

Iran: From Blockade to Ground Invasion & Russia's War Strategy | Stas Krapivnik

Iran and Ukraine War Update with Stanislav Krapivnik. The US is not getting any more reasonable, just the trickery-level seems to be increasing. Support us on Substack: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com> For merch and donations: <https://neutralitystudies-shop.fourthwall.com> Stas' Links: Stanislav's YouTube Chanel: @MrSlavikman Stanislav's Twitter: <https://x.com/StasKrapivnik>

#Pascal

Welcome back, everybody, to Neutrality Studies. My name is Pascal Lottaz, and I am joined today again by Stanislav Krapivnik from Moscow. Stas, welcome back.

#Stas Krapivnik

Thank you. Always a pleasure.

#Pascal

Great having you back. You're always giving us good updates, and we need to talk about Iran again, of course—now in the context of the four- or five-day-old U.S. blockade that's happening. Can you maybe give me your interpretation of why the U.S. decided to blockade a strait it wants to free from Iranian control? What's the rationale behind that?

#Stas Krapivnik

Okay, so... during the negotiations—I was talking with Professor Morandi, who I'm friends with—he was telling me they basically went through all the points and found agreements, common ground on everything. There was discussion about removing Iran's nuclear materials to a third party, to Russia, for storage there. That's not a new issue, by the way; that proposal has come up several times before. Or, you know, going back to strict regulations, which the Iranians had agreed to when Obama concluded the deal with them, the one Trump promptly ripped up. When they got to the Strait of Hormuz, that was the problem, because the U.S. kind of wants to own the Strait of Hormuz. See, there are four major choke points in the world for trade.

Panama, the Red Sea, the Strait of Hormuz—the Red Sea from both ends, of course, or just the whole body of the Red Sea—the Strait of Hormuz, and the waters that pass between Indonesia and Malaysia, going past Singapore. But those you can actually go around, right? Because they're still islands. It's longer, but you can go farther down into Indonesia and swing around by Java. So that's

the hardest one to control, because there are plenty of ways to get around it—it's just a bit more expensive. But the other three points are absolute choke points. Now, the Red Sea isn't really a reality for the Americans, because on one side is the Suez Canal, which the Egyptians aren't exactly thrilled to surrender, for obvious reasons. The Israelis claim that as part of Greater Israel, but one day that's going to have to be resolved as an issue.

On the other side are the Houthis, and, well, the U.S. has already tried to control those straits once, twice before. That didn't quite work out either. But in this case, they were insisting on sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz—basically asking Iran to give up sovereignty and step back from its own territory. Now, believe you me, if the Americans get that, they'll be charging tolls as well. I mean, that's 100% guaranteed—and probably a lot more than \$2 million. So, we have that. And that was, of course, a stopping point; they couldn't go further on it. Then the American team left. And what Ryan Davis told me was not lying. Just to understand the difference—the Iranian team, when they went down there, he was part of that team—they went to Khomeini.

Khomeini said, "You know, I trust you. Negotiate. You've got full authority to negotiate." The American team—two Zionist agents, plus Vance, Woodcock, and Kushner. Because, well, what would you do without two New York real estate moguls who answer to Netanyahu, for God's sake? But that's not enough, obviously. Vance called Trump twelve times during those negotiations. Okay, fine—you could say Trump was his boss, so that makes some sense. But then he also kept calling Netanyahu, from what Morandi was telling him, giving reports to Netanyahu and getting his instructions. Let that sink in: the Vice President of the United States is negotiating an end to a war that America started, and he's getting his marching orders from the prime minister of a—quote—client country?

#Pascal

Yeah, I mean, yeah. Marandi was telling me the same thing on my show. It's quite incredible, but apparently this is just how it works. It's like constant triangulation, right, between the capitals. Yeah. I mean, it's marching orders from Camp David, of course.

#Stas Krapivnik

Right. But it's worse than that, because Netanyahu—this is like an exercise in shaming, or an exercise in... well, shaming, that's the best way to put it. He—Florida, Adele, yeah—you know, Vance was calling me, and I was there, basically. This guy has two of his own agents there to begin with, absolute assets of Netanyahu, and he's giving marching orders, and he's bragging about this, right? He's putting them in their place, showing the world that the Americans are beneath him. He's the boss.

#Pascal

Which goes very well with the rest of what they've been doing. I mean, there was the German chancellor the other day who had a tiny bit of criticism about Israel—I think it was about the indiscriminate bombings in Lebanon or something like that. And the president, the foreign minister of Iran, immediately lashed out and said, like, "We're not taking any orders from any kind of German. Have you forgotten what you did to us 80 years ago?" and so on. It's quite insane. I mean, they're really putting these other whites in their place—beneath, way beneath them. And they did the same with the negotiations in Tehran, of course.

