Daniel Davis: Trump's New Iran Land Blockade Is a Dangerous Fantasy

Lt. Col. Daniel Davis is a 4x combat veteran, the recipient of the Ridenhour Prize for Truth-Telling, and is the host of the Daniel Davis Deep Dive YouTube channel. Daniel Davis Deep Dive: https://www.youtube.com/@DanielDavisDeepDive/videos Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: https://glenndiesen.substack.com/ X/Twitter: https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen Patreon: https://www.patreon.com/glenndiesen Support the research by Prof. Glenn Diesen: PayPal: https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glenndiesen Buy me a Coffee: buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng Go Fund Me: https://gofund.me/09ea012f Buy Diesen merchandise: https://diesen-shop.fourthwall.com/en-nok Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL 00:00 The West's "1992" mindset and a changing balance of power 03:59 Unattainable objectives, morality, and the rules-based order 09:38 Operation Iron Gate: Can Iran's land borders be sealed? 13:12 Why Davis calls the proposed blockade a fantasy 17:26 Show of strength, negotiation, or a path back to war? 21:02 Two possible exits from the Iran conflict 25:28 Why the Strait of Hormuz changes the stakes 28:59 Russia and Ukraine: the same strategic miscalculation 33:40 Closing thoughts on Western policy toward Russia

#Glenn

Welcome back, everyone. We are here with Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Davis, a four-time combat veteran and host of the very popular Daniel Davis Deep Dive podcast. Thank you for coming back on the program.

#Daniel Davis

Always a pleasure to be here, Glenn. Thanks for inviting me.

#Glenn

I often feel that one of the most dangerous things currently happening, not just in the United States but in Europe as well, is the inability to adjust to the world as it is. That is, we have entered a new world order. We have a new international distribution of power. But those 1990s, they were so good. With that concentration of power in the West, we could do what we wanted. We had collective hegemony. We had the ideology that suggested this was for the betterment of all of you, for the good of all of mankind. And we often seem to still be stuck in that mentality in terms of how to manage foreign relations. We were recently together in Istanbul, and I thought you were speaking

about something related to this, about how American military leaders seem to be stuck in 1992. And I thought this was very fascinating. I was just wondering, how do you read the mentality of a lot of our politicians, if not also military leaders?

#Daniel Davis

Yeah, it is unfortunately on display here, even in the last 24 hours or so. President Trump, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and retired General Jack Keane all made statements yesterday that show that they do still think it's 1992, that we are in a unipolar moment, that we call all the shots and everybody else has to do what we tell them to. I mean, you had President Trump still talking like, "Yeah, I'm deciding whether we're going to go back to war with Iran or not. But basically, I'm giving them a chance here if they'll just do what's right and agree to whatever terms I want to give them."

Otherwise, they'll just have to go in and destroy them. But that's absurd because we have proven that we can't just go in there and destroy them. We've already tried that. And yet somehow that reality hasn't gotten through to President Trump. You had the secretary of state saying a similar thing: "Well, we're trying to negotiate, and it would be great if we could. But we'll go back to kinetic action if we need to. Right now, they're asking for things that are just outlandish and ridiculous." Well, they're only asking for something outlandish and ridiculous if they don't have the capacity to compel it.

And if you do have the capacity to say no, then those things are not at play. They do have capacity here. They're not a powerless bystander. We don't have the power to compel them to comply with what we want. We have, again, proven it. You have Jack Keane saying, "No, a deal would be bad. It would be awful. We can't do that because that would equal a strategic loss, because it would leave them in power. They would get reparations. They would get sanctions relief as part of anything to open the straits back up. So, no, we can't do that. We've got to go and finish the job."

And again, this is a four-star general. It's one thing if it's President Trump, who never served in the military and had very little international experience, or even Marco Rubio, who never served in the military and, other than sitting on some panels as a senator, doesn't really have a lot of good international experience. You can, to a limited extent, give them a bit of—not a pass, but at least some understanding. Not the four-star general. He's supposed to be the subject matter expert on these issues, knowing what is and isn't militarily possible. And yet all three of them together are saying the same nonsensical thing. And all of it stems from this belief that we have the power to do whatever we want.

