a sense, the Gulf states are now becoming the shock absorbers for the United States, which the U.S. really doesn't need to care about.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Well, let me put it this way. Okay, so you've got a big bull here—you've got a big tank, and you've got lots of little tanks. They all do damage. Now, to destroy the big tank is going to take a lot of hits. Meanwhile, the little tanks are shooting at you, or the little guys are still punching at you. So sometimes you're better off going after the allies of your enemy, because those allies have a much lower threshold of pain they can tolerate.

#Pascal

But are they punching at the moment? I mean, I think all the U.S. infrastructure in those Gulf states is more or less gone by now, isn't it? Or is the U.S. still running operations from those bases?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

They're still running operations from those bases. It's much more limited now. Obviously, they're blinded. The Saudis are still allowing them to use airspace, even though they supposedly aren't. They're also letting them use airstrips, which they claim they aren't—but they are. So what's happening here is, first, you're stripping away the American allies, and the hope is you're forcing them to go neutral. That means goodbye to American bases in the future. That's a big hit on Trump—on his prestige, on his ratings at home, and on the markets. And let's not forget, this war is about markets as much as, or even more than, it is about people.

Uh, because the Trump administration—people like Trump—are making money off this. Yeah. Obviously, I mean, prices are heading toward four and a half dollars in the U.S. per gallon for E87, that's their base gasoline, pretty low grade. But that's almost—at this rate, in another week—we'd be closing in on five dollars, as the markets start to realize the damage is huge. Now, if Iran takes out

the desalination plants or the electric plants, you're probably looking at gasoline hitting six or seven dollars, because panic is finally going to really set in. The markets have been very unpanicked so far.

Considering the escalation, they've been very willing to believe in fairy tales—"Everything will be fine, one day we'll just switch it back on, it's all going to be fine." Well, it's not going to be fine. Now, the Gulf isn't fully shut down. Out of 25 million barrels, about 7 million are still going out every day. So it could be worse—much worse. Iran is still shipping most of its oil, and it's allowing some other Gulf countries' oil to go out. The Saudis are still shipping through the Red Sea, which again could be shut down, especially with Yemen in the fight now. Yemen could easily wipe out that terminal.

#Pascal

Or Iran could blow up the pipeline.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Right. Blowing up pipelines is a short-term solution. You don't want to go after a pipeline because it's easy enough to repair. You want to go after the pumping stations, the control points, the loading stations. Those are the big-ticket items. And plus, depending on where the pipe is, it may be buried. Right. In Russia, it's standard practice to bury the pipes in a lot of areas, so hitting a pipe is much harder, infrastructure-wise. But if the pumping stations are there, you can see them and destroy them. So that's another point that makes it very, very difficult to defend. It's infrastructure.

#Pascal

Yeah, so in short, I mean, there's still a significant amount of infrastructure on both sides that hasn't been touched, right? There are still potential targets. And if Donald Trump decides to go after all the infrastructure in Iran, they're going to repay in kind—period.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Oh, yeah. Well, you know, they've shown that. For example, the Israelis blew up two Iranian steel mills. Iran responded by blowing up an Israeli steel mill and taking out five more, along with the Arabs'—Kuwait down through the Emirates. You know, if you're all on the same side in this fight, we're going to destroy you equally. Iran has suffered hits on 30 different universities. This is the difference, too. Yeah, exactly—the Americans and the Israelis are hitting universities. They're not giving prior warning. They just hit universities. If there are professors or students there, they kill them. That's just how it is. Iran, on the other hand, gave a day's warning: "We're going to hit every American and Israeli university or affiliate of the universities today in the Gulf states. You have one day to get your people out of there. Don't come within a kilometer." And then they proceeded to hit. So they went the much more humane route—you got fair warning.

#Pascal

It's just kind of amazing how both sides are actually continuing to wage exactly the kinds of war they've been doing before. And you can see how warfare itself is also a very deeply trained and embodied kind of affair. The Iranians, again, they warn and they go proportionally—that's the two things they do. The Israelis and the Americans, they try to create as much chaos, casualties, and damage to civilian infrastructure as possible because, I mean, look at Gaza—that's just how they do things. It's like, "Let's flatten the place," and a few hundred thousand people end up dead. I mean, it's a good thing at the end of the day, right? And it just continues on a bigger scale.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

It's not collateral damage—it's bonus points. That seems to be the Western approach. It always has been, to some degree or another. The Anglo-Saxon approach, particularly.