#Stas Krapivnik

Of course, this is all going to, in the end, backfire massively on the Israelis. Um, never mind. You know, when the traditional Jews are saying, you know, one of the guys said, "Hitler made me afraid of being a Jew; Israel's made me ashamed of being a Jew." The split is massive now. It used to be on religious grounds; now it's something much worse. And the support for Israel is collapsing everywhere. I mean, they're looking at people who have totally gone off the reservation. They've lost all sight of the shoreline, they're out there in the deep, and they're getting more psychotic by the day. They're getting meaner, eviler, and more psychotic every single day. And they're flaunting it—absolutely flaunting it.

#Pascal

May I ask you, though—I read this news from the TASS agency saying that the Russian Security Council is warning these negotiations could be masking a planned strike, I mean, boots on the ground against Iran, because the U.S. is still amassing troops not too far from Iran. Did you hear anything about this? And do you think the U.S. is preparing something now under the cover of these negotiations? What's that term—Captain Obvious? Yeah. But a ground invasion, I mean, preparing a ground invasion would be quite an insane thing to do. We talked about this before, but it's not getting any saner.

#Stas Krapivnik

Yeah, it's not getting any saner. They say, look, the sanest thing at this point—the sanest thing—would have been never to start this. But obviously, we've gone past that for the last month and a half, and we keep sailing further and further downriver from reality. The sanest thing Trump could do now is just allow this blockade to continue and peter out on its own. It's very hard to understand what this blockade has actually done, because on the American side it's, "Oh, we've controlled everything," and on the Iranian side it's, "Yeah, our ships are still going." I can't quite imagine American ships coming up to the Iranian coast, where Iranian vessels are hugging the shoreline, heading into Pakistani waters, and trying to stop them. They're just a very short missile flight away from becoming a reef.

If they do that, first of all, let's start with the fact that the U.S. Navy can't keep this up for very long. The Navy is stretched to the breaking point. Its mission is still basically the same as it was during the Cold War, but with less than half the ships it had back then. A lot of those ships are in bad shape, and most of the aircraft carriers are, too. They're understaffed because they can't recruit enough people. They're overstressed. I mean, just look at the Ford—eleven months at sea with only two very short stops for recovery. The people are exhausted; they're worn out. And that's the whole U.S. Navy. If you talk to people like, for example, Cameron McGregor, a former Navy officer, even when he left a few years ago, it was already basically broken. It's only gotten worse since then. His classmates are getting out, too.

He's in contact with it. It's getting horrible. People are leaving. You can't keep people in. And a lot of the people who are in aren't fully trained. And you're not fully staffed. So it's a huge issue—absolutely huge. If they continue this mission, they'll just drag themselves into the ground permanently. So the best thing they'll do—because what they're trying to do is, "Okay, Iran's not letting everybody out, then we won't let Iran out." That way nobody gets any order, which, of course, just exacerbates the world crisis even further. It kills American PR because even—well, I mean, you've got America's vassals. I'm not going to call them anything but vassals. You've got the EU vassals of America, which spin all this as Iran's fault, even though it was their owner that struck first—or their two owners that struck first.

And Iran responded, having warned that it would do that. But now you can't even spin it that way because, oh, it's the Americans. So it's a major PR hit. Iran apparently has already had a short conversation with Saudi Arabia, saying that if you don't back us, or if you keep those slow pumping stations in the Red Sea running, they're not going to exist either. And you're not going to get any oil, period—which would collapse the Saudi economy. So you're in a very bad place. Now, like I said, if the Americans did this right, at this point they'd keep the blockade in place and it would just peter out over a couple of weeks. And then Trump declares victory.

For the MAGA that's left—because most of the MAGA left—the people who voted for peace, the people who voted for what the Vance position was earlier, to take care of the issues inside—and there are mammoth issues inside the country—it's just collapsing. It's rotted out. It's collapsing. There are issues: education is third world, medicine is third world, people can't afford housing, young people can't afford a life, period. It's a total collapse of society. That's what they should be concentrating on. That's what they voted for. All those people have left. The people who are left in MAGA are groupies. They're fanatics. They're groupies. They're the people who bought Trump coins.

They're the people who are backing Trump but screaming at the Pope—oh, yeah, yeah—because the Pope suggested, "Oh, maybe we should have peace." Where's that in Christianity for them? These are people of blind faith who'll believe anything Trump says, spits out, and thank him for it. So if Trump, for that base—which is still a very small base compared to what he had—told them tomorrow, "Victory! Get on an aircraft carrier and declare victory like George Bush Jr. did," they'd

believe it. They'd accept it. Either way, he's screwed when it comes to the elections at this point. The U.S. is in a deep recession; it may be in a depression by the time this is over. But that would be the best-case scenario.

#Pascal

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 going to be in the description below. And now, back to the video. So the question to me really is: what are they currently planning? I mean, that something more is going to come is obvious, but what will it be? Because now we have, again, reports that the Russian Security Council is expecting a ground invasion.

On the other hand, we have this kind of, you know, same people thinking about what's possible. They would argue, as you do, like, "Let's let this blockade kind of thing taper out," or whatnot. One thing that would be very, very reasonable for me, for what comes next, is something that happened in the First and Second World Wars when Britain blockaded its enemies. But because you can't control all the shorelines, what you do is introduce the idea of navicerts—to tell third states that they need to apply at your office, in your embassy, for the right to go anywhere. So, you know, the United States could do that very easily.