It doesn't matter what constraints others may have, whether there are limitations on power or consequences to action. No, that's only for those people. But for us, we can do whatever we want, and it'll work out because, well, we're Americans, and we say it will, so it will. That's their mentality, and it's already led us into disaster. Joe Biden was the first egregious violator of this in the early part of the Russia-Ukraine war by saying, you know, "My God, that man has to go," talking about

Vladimir Putin. “We'll stay for as long as it takes,” and all that. And then we led the whole European alliance gleefully into something that was militarily unattainable. And now Trump's continued it, primarily in the Middle East instead of in Russia.

He seems more ambivalent about the European part, but not about the Middle East part. As of last night, he still thinks we can just do it because we want to. Both Trump and Biden were devastatingly wrong. European leadership is just as culpable and just as guilty of this, just across the board. Meanwhile, you have others in the Global South that recognize very much what's going on. You have, obviously, China and Russia, and even Brazil and many countries in Africa and South America. They all understand what's going on, and they see that there are limits to power, and it's very much not 1992 anymore. The only ones that still seem to be living in that fantasy are in Washington, Brussels, Paris, London, and several other capitals.

#Glenn

The whole idea of strategy means that you set objectives that are achievable based on the resources you can mobilize, while also taking into account how your opponents will respond. It just seems like there's been a failure at every point in this. We haven't set clear objectives. We've clearly overestimated what we can actually mobilize in terms of resources to achieve those objectives. And when it comes to opponents, be it China, Russia, Iran, or whoever we want to fight, it looks like we always underestimate them. It is quite remarkable, that very strange arrogance or assumption.

#Daniel Davis

The absence of any morality. And we're not saying that there needs to be a religious component to any government. But there do need to be standards, and there does need to be morality that undergirds it. And in this same conversation I was talking about with President Trump yesterday, he was bragging about the fact that, well, we were only at war with Venezuela for 48 minutes, is what he said. You know, he was bragging about Pete Hegseth and saying, "He won that war." And then, just as part of his declining intellectual capacity, he said we won, past tense, the Iran war. Turns out that we just have to figure out how to close it off. Well, that's obviously nonsensical. But he is right that we did have a 48-minute military exercise that did result in the stealing of the governing leader of another country, killing a bunch of people in the process, which violates every kind of international law that exists.

Obviously, much of that's just a dead letter now, including our own Constitution, our own 1973 War Powers Act, and our own regular laws. You don't have the authority to just start assassinating people in boats because you accuse them of running drugs, which is not a capital offense anyway. And yet we just did it. Secretary Hegseth did that. President Trump brags about it. So there's no morality. There's no following the rule of law. There's just following the so-called rules-based order,

not the law-based order, because that would require everybody to be held accountable to it and subject to it. We don't want that. We just want the rules that we make, which means I can tell you I'm going to take your country down because I don't like you.

You're not going to do anything about it. We're going to steal your oil and sell it, and you'll make no complaints about it. But I will scream bloody murder if somebody else tries to do that to somebody that I like. That's the rules-based order. And that's what you could do in 1992. It's no longer that way. But as you said very accurately, we're not setting attainable objectives that would benefit our country and that are also grounded in morality or law. And when you get rid of those foundations, you have chaos, and then you have failure. And lots of people are dying as a result of that. And I think it's going to end up just destroying the foundation of power that we had as a Western world up to this point.

#Glenn

Well, it's not just an American problem. If you look at Germany now, you have Chancellor Merz. He still speaks in the language of morality, and he's very angry about how they've been cut off from energy in the Middle East and how prices are going up. No fault of his own. This is everyone else's problem. And, of course, he also likes to lecture countries about human rights. But again, this is the same guy who stood by and even supported a genocide in Gaza. When the Israelis attacked Iran, he said, "Oh, they're doing dirty work for us." And when the U.S. attacked, he tried to position himself as Europe's number one man in Washington, D.C. That is, he was going to be the guy Trump could talk to, so he would show, you know, full support for what the Americans were doing.