#Pascal

It's pretty sick. Mass casualties. Yeah, it's very, very sick. But in a sense, knowing that—knowing that the war is going to be fought like this—I mean, what Iran is trying to do is make sure the U.S. understands: no, we have the ability to repay in kind, and we will do so, so you'd better not. Why is it that the United States still seems eager to escalate, even though John Mearsheimer now says they've lost the ability to escalate? I'm not sure I agree with that, because they still do. They have nukes, they have the means to devastate, they have chemical weapons. I mean, there are a lot of ways they could go even much, much more draconian. But what do you think is next on the minds of these sick people?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Well, I think they may go after—A, I think they may go after the electric infrastructure. Let's not forget, Bushehr's nuclear power plant has been hit four times. They're committing—let's call it what it is—nuclear terrorism. The United States and Israel are guilty of committing nuclear terrorism. Are we at all surprised that their proxies in Ukraine were, and still are, trying to blow up the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, which has been in conservation to keep it from going nuclear? They've tried to hit the Kursk nuclear power plant several times. Are we surprised by this?

Of course we're not surprised, because, look, the masters do it. And the interesting thing is, on the second hit, there was an expulsion of radioactive steam. The trade winds blew it into Kuwait. It wasn't that much, but if there's a full nuclear meltdown—considering which direction the winds are going—let's extrapolate from that. It hits Kuwait, it hits western Iraq, it hits northeastern Syria, and it goes right into Turkey. So at this point, the Turks need to maybe get a little more involved in this to stop the U.S., because they're committing terrorism.

#Pascal

I mean, in a very sick sense, you can't keep nuclear fallout contained to just a small area—wherever the wind blows, it goes. So this, in a very sick way, is one of the best kinds of insurance at the moment, that the other side is probably not going to try to do that, because the fallout would be huge. But then again, if you're Israel or the United States, you're quite a bit away, right? So yeah, I mean, who cares about Syria, who cares about Iraq, right? Welcome back, everybody. We just had a little interruption because there's a puppy in the house—and the puppy is really cute. All right, stats, let's get back to the topic. Um, get back to the topic—the issue, like, of this strategy now, right, that we're seeing at the moment. Do you believe this is a way to actually get the United States to stop what they're doing?

Because of the way the Ukraine war has been going, we saw how they kept adjusting time and again but basically kept the pressure up, even after Donald Trump was elected, right? This whole charade of, like, "Oh, we're going to have peace within one day," and then, "Peace within a month." And now we're one and a half years in, and there's still no peace. We know the United States is still supplying intelligence, still supplying weapons. I mean, this war has just continued under a different rhetoric. Russia, though, has successfully established that it has the military upper hand—until and unless the United States would be willing to go basically nuclear. And it seems to me that Iran is trying to do something similar, saying, "No, in this war, we can stand our ground and push you back." How do you think their military negotiation strategy or tactic is playing out now?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

You know, if you were dealing with a rational opponent in the U.S.—one that might want to preserve their position in the Persian Gulf—well, actually, if you were dealing with a rational player in the U.S., this war wouldn't have happened to begin with. As radicalized as some of the presidents have been before, nobody went down this road. But we went down this road with Donald Trump. Uh, and Donald Trump 2.0—Donald Trump 1.0 refused to go down this road. So we're ready; we understand we're not dealing with a rational player. On top of that, when you hear the language and see the people around them, we're dealing with a radicalized regime in Washington, and I don't think they really give a damn what happens. So they'll probably continue escalating, because the alternative is to admit that you were defeated—even if you say, "You know, we won," and go home. They're going to try to double down. Roy Cohn, who was Trump's mentor, his approach was always: never admit you were wrong, and always double down. Right. Go ahead—go run around the office.