Say, like, okay, anyone who wants to pass through the Strait of Hormuz needs to apply with us in Washington to go through there. And if you don't do that, then we're going to blacklist you, and we might board you or something, or we might just sanction those ships. That would be relatively easy to do and pretty straightforward. Um, but this administration is not one that goes for the doable, I believe. So, do you think that a ground invasion is actually on the cards? Well, from what you're saying—before we get to the ground invasion—what you're saying about registering at our office, that'll work to a degree.

#Stas Krapivnik

Look, you know, the U.S. blockade on Cuba—yeah, everything's great until the Russian tanker arrived with a frigate and an attack submarine escort. And what did the U.S. do? Got the hell out of the way. There's another one coming, and it's going to have the same escort, and they're going to get the hell out of the way. Because if they don't, it's war. It's war with a nuclear superpower, with an army that can destroy the American army. It may be hard for some people to hear that, but that's the reality of it. Yeah, what are you going to do when the Chinese arrive with the same thing—with a convoy of tankers and three or four destroyers? Do you want to start a war with China now? I mean, the U.S. law is sometime in the future, but it's not ready for that.

#Pascal

Yeah, but with a move like this, you could fragment the fleets, right? You could have ships that only go from China to Iran and nowhere else. And for the Russians—I mean, you kind of inconvenience everybody—but that would be something you'd be inconveniencing yourself with too.

#Stas Krapivnik

But here's an idea. First of all, what happens if China takes in, say, ten tankers and then resells the extra oil to Southeast Asia? What happens if Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam decide, "Hey, why don't we form a coalition and send in our own convoy of tankers with warships?" Is the U. S. ready to fight a coalition of countries in Southeast Asia? I mean, when you start looking at this, it can expand very, very quickly. People aren't dumb. They sit there, they pay attention—"Ah, okay"—they step back when military force arrives. Now, having said that—ground invasion. You know, if you want to give the gift that keeps on giving, it'll keep on giving every time an American soldier gets killed.

It'll be the gift that keeps on giving to Iran. I mean, this is—this is basically Trump taking a nail gun to his temple and just start nailing his head. That would be that level of stupidity. Will they do that? Well, you know, they just might do that. I think the White House has gotten insane enough. I was interviewing a friend of mine, Robert Barnes—he's a constitutional lawyer in the U.S. By the way, his big client right now is the Amish, because apparently federal, state, and local governments are going after them. Who goes after the Amish? Well, apparently they're now the target.

In the second half of the interview, we were talking about his direct contacts in the White House—the current White House. And they're telling him that, you know, Trump's gone off the deep end. He's totally off the deep end. Vance is running like a rat in a wheel, trying to keep all of this from going to nuclear war. He's the rational one. Vance has basically given up on his presidential run because Trump sank him. But he's trying to keep it all from, you know, going nuclear, and kind of, I guess, wants his kids to grow up not in a bunker. So this is the point we're at. Should the 25th Amendment be used? More than likely, yes. We're getting there, if we're not there already.

#Pascal

Right. So there was this argument also made by Trita Parsi, you know, the head of the think tank Responsible Statecraft, I think. And his argument was that now that there's a ceasefire in place, if no side starts shooting again, this actually puts the United States in a stronger position. Because under the war scenario, when they were fighting each other, Iran had to sustain a lot of damage, but as long as they kept standing, every single day that it continued developed the war in their favor.

Now that everything is standing still, and the United States has time again to replenish and rearm, the balance of forces has actually tilted the other way around. Iran is now structurally in the weaker position, especially because if it started shooting again without being shot at, it would probably make Russia and China quite angry and be seen again as the source of instability. What do you

make of that argument, and how do you think the diplomacy and politics of the ceasefire are actually developing for Iran?

#Stas Krapivnik

Well, we obviously saw from the Russian side that the warning is an acknowledgment of reality. So if you read it a little bit sideways, that warning is a kind of backup to the Iranians—like, “We understand that the Americans are probably getting ready to attack you again, so don’t be surprised, and we’re not going to be surprised or shocked.” I’m not quite as sure about the Chinese, because this is playing on Chinese weaknesses—the Americans are. But as far as rearming goes, sure, if this holds for the next two and a half to three years, the Americans will be rearmed, maybe. I mean, we’re talking infinitesimally small rates of production. The Patriot is a prime example.

The Patriot—first of all, all of these missiles are hand-built because that maximizes their cost, that maximizes the profit. The U.S. military normally runs on a system called cost-plus, which is an asinine system. So if the item costs \$100, cost-plus means cost plus 10%—a 10% profit, for example. If the item costs \$100, you charge \$110 and make \$10 profit. But if you can make the item cost, or at least on paper cost, \$500, then you get a \$50 profit, even if it really only costs \$100. You maximize the cost of the item not by automated production, but by doing it by hand. Look, every one of them is a master at his skill—he’s got to put each plug in separately, and so on.