I mean, of course, Ukraine ignored diplomacy and let hundreds of thousands of young men die. It's still comfortable talking about its values. It's so bizarre to watch. But everyone seems to accept that, yeah, this is, you know, somehow reasonable. But just pivoting back to the Middle East, because I did want to ask you: after the midterm, we now have Trump looking for a way to gain this advantage over the Iranians, because at some point he wants to be able to dictate the outcome of this war. And this new task force, Iron Gate, is blocking all of Iran's land corridors. This is the new thing now. So not only a naval blockade, but all land corridors, plus the Caspian Sea, connecting them to the Russians. How do you assess this new initiative?

#Daniel Davis

I mean, it's just fantasy. I mean, listen, I spent some time on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in mountains that are very similar to those ringing most of Iran's land borders today. And that was at a time when we had—let's see, what was it?—140,000 U.S. and NATO troops on top of about 350,000 national security forces inside Afghanistan at the time. So you're talking about close to half a million uniformed people altogether. And we never stopped anything on just the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, just that one section there, primarily up in the Kunar area, up in the north of the country. We couldn't stop anything.

And that's with all of our persistent surveillance, our intelligence capabilities, satellites, drones, physical troops, checkpoints, many of which I went out on patrols to observe. And you couldn't stop anything. And you have some fantasy that, with no troops on the ground in Iran or on any of these borders, you're going to get 20 dudes in Tampa, Florida, somehow to set up some sort of a coordination cell—I don't know what—and you're going to stop Iran? But you have no ground power. I mean, that is just self-delusion of the highest order. It's not going to happen if you had 100,000 troops. If you had 500,000 troops, you're talking about 6 bloody thousand miles of border territory and all kinds of people who would love to do it.

There aren't just nine corridors. I don't know what they're even talking about there. You can do stuff all over the border. It doesn't have to be a big highway or a big control point. There's almost no limit to what you can get across there, as the Afghan people proved, especially the Taliban. They went to a lot of these places with just mules, carrying stuff across. You can't stop it. I mean, it reminds me—and as a historian, you're probably already thinking about this—of what we tried to do with the North Vietnamese in the Vietnam War. We were trying to bomb the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

And we just unloaded hundreds of tons of ammunition and bombs and missiles, and carried out strikes. And we had patrols and everything. We never shut down anything. They always got it through. And people will when they have the motivation to do so, as the Iranians certainly do. When you have a pretty effective blockade in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman in particular, there's some legitimacy to that being a real issue, but that's only part of the deal. And this other stuff about Operation Iron Gate is just outright fantasy, Glenn. There's no effectiveness to it whatsoever.

#Glenn

How would it be implemented, do you think? I agree, but I think this goes back to your thesis about the continued arrogance since 1992, this idea that one can have the final say anywhere in the world. If we're completely rational, we look at Iran. They have 92 million people, or 93 million. They have a massive territory, built like a fortress, with mountains and waters and deserts around the outside, at least. And again, they've got excellent industrial productivity. They have great drones and missiles. I mean, if we're all rational, we would reach the conclusion that, well, we should probably sit down and talk to them because there will be no victory. We have to make concessions. That whole thing seems to be out of the question—that is, you know, that admission that we can't beat them. I think it's quite fascinating. But how might Trump try to implement this? Because he can't just have this task force and make grand statements. Something has to happen. Is this an escalation towards a larger war?

#Daniel Davis

I don't know for sure, Glenn, because I looked at President Trump's comments last night when he was talking about it, and he said it's now in effect. And one wonders, does he believe that somehow

there's a blockade on the land border of Iran right now? Because when Central Command released a map of it in a press release, there's this yellow outline of Iran along all its land borders and another one in the Gulf of Oman. And you may wonder, did someone tell him that this is now closed? Like we just did it because it's 1992. You know what I mean? I don't know for sure. But CENTCOM itself has been very slow to come forward with an operational plan for how they're going to execute this.

There is some conversation that it's diplomatic, that we're putting economic or diplomatic pressure on all of the countries around there and asking them not to do stuff. But you know what? Even if you had full diplomatic agreement and every country, including Iraq, said, "Sure, we'll just completely stop any kind of cross-border traffic," that would require them to send all of their border patrol and all of their border troops to seal off all of these major transit points and then be able to patrol the other parts there, too. Who's going to do that? Who has the resources? I'm talking about all these countries. I think there's nine or ten, whatever there are. Which of those countries is going to deploy its military to make Donald Trump happy by literally spending money and resources and diverting its resources to stop traffic from Iran?