#Pascal

But, I mean, at this point—especially when we talk about the Bushehr nuclear power plant—there are about a hundred or so Russian workers there, including scientists and engineers. At this point, Russia must be saying, like, "Guys, guys, I mean, probably to Israel—this must stop. This is insanity." Do you hear anything from your sources in Russia?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

The Russian engineers have been evacuated. I'm not going to say who's flying the planes or working on the S-400 systems and all the other stuff. I mean, Russia is very actively supporting Iran. The Chinese are starting to support Iran too. Now they're seeing that Iran's holding its own—it's not going to bend over, it's not going to break. And I'm sure there'll be other powers, small and large, that'll start getting involved—like North Korea, for example. You think? Maybe Belarus. The longer this goes on, I mean, you've already got a war of, well, fascism—five sides now—against the Zionist coalition, because I don't know what else to call it. You've got Iran in combat directly. You have Iran, you have Iraq—both the militias and the government—you have Yemen, and you have Hezbollah.

But it's not just Hezbollah alone, because the Lebanese army is now getting involved—they're murdering Christians just fine. This is how radicalized the Israelis have become. In the past, when dealing with Lebanon, they were always very careful not to involve the Christians or the Sunnis, to keep it separate that way. But now they're bombing and killing Christians, hitting churches left and right. They've given up all pretense of control. So now Hamas has entered the fight fully—they've declared themselves in it. You're getting more and more players involved, and this is escalating. I believe it was Bahrain, along with the UAE, that were demanding in the U.N. that a resolution be passed to force the straits open.

Which, again, the straits aren't exactly closed—they're selectively closed, to them in particular. The UAE is still getting some oil out directly into the Arabian Sea, into the Indian Ocean, through their one port there, and then through Oman. They tried to get it through the U.N., but obviously it's not going to get past the Russian and Chinese vetoes for obvious reasons. And the Europeans have said, no, we're not getting involved. Because the Europeans, quite literally, if they really wanted to, the Western Europeans could still get oil and gas out of there—they'd just go in, pay the toll, buy in euros instead of dollars, and everything's fine.

#Pascal

Yeah. However, when it comes to the veto in the UN, what we saw last time—three, four days in—was this horrible UN resolution condemning Iran for its aggressions against its neighbors, right? And Russia and China both abstained from vetoing it. Russia, later on, we know, because there are about two million people in Israel with Russian roots, and the Chinese because they also have a good relationship with the Gulf countries. So they had no intention of pissing them off either. So, I mean, in a sense, I don't know where this will go. Not that the UN resolution will do very much, because both sides will obviously just ignore it. But is there any hope you're seeing from these other powers around? Because, as you're saying, the whole thing is spreading, but it seems that at least for now, Israel is still able to absorb this—although they're pretty tiny and by now also pretty roughed up.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Oh, they're roughed up. There were videos of long lines on the Egyptian border—Israelis trying to get out on the ground border by foot. They're not really allowed to fly out much, and when the planes do fly, they can't be, I think, more than half full for, quote, "safety reasons." Really, it's because a large chunk of the population will just remember, oh, we've got a second passport, we're citizens of another country—let's leave. You're already seeing that on the Egyptian border. So there are a lot of problems. I mean, the last big call-up of 300,000—one-third didn't show up. So they've obviously got big problems. You know, how do you keep the people fighting? The economy... The biggest plus Israel has is the American taxpayer. Because, Ray, that's who's going to be building Israel back up at his own expense. You know, Americans don't have free medical care. Americans have paid education.

#Pascal

Israel has both, because it's got Uncle Moneybags sitting over there who can maintain it.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

And that's who's going to be rebuilding the U.S. economy unless something seriously changes in the U.S. government. So that's their calculation: we've got to backstop. Does the U.S. consumer have a backstop? The U.S. voter? No, of course not. He's got bankruptcy. But that's the politicians.

#Pascal

Yeah, so basically Iran, at this point, is trying to make the war more costly for the United States, right? Absolutely, absolutely.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

And everyone else is trying to get the United States to stop. I mean, look, what's the United States proposing? "Take our plan. We are the aggressors. Accept basically surrender, and then things will be okay—after we overthrow your government and do everything else." Because the U.S. approach of "we're here to liberate the people" means what—by exterminating them? You've got Trump—he was asked during the Easter holidays, out on the White House lawn—and a journalist said, "What about all these people?" And as far as Iran, he's like, "Oh, they're animals. The Iranian government murders its people, so they're animals. We have to stop them by massacring the populations." Yeah, the logic train just goes right off the rails on that one. But that's what we're facing. And the wording—"they're animals." When you start talking about your opponents on that level, who do you negotiate with? And this is on television, broadcast publicly. It's not like something you say in private company.