And you can inflate the cost infinitely on that, and you maximize your profits. But that, of course, has a few problems because, you know, you kind of have a high end on production that you really can’t expand easily. You can’t just set up a second production line like an automobile line—it just doesn’t exist. And you have to hire more and more people, and the space has to be larger and larger. So you get certain constraints. The military-industrial complex promised Trump they’d double or triple their production. Okay, let’s say they double production of Patriot missiles. Right now, they’re producing somewhere between 35 and 40 Patriot missiles per month.

Okay, so we double it to 80 to 100. Okay, how long does that hold up? That’s a day—maybe two days. And that’s what you produce in a month. So you cannot meet the volume that’s demanded—and we’re not even talking about Ukraine and the EU at this point. The volume that’s demanded just, say, on the Iranian side, to stop the incoming missiles—you can’t produce enough, obviously. Attack missiles, offensive missiles. You know, the high-accuracy missiles, the new ones they’re producing, they’re supposed to replace the ATACMS. They’re all gone. There was a very small batch of them. Basically, they tested them, but they’re gone right now.

They have to be built. The ATACMS are a very limited quantity to begin with. There were fewer than a thousand ATACMS before this conflict started. A lot of them were being shipped. The U.S., I think, built around 2,500 ATACMS. About a thousand were sold to places like South Korea and Taiwan, and then another 400 or so went to Ukraine and have been used up. They were also using additional ATACMS on Iran, but they have a very short range—around 350 kilometers—so they’re relatively

short-range. I mean, you can fire them from Bahrain or Qatar into Iran, but you're not going to go very deep into Iran. Iran's huge. So there's that problem. Okay, so Tomahawks. Tomahawks are produced at a rate of about ten per month. Obviously, again, they're handmade and assembled, so no matter what you do, you have major issues.

Sure, could you expand on this? Yes, you could build new factories—automated factories—to produce them. But it takes two or three years to build a factory like that. It's not something you just snap your fingers and it appears with the lights on and ready to go. I mean, this takes a long time. Like it or not, it takes a long time. What continues to amaze me about the Americans, knowing their issues with Patriots—seeing their issues with Patriots in Ukraine, how they're just gobbling them up and their very limited ability to actually intercept—you'd think by now, I mean, it's been four years, you'd think by now they would at least have a factory in the works. No, nothing's been started. They never put the money in for the investment.

So there's very little they can do in a month or two. They can scrape together whatever reserves they have left. They can buy out their allies and get back the missiles they'd sold them previously. And they've already started—three weeks ago they were pulling missiles out of South Korea, out of Japan. In the middle of the night, of course, like thieves in the night, they're pulling everything out. But again, okay, so now what? You've bought yourself maybe a week or two more. Unless you think you can suddenly conquer or destroy the Iranian government in another week or two of battle, you're back to square one, where again you don't have the missile capacity to intercept. And again, Iran continues to strike. Again, you look like a fool.

#Pascal

I don't know. Shouldn't all of these be indicators that the United States, at the moment, actually doesn't have what it takes to do a ground invasion—doesn't have what it takes to continue the war? I mean, not enough missiles to fire, not enough replenishment, not enough men, not enough air superiority. They told the world that Iran was open skies and all that, and yet their stuff has been brought down time and time again. So all of this should tell us that the United States lacks the ability to actually continue. To me, that would indicate they have every incentive to maintain the ceasefire.

If not go to a full peace agreement, at least maintain the ceasefire, because if it goes back to shooting at each other, the United States is on the shorter end of the stick for the first time in a long time. And maybe let's just add to this—I don't know if you've heard about it or not. I was informed this morning by Rainer Rupp that apparently a very, very important U.S. drone, an MQ-4C Triton, went missing near or over Iran. This is a surveillance drone. I cannot confirm whether that's actually the case, but I've heard about it, and it's been reported in several media outlets. Have you heard about it? And do you know what we can deduce from that incident? I haven't heard about it yet.

#Stas Krapivnik

But then again, I was running on three hours of sleep between the morning show. And yeah, I still have to go through the news. That's the big problem with 24-hour news cycles—the human body and brain aren't built for that.

#Pascal

You know, the problem right now is that with this kind of news, we can't be sure whether it's hearsay. I mean, it's circulating that this Navy MQ-4C Triton disappeared, and people are now speculating whether the Iranians managed to divert it—because they did something like that once in 2013 with another drone. Yeah, it was a Reaper.

#Stas Krapivnik

Yeah. With a situation like that, you really have to wait for confirmation before jumping to conclusions.

#Pascal

And get it to land in Iran and then basically, you know, reverse-engineer the whole thing. And this MQ-4C would be an even bigger prize because it's a surveillance drone with the latest technology and so on and so forth. But again, shouldn't all of this actually send a signal to Washington that what they need to do is prevent the hostilities from resuming? How do you read it?