They're not going to. They'll just say, "OK, it's illegal." And then what? No one's going to stop, because if people don't go across the main crossing point, they'll go five or ten miles in the other direction. They'll cross over there, and there's nothing you can do to stop it. So there is no practical way to actually bring this into effect. I think it is just to make Trump think that we're tough, we're strong, we can do something—to fool the American public into thinking, "Oh, yeah, OK, now we've got a land blockade, too," even though there's no effort. There's no reality to it. But that's not important. What's important is to make people think there's a reality to it, because it buys them a little time.

That's the only thing I can think of, because there's no long-term gain from fooling the American people on this topic here. You're obviously not going to be able to prove it, and it's not going to change anything. Maybe no one's going to go up to the mountain passes with a camera and see, "Yep, there's the stuff that's going across," you know, whatever. So no one can prove that. But it's not going to change anything. So what do you gain by fooling the American people here? Because it's not going to get the war over with. It's not going to get Iran to open the Strait of Hormuz. It's not going to get them to back off on their threat to attack us if we respond and return to war, et cetera. So it's just more of this self-delusion, because I don't see any benefit from it.

#Glenn

That's what you said, though: this show of strength appears to be the main purpose, at least the theatrics of it. But to what end, though? Because I could see two competing hypotheses there. One is that you show strength to open up space for diplomacy, because you're not too vulnerable at home if it looks like you're opening up diplomacy from a position of strength—that is, your opponents are willing to make concessions. You can sell this idea to the Americans. Or is he setting the stage for war, that is, building up for a larger conflict? Because he has been talking for a good

while now about how, you know, he would inflict this crushing defeat on the Iranians after the midterms.

#Daniel Davis

Well, yeah, I mean, that's what he said. It was going to be over immediately after the midterms. Well, the midterms were almost a week ago. It's still not over. No action's been taken. So that's obviously already another lie. Everything is built on lies, Glenn. There's almost nothing that President Trump says that's true. There's almost nothing that the Central Command commander, Admiral Cooper, says that's true, or that Jack Keane says that's true. None of the things that any of these people are saying are actually true. And so there is no basis for bringing this war to an end. And you talk about these competing theories: "Well, it's just going to show strength, so it helps us in negotiating." Well, the Iranians, they're aware of the truth.

They're not fooled by any of this. They're not fooled or impressed at all by this Iron Gate crap because they know how absurd it is, so they mock us. They literally laugh at this. Abbas Araghchi, in an X post that went out last night, says, basically, look, you learned politically at the ballot box last Tuesday what the American people say. You can now learn the lessons of that. Or if you go back to war, hell is going to rain down on you. You can just walk away from this and have a deal, or die. You're going to have hell rain down on you. And I think that they are very clear. See, unlike their side, we don't have anything new to threaten them with. We can hit them with the same stuff we did before.

We can hit the same targets and have the same lack of effectiveness because the things that matter, of course, are underground, under these granite mountains, et cetera—not just Pickaxe, but probably 30 or 50 others, depending on which reports you want to believe. But the bottom line is, whatever the number is, we can't get at any of them. We can't knock any of them out. So we can just prove again that we can't knock them out. But on the Iranian side, they can engage targets they haven't before, and they have already proven that we can't stop their existing technology. So if they want to come after our energy infrastructure, if they want to come after our business entities, like the data centers or any other banking centers, that would be just catastrophic.

Go after those undersea cables. You know, they've been talking about that. There are all kinds of things that they didn't do before that they can do now. And they have a much bigger arsenal than they did before, with weapons that, by all accounts, are technologically more capable than the ones we couldn't stop before. So I think they are in the driver's seat, and they know reality. When they issue something close to an ultimatum like that from Abbas Araghchi, I think they're ready to execute. But we, on the other hand, are just full of empty threats that don't have reality behind them. So right now, we're in this neither-war-nor-peace period. And you can say whatever you want on either side. But if it ever comes to action, we're going to find out that only one side was dealing with reality.

#Glenn

If the U.S. doesn't go to war, or goes to war and then tries to put an end to it, how does this all end from your perspective? What would a realistic American exit from a war with Iran look like?