#Pascal

Yeah, I hate those guys. They're real animals.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

And then you turn around—yeah, let's negotiate. No, this is flat out for the whole world to see—the President of the United States. You know, even in the worst times, in the worst wars, I mean, they might have said things like that in private, but they never said anything like that about their opponents on recorded media. But that's what we have now. And the people around him are no better, for the most part.

#Pascal

Well, it depends. You know, depicting your enemy as animals has a long tradition, right? I mean, there were all these leaflets—even from, I think, U.S. government branches during the Second World War—that made the Japanese look like rats, right? So there's a racist element. There's a different standard toward white Russians versus the other races, right? That comes up and bubbles up in war because war, as Clausewitz said, drives you to the extremes, and it also seems to bring out the blatant racism as well.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Oh, yeah, yeah. We saw that in 2022 all over Europe and the West.

#Pascal

Well, the orcs, yeah.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Yeah, yeah. The, you know, attitude toward Russians—Russian culture, Russian this, Russian that. So if you're talking about, you know, we don't like Vladimir Vladimirovich—which, again, everybody has a right to like or dislike someone as they wish—but it just instantly melted from "we don't like Vladimir Vladimirovich" or "we don't like this policy" or "we don't like this war," even though we don't really understand why this conflict started, to "all Russians are evil and have to be destroyed."

#Pascal

Yeah, that came pretty fast. Yeah, that's true.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

The difference between us and the Jews in the 1930s is that there are 150 million of us, and we have a huge army. That's the big difference.

#Pascal

But we were at the brink of nuclear escalation with Russia under Biden, right? Oh, yeah, absolutely—including, of course, Operation Spiderweb and so on, and those assassination attempts, and even the long-range missile strikes that were carried out. So, in a sense, what Russia managed to do was convince the other side to cut it out. And now Iran is in this position where it needs to convince the other side that, no, you have to stop this. Otherwise, the damage to you is going to be so huge that you just can't stomach it. The question is, is it enough to threaten that—to the Gulf states and maybe even to Israel?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Well, you know, there was a good meme I saw the other day—I don't know if it's pronounced right as a word. It showed the White House administration, and somebody asked them, "Why are we attacking Iran?" "Because they have nuclear weapons." "Then why don't you attack Russia?"

#Pascal

Because they have nuclear weapons.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Yeah, that's the reality of it.

#Pascal

Yeah, it is. Okay, it all circles back to this one, which is also quite crazy, right? Because the JCPOA was working—all of these things were working—which just, again, actually proves, I think, that Brian Berletic's point is an important one. Whatever you do, there's a grand strategy behind this kind of onslaught to destroy anyone who could potentially oppose you.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

I slightly disagree with Brian that Israel is an absolute tool of the U.S. I wouldn't say that Israel owns the U.S. I think it's a dog chasing its own tail in this case—or, as some people say, a self-licking ice cream cone. They're very much entwined with each other, doing each other's bidding because there's a lot of money involved.

#Pascal

Yeah, I mean, the easiest way, I think, to understand this—in a political sense—is just to see it as a colonial enterprise. It's a colonial enterprise where the colony is still tethered to the motherland, right? And they have reciprocity; they share one bloodstream. Yeah, absolutely. All right, is there anything you'd like to add, or shall we give your puppy his daddy back?

#Stanislav Krapivnik

Yeah, I've got another call after this, so he's going to be here—he doesn't know that yet. All right, get some water.

#Pascal

Go get a little cuddle time with him. You're going to get a massive number of extra clicks and views now. We'll see. Everybody, please comment in the box below whether you enjoyed this or whether you want Stanislav Krapivnik's attention back on our discussion. But thank you for taking the time. Everyone wants to follow you—it's SlavicMan, right? Minister SlavicMan.

#Stanislav Krapivnik

With a K. Or on X, Stanislav Krapivnik. We couldn't get the whole name in.

#Pascal

There's a limitation—we just have long names. Google Stas. I'll try to put the links in the description box below. Stanislav Krapivnik, thank you for your time today. Thank you.