#Stas Krapivnik

Oh, Pascal, if we were dealing with absolutely rational players—of course. Of course, if we were dealing with rational players, this whole war wouldn't have started. But we're not dealing with, A, rational players in Washington, and B, as we've seen in these negotiations, the people behind the wheel of the bus are not Americans—they're Israelis. You know, Israel's agreed to this so-called ceasefire with Lebanon that's not really a ceasefire. It's just the Lebanese government pathetically betraying its own people, pathetically surrendering a third of its own country. Basically, it's a Quisling government. If nobody understands where the word "Quisling" comes from, look up World War II history in Norway. The chancellor of Norway, who was a Nazi after the German occupation, his family name was Quisling—so he got famous, whether he liked it or not.

Don't betray your own people, in other words. But yeah, they did betray their own country, and Hezbollah is continuing to fight. Nobody stopped that. So what the Israelis do next—I don't know. But Lebanon is part of this deal. It's a breaking point for the deal if the Israelis keep doing what they've been doing, which is genocide. And interestingly, by the way, the Israelis, instead of playing one part of Lebanon off against another, as they've always done—usually allying with the Christians

against the Shiites and leaving the Sunnis alone—have started just massacring everybody across the board. They don't care. They're going for... and it's not occupation; it's annexation minus the population. It's genocide and annexation of territory.

#Pascal

Yeah, and of course...

#Stas Krapivnik

But that's the currency.

#Pascal

Yeah, and Israel can, of course, at any point in time, ruin any kind of process the United States might want to pursue. On the other hand, the ceasefire has a hard stop. It's a 15-day ceasefire, and that will end in about a week from now. And Iran, at any point, can say, "Fifteen days are over, we're starting to shoot again." So it's basically a sunset clause on not shooting. So overall, this puts tremendous pressure on Washington, doesn't it? In Moscow, though, what do you hear about the assessment of this war's impact on the United States? I mean, there must be people in Moscow quite excited about the U.S. getting bogged down in such an affair.

#Stas Krapivnik

Of course. I mean, that's beyond a doubt. That doesn't mean Moscow wants to sacrifice Iran. It doesn't, and it's supporting Iran quite actively—as much as you can when you're fighting fifty other countries. Yesterday, there was a list of drone manufacturers that came out. I would hope they heard the message that they're going to be targeted, but probably not—drone manufacturers, unfortunately, in Europe that are directly producing drones for Ukraine. Unfortunately, I think until strikes start hitting Europe, they're not going to hear anything. These people are tone-deaf.

I mean, just to understand how insane the European leadership—and the people who support them, which is the majority of the population—really are, how out to lunch these people are. They were doing a thought exercise, well, kind of a thought or planning exercise, on preparing to take mass combat casualties. So they were checking their hospitals and things like that, evacuation routes, to be able to handle casualties from a big war with Russia. And they were planning on accepting a thousand wounded a day. Are you insane? Right now, Ukraine is taking about two thousand wounded per day. And Russia's fighting with one arm and one leg tied behind its back, with another 350,000 troops that haven't been pulled in, sitting on the sidelines—plus the rest of the military along the borders.

If you're talking about a full war with Russia—from the European Union, from the European Army, which would basically be NATO minus the U.S.—you're talking about mass mobilization on the Russian side, obviously mass mobilization on the European side. You're talking about 30 or 40 million people fighting. You'd be taking tens of thousands of wounded per hour. And these people really have no basis in sanity when they're looking at this. And yet, that's what they keep talking about. And with Hungary becoming basically a vassal state back to von der Leyen, you're looking at war in Europe at 100%. Okay, nothing's 100%—99%. Plus...

#Pascal

You see, the sick thing is that now, starting this game of trying to bait the Russians into attacking these missile and drone facilities in the EU, is actually part of the game, right? Just like trying to bait Russia into attacking Ukraine was part and parcel of the game. The moment Russia stepped over into Ukrainian territory—officially went into Ukrainian territory—on the 24th of February 2022, that was the day they opened the big, good champagne bottles over in Brussels. So, in the same way, they're now baiting Russia into actually attacking these production facilities in the rear, while all the while claiming they're not part of the war.

"We're not part of the war. We're not part of the war. We're just supporting Ukraine with all this equipment." And then, having that equipment destroyed will give them everything they need to say, "Look, we've been right. The Russians are attacking us. We told you all along they would attack us, and now they're attacking us. And now we all need to fight—all 450 million of us need to go and fight the Russians." I mean, that's exactly the sick name of the game. So, what would Russia do against this one?

#Stas Krapivnik

Well, first of all, at this point, Russia has no choice. What we're looking at is their strategy, obviously, to double their drone production on the Russian battlefield, overwhelm Russian defenses, and just strike everything inside Russia. And while the Russian defenses are ahead of the game, you can't stop a hundred percent of anything once you put enough targets into the area. So, while the Russians are still ahead of the game, they can more or less handle most of what's coming through.

Uh, if they continue to, uh, ramp up their production—no, Russia cannot ramp up anti-aircraft systems as fast as the West can ramp up drone production. So this brings it to a point of either Russia survives or Europe dies. That's quite literally the choice. I personally vote for Russia, all things considered. And so do 150 million other people. So the government will have backing. What they don't understand, though, is that this will, of course, very quickly expand—and it will expand in both directions. What they're going to be facing is a subcontinent that already has a shortage of gas, a shortage of oil, a shortage of food—and it's about to get much, much worse.