#Daniel Davis

Well, there's what could be a realistic exit, and there's what's almost certainly going to happen if we don't take the exit we can choose. We can choose to walk away right now. We can choose to say, "Okay, the war's over. We're leaving. I'm going to pretend, for my own sake, like I'm pretending that Operation Iron Gate is real. I'm going to pretend that I won and just tell you that I did. And we're going to pick up our ships. We're going to leave. We're going to take all of these aircraft carriers home. We're even going to take our troops out of the Middle East, too. No reason to have them on these wrecked bases. We're not going to build those back, so we'll just take them all out. And then we'll come back if you ever do it again. You know, if you're mean, we'll do something, whatever." We can do that.

And then that's going to leave Iran in control of the Strait of Hormuz. In the eyes of virtually everybody in the world outside of the U.S. or perhaps parts of Europe, we'll have lost. The rest of the world will realize we lost. We'll have some fantasies that we didn't, but whatever. It'll be embarrassing for us. It'll be a hit to our credibility worldwide, etc. But the damage will be limited, and it'll start opening back up. The Strait of Hormuz will start to recover. The damage to the facilities will start to be repaired. It'll take a while. It'll take a while to unwind and get the system back in place, with all the damage to so many ships. I think it's near 100 now that have been damaged or destroyed by both parties since this thing started. I'm talking about tankers. So that'll start unwinding too. That's if we do what makes sense, which is the walkaway plan.

Because we're not going to get a negotiated settlement like the MOU we agreed to. We'll never get another one like that. That was the silver opportunity. The golden opportunity came on the 26th of February with Oman. That was the gold-plated one, where the Iranians actually agreed to negotiate their long-range missile program, their support for the proxies, and the nuclear terms. They put all of them on the table. Now they won't do that anymore. So we lost that one. So the MOU would have been the next best, because at least it said, "All right, once these things are done here, then we'll get into a discussion of the nuclear stuff." So that was still on the table at that point.

Now, with the walkaway plan, there's not going to be a negotiated settlement, because the Iranians have said, because of all the stuff that's happened so far, that they want five or seven terms, depending on which official you ask, to all be met up front. Then we'll get into negotiations on the nuclear program. But that means frozen assets released. That means sanctions lifted. That means stopping the war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip, stopping the war against Hezbollah in Lebanon, and, in fact, stopping the war on all fronts—all of them, all up front—which Israel is never going to do. So that's not going to happen.

We're not going to pay reparations. That's not going to happen. It's politically toxic at home for President Trump to lift the sanctions. He didn't have to worry about any of that in the walkaway plan. So there's not going to be a negotiated settlement. There might be the walkaway plan. And if we don't do either of those two, Glenn—if Trump listens to the likes of Jack Keane, who last night again begged President Trump on national television to go back and finish the job and destroy Iran, or attempt to—then it's going to be catastrophic. And the end result is still going to be Iran in control of the Strait of Hormuz, but now after profoundly more damage.

And so now you're talking five to seven to ten years to recover after all of it plays out, whatever we end up doing. But Iran is still going to be in control of the Strait of Hormuz. It's just going to come at a higher cost. And our reputation will take an even more egregious hit. Our costs and the physical damage we suffer will be much higher, and we'll have been driven out of the Middle East, not by Iran, but by the other Gulf countries, who say, "You're toxic to us. You're a missile magnet. We don't want to have anything to do with you because it's destructive to us." So those are the ways I see this playing out. There is no scenario where we come out in good shape.

#Glenn

We've had a lot of failures in that part of the world over the years, you know, from Afghanistan to Iraq to Libya. But this is on a more spectacular scale, it seems. I mean, what do you think the wider Middle East might look like when this is all over? I mean, you spent some time down there as a lieutenant colonel. And, you know, Yemen could at least potentially bring the Saudis to their knees. Iraq—well, the U.S. recently left Iraq. Syria looks awfully shaky. You know, the whole stability of the country now seems to hinge on the ability of a former al-Qaeda leader to hold the whole thing together. Kuwait, Bahrain—they all seem a bit shaky. Wow. What do you think could happen in the region? Because the foundations were never that strong to begin with. A lot of these countries are essentially family monarchies.