Because once this expands—with strikes and counterstrikes—it'll move very quickly at that point. And then you're looking at what Russia is going to hit next as this keeps expanding. That becomes the energy infrastructure in Europe. That becomes the leadership in Europe. I wouldn't suggest sticking around the European Parliament or NATO headquarters for very long. Russians fly very fast and strike very deep—and I mean that quite literally. You know, this becomes an issue of, if this turns into a full war, decapitating the leadership structures of the Europeans.

And Russia can do that without ever going nuclear. Russia can fully decapitate. I don't think they even realize this. I mean, Rheinmetall—I wouldn't be working there once things really start going, because that's another area that's just going to be destroyed. But as long as they're—now, if the Americans are neutral and buying equipment from the Americans, they at least have a backstop where they can get their equipment from. Anything inside Europe is within striking range of Russia. And while things like drone manufacturing—particularly small drones or small arms manufacturing—you can farm out to various small plants and hide them in warehouses and places like that.

You can't do that when you're trying to build heavy equipment. Let me just pick up on that. Obviously, large manufacturing facilities—if you're putting together tanks, if you're putting together armored vehicles—you can't hide that. Those are massive targets that are going to be hard to conceal. But again, the energy infrastructure in Europe—when you're reliant on LNG—that's a very narrow system that can easily be destroyed. And then all the LNG tankers can arrive that you want, but they've got no place to unload. You have no storage facilities, because a strike can take out any gas storage facility in Germany.

It'll bore down deep enough for all of it to go in one big bang. When you're looking at that, it's suicide. But you're dealing with people who aren't rational yet. Russia will have to act based on its own rational view of survival. And when you—never mind, it's a nuclear state you're trying to threaten with extinction. That usually means you get a nuclear response, and Europe just won't survive a nuclear response. Europe is a small cage with a lot of people in it. Any strike inside Europe will cover massive amounts of territory, population-wise.

#Pascal

You know, in any kind of rational world, the Europeans would want to wind that kind of threat, that kind of fear, down immediately, right? De-escalate and get to a new point, have an agreement with the Russians. But unfortunately, we're not in a rational moment. We're in something like a cultural revolution type of moment. If you compare it to what the Chinese did about 50 or 60 years ago—sometimes these large groups just go berserk and end up hurting themselves. And Europe, at the moment, is in one of those. So the question to me is, can Russia somehow wind down the Ukraine war and take away that toy? Because by now, the Europeans are using it as a toy to conduct a proxy war.

I mean, of course, through the Americans as well, to channel their proxy war against Russia. And we've heard the German chancellor recently say that he'll do his best to find all the military-aged Ukrainians in Germany and send them back so they can go and die for this stupid, stupid project. But that's what they're doing—throwing more people into the meat grinder. It's absolutely inhumane, absolutely horrible. But the counter-strategy from Russia could be to try to wind down the Ukraine war and take the war-fighting toy away. Are we looking at a spring or summer offensive that could potentially achieve that? And if so, would it include Galicia?

#Stas Krapivnik

Well, Russia's already started that spring offensive in several directions. The problem is, drones are predominant everywhere. Anti-drone technologies are advancing, but they're just not at the stage where they can actually change things in a meaningful way. There are a lot of anti-drone technologies. There are anti-drone drones that the Russian military has—you can just line them up with a drone that's flying, shoot it, and the AI in it will target it. It's a kinetic hit, so your drone will just knock the other drone out of the sky. There are automated machine-gun posts that track and destroy drones. There are lasers the Chinese manufacturers have been field-testing and using on the battlefield.

They're very effective—and there are lots of other things. But again, drones, attack drones, the FPV drones—they're very cheap and easy to manufacture. You can set up a drone factory with the right chipsets. And there are Chinese companies selling something like two or three billion dollars' worth of chips to Ukraine. Now, this goes against the official line from the government, but it's still happening. That's going to be one of those issues that gets brought up between Vladimir Vladimirovich and Xi to shut that down. But the point is, you can still manufacture these drones relatively cheaply and in mass—faster than the Russian army can advance through that drone wall.

And it's advancing—it's advancing in every direction again because the ground's hardened up, it's dried out. We can answer it back on. Zelensky right now is promising a new super offensive in 2027. For that, of course, he needs manpower. And yes, you're right. But Germany is just going to be the first start. Look, the troubles in Ireland, which may still lead to a revolution—it seems to be boiling in that direction very quickly. A very large part of that is because of the Ukrainians. Ireland has taken in, per capita, more Ukrainians than anybody else short of Russia. Of course, in Russia, they don't get special treatment.

They come into Russia, they can get citizenship, find a job, just like everybody else, and fit into society. In Europe, they get privileged status. So Ireland, which is already struggling economically, has taken in, per capita, about 18 Ukrainians per 100,000 citizens. Germany—around 13 per 100,000. So Ireland, with a much smaller population, is expected to absorb a large number of

Ukrainian, quote, refugees, many of whom are driving very expensive cars. They get housing, their kids are first in line for schools, they get pocket money. Meanwhile, the Irish are left on the street, and anger is obviously exploding now—it's reached the boiling point.

There are issues with other, quote, refugees that have flooded into Ireland. That's pissing people off. From what I've heard from several Irish friends—one's a journalist, another's an activist—the number one issue now is the Ukrainians. And they're being chauvinistic inside Ireland, which really pisses the Irish off. If you're a guest, act like a guest. You're not the owner, you're not co-equal. So, to lower those tensions—and that's, by the way, before food prices start to skyrocket in the next three months when the first bad harvests come in, much reduced. This is with petrol prices already skyrocketing. You know, winter's not beyond the mountains. We may be in mid-spring, but winter's not beyond the mountains.

This is the point where you're supposed to start building up gas reserves for winter. There aren't any. That raises the question of how the hell you'd survive at all with just what you have, let alone build up reserves. People are getting angry. And the best way to lower the tension is to get rid of at least one of the irritants—and one of those irritants happens to be Ukrainian men. And what better way to get rid of them than to physically send them off? Toss them onto the battlefield, they'll die there, and that buys you time to prepare for the big war. That's what we're looking at. I think that's going to be a big trend across European countries—grabbing the Ukrainians and sending them to the battlefield.

And again, quite a few Ukrainians are now rushing toward Russia through Belarus because they've figured it out. They're the sacrificial lambs, and they're going to get herded in massive columns, shepherded off to die—the very thing they ran away from. So, you know, that's the situation. And yeah, I think Germany is saying the quiet part out loud. But I think all the European states are now looking at doing this for various reasons—internal reasons and reasons for supporting this psychotic war effort. So, you know, this isn't going to end in a year at this point unless there's some major breakthrough, like EMP technologies that can take down the drones as they're flying, without using a nuclear warhead to create a big enough EMP burst.

And then there's development in those fields too. So unless something radical shows up on the battlefield soon to counter the drones, this will just be a slow, steady push forward—as long as Europe keeps shoving men into the ranks. And the Ukrainians, by the way, if you look at it, they're now pushing women into the ranks faster than ever before. The percentage of women in the Ukrainian armed forces has grown to 13.5%. On the battlefield itself, it went from 5% to 7.5% just over the last year. And they're still kind of pushing them in without using press gangs, but that's probably coming down the road too. This is the last Ukrainian, for God's sake. I mean, for the leadership, this is a money-making thing. This is profit—quite literally, meat profit.

#Pascal

It's extremely sick. And it's, of course, this entire cynicism of the EU to say, like, "Oh no, we're doing it for the Ukrainians." And now they're rounding them up and sending them to certain death. But that's what they're doing, and that's what they'll do with their own populations. I mean, these people have no limits. And as Alex Kristoforou keeps saying, they also have no reverse gear. That means for Russia, there's really no other strategy at the moment than to somehow have a war economy and war capacities that can just keep grinding this down, right? It's like, what else are you going to do? Because apparently, yeah, it's not physically possible to overwhelm all of that and stop it. So on both sides, we now have machinery that is already, after four years, trained in dealing with each other.

#Stas Krapivnik

Well, you know, the Europeans like to, and the West loves to, talk about Russia as a war economy. Russia is not a war economy. Russia is spending about 6–7% of its GDP on this. A war economy would be close to 30–40% of GDP. If Russia actually went to a war economy—if it emulated anything close to the Great Patriotic War, World War II—then everybody would be either on the battlefield, in direct support of the battlefield, or in the factories. Europe would get destroyed, just conventionally. Russia could put under arms 30 million soldiers, quite literally. I mean, women and children would go to the factories, and mass manufacturing would start. It would take a little while to rev up, obviously, but it's possible. And remember, the country hasn't even declared war.

Once war is declared, we're talking about a whole different matrix of thought—a whole different matrix of what the government can actually do. I mean, that's when the government says, "Oh, we liked your pickup truck, we need it at the battlefield. Here's a voucher; you'll get some money for it when the war is over." Off goes the pickup. You know, that's when you have full mobilization of all the assets in the country. And Russia's resources are, compared to Europe, quite limitless. Europe is in a much, much worse place than it was in World War II when it comes to energy security and production capacity—partly because, unlike in World War II, when the Russian ability to strike deep into the European Reich—sorry, the new European order—was limited, the Czechs back then were happily producing tanks for the Germans.

So were the French in the north, and so on. The ability to strike deep in was very limited. The ability to strike deep instantly now is absolutely open—it exists. And what's worse for the Europeans in this case is that everything's on a sheet of paper, basically. Everything's visible. There's no place you can hide a large factory. Everything's known. Any concentrations are going to be known. Satellites are constantly watching—absolutely constantly watching. So, in a sane world, they would be de-escalating very quickly, just like the European leadership was de-escalating as fast as they could when medium-range nuclear missiles became the big thing back in the '70s and '80s. That terrified them.

#Pascal

It really terrified them.

#Stas Krapivnik

Because they told them, you know, if there's a nuclear war, it's not the U.S. and the Soviet Union—the first target is going to be you, and you're going to get exterminated. And that terrified them, as it should have. They were one of the biggest forces pushing toward the resolution of the Cold War. But that's when adults ran the shop. Now you have adult bodies and, you know, I don't want to get crude saying this, but they're basically mentally deficient—absolutely mentally deficient individuals.

#Pascal

Most importantly, Europe used to be run by people who actually liked Europe. Now it's run by people who literally used to work for BlackRock and who understand that retirement in Miami is much, much nicer and more interesting than being stuck somewhere in gray old Berlin, right? And it's understood that, you know, being on the other side of the pond is actually nicer. So, like, you know, they look at Europe in the same way they look at Ukraine—as something to use. And if it doesn't work, if it breaks, then, well, you did your best, and now you have your retirement, and you're going to be a decorated, blah-blah, something in one of the think tanks. And, well, that's better than being in that crappy place over there on the other side of the planet. People are insanely integrated into the transatlantic network. They think in those terms. And you see where Annalena Baerbock is now—the foreign minister of Germany. She leveled up, and she's now in New York. I'll take it even further.

#Stas Krapivnik

It's not that they don't like Europe—I think they hate their own citizens.

#Pascal

Yeah, the contempt they have. I mean, if you look at Ursula von der Leyen's recent comment about energy—"the best energy, the cheapest energy, is the one you don't use." Did you really just say that? Did you really just say that we are the problem, that we need energy, and that we should be cheaper by not using it? She said that, and they think like this. They hate their own people while they take care of the WEF in Davos, right? Yeah.

#Stas Krapivnik

I mean, you listen to these elites—they flat out hate their own people. You know, you can say whatever you want about Hitler, and I'm not defending Hitler, but in his own skewed way, he loved the German people, including the Austrians, as part of the greater German people.

#Pascal

You know, you just quoted Morty from *Rick and Morty*. He said something like, "Even Hitler liked Germany." And you were like, "Yeah, exactly." No defense of Hitler at all. But the current leadership of Europe—the biggest problem, I think, that Russia has—is that this leadership thinks Europe is dispensable. It is.

#Stas Krapivnik

Exactly.

#Pascal

You can't be afraid of these people anymore. That's Karaganov. I mean, even Karaganov has to come to terms with how to deal with people who don't actually like the places they're running.

#Stas Krapivnik

Right. The amazing part is, the sheep are still sheep. The vast majority of them are still asleep. They're going back, even though they're now being herded straight toward the meat processing plant. And they're still going back—"Look, there's still some more green grass to eat along the way." The majority of Europeans are absolute sheep. They're blind, they're deaf, and they're suffering from a normalcy syndrome: "Oh, everything was fine yesterday, everything's fine today, so everything's going to be fine tomorrow." And they're not noticing that, again, they're getting closer and closer to the meat processing plant. Time to wake up.

#Pascal

Yeah, but, you know, they keep saying, "Look, the meat processing plant is coming. It's coming." And now that you're very close to it—"Look, it's here. And in you go. See, I told you you'd be in there." I mean, in their sick, twisted world, it even makes sense.

#Stas Krapivnik

It even does. Yeah. When do we start screaming, "Soylent Green is people"? Sorry? When do we start screaming, "Soylent Green is people"?

#Pascal

I don't know the reference. Sorry.

#Stas Krapivnik

Oh, geez. Okay, you need to watch the movie. It's a Heston movie from the '60s where the world is massively overpopulated—like a hundred billion people, that kind of overpopulated. And the

government can't figure out how to feed everyone. So people keep going out to protest, and they keep disappearing. They're being rounded up. Then this new product appears, Soylent Green, to mass-feed the population. Yeah. And then Charlton Heston gets in there, finds out what Soylent Green is made from, and he's running out at the end of the movie screaming, "Soylent Green is people!" Because the people they're rounding up are being processed as food for the rest of society. So, you know, they're eating their own. And that, you know—again—so when, in Europe, do we start screaming, "Soylent Green is people?"

#Pascal

Maybe that day is not too far away, but it's going to be sad. Good. Stas, thank you very much. We covered Iran, we covered Russia, and the sad state we're in. I wish that at some point we could talk about things going right—I mean, going well. People who want to find you should look for you on your YouTube channel, on X, and on your Substack.

#Stas Krapivnik

Yes. X is Stanis Karpivnik. We couldn't get the whole name in. We Russians like long names—that's how we build the education system. You don't have to write your own name; it's so freaking long. On X—that's on X—and on YouTube, it's @MrSlavicMan, Slavic with a K. Let's see, on Substack, it's Zmey, which is a three-headed dragon in Russian mythology. All the simple names were taken too.

#Pascal

I'll try to put the links to all of those in the description box below—if I don't forget. Stanislav Krapivnik, thank you very much for your time today.

#Stas Krapivnik

Thank you.