#Daniel Davis

I'll say that the wars in Lebanon, Iraq, and Afghanistan never had an impact outside the borders of those countries. The Iraq war dragged on, on and off, for about two decades, and the Afghanistan war lasted about two decades. There was chaos, a lot of death and destruction inside each of those countries. But it didn't bleed out. It didn't have much of an impact anywhere else. The Strait of Hormuz was the big game changer here, because this time, when we struck, it had an economic impact on the world. Not only on our country, not only on Europe, but on literally the entire world.

Everybody's been affected by this, by all the things we've talked about a bunch of times: oil, gas, derivatives, fertilizers, all that kind of stuff, sulfur. That's the difference here. And so, when we did these before, we could just muddle through, and we could literally say whatever we wanted to say until we were finally like, "All right, 20 years. I guess it sucks. Let's leave." And then, who knows?

Nothing happens. That's it. It's off the headlines, and it's as though nothing ever happened. This one, on the other hand, is already causing problems outside that we didn't foresee for some reason.

And now we don't know how to fix it because words aren't working anymore. And so now we're faced with a physical, strategic defeat because we are going to have to withdraw or we're going to be driven out by the Iranians. So it's going to be one of those two. And there's going to be a cost no matter what. And of course, the path of least resistance—or least harm, maybe a better way to put it—is for us to do a version of the walkaway plan. But I don't know, Glenn, if President Trump has the capacity, the intellectual and moral capacity, to do what makes sense, because that means you have to concede that you lost.

You don't have to say it with words, but it's self-evident. And doing this will reveal that. But if you don't want to reveal it or admit it, and you try this other option, the loss will be far greater. And that's the problem. I don't know that Trump has the ability, or that any of the other Western countries do, for that matter. I mean, you could say the same thing about the Russia-Ukraine war, about the whole Western support for Ukraine. It's in the same category. I don't know that anybody has the capacity to do the right thing. So I think that, in both of these places, it's going to end up being settled on the battlefield. And we're going to lose in both of them.

#Glenn

Yeah, I was going to say, on the Ukraine war, I mean, the Europeans also suffer a little bit from this ’90s effect. That is, you know, in the academic literature, they often refer to the European Union as a regulatory superpower. This was in the ’90s and the 2000s. They also called it the Brussels effect. That is because it was such a big economic power that it essentially created a gravitational pull. So even countries outside the EU would begin to adopt its standards, legislation, and regulations. It could essentially just sit there in the EU Parliament, pass some stuff, and say, “This is the law now.”

And you would see countries beyond the borders of the EU begin to adjust. The challenge was, of course, always to get Russia into that orbit, so that it would stay on the outside and still do as it was told, even though it didn't have a seat at the table. That was always a big, big, big problem, and it's why the European security architecture, in my opinion, was doomed to break. But anyway, I was going to say, Kaja Kallas said today, November 9th, that the Russians aren't negotiating properly. They're not demonstrating a genuine willingness to reach peace. Again, this is Eurospeak for “they're not falling in line.”

They're not surrendering. No, they are sticking to their guns because they still want Russian reparations. They still want Russia to pull out, to essentially capitulate, to allow Ukraine to join NATO and, you know, stock the whole border with Russia full of NATO missiles if they have to. I mean, this is essentially what they're going for. How do you see this, though? Because this is why it's so dangerous: it's happening in parallel with the Iran war. And this can also blow up at any moment, it seems, because that conflict is awfully shaky as well.

#Daniel Davis

And I'm afraid I'm going to have to go after this question. I'm running low on time. But I have grave concerns about that dynamic you're describing here, especially about the comments by Kaja Kallas, of course, Ursula von der Leyen, and Friedrich Merz, whom you mentioned a minute ago. I mean, the whole band of them are, as a group, as delusional as President Trump. And she can say something like that when it's so self-evident that you're not talking about Cuba or Venezuela, which have very limited power.

You're talking about a country with the most nuclear warheads on the planet, that has all the natural resources within its own borders that it would ever need, and that can withstand all of these economic sanctions you've imposed and still thrive better than the whole EU has. So, I mean, in every category you want to measure, plus the history, plus the culture, everything that you can imagine is on the Russian side. And yet you're talking as though they're Cuba, on the verge of collapse at any moment, or, you know, as though they're wayward children. I don't know, something like that. But it's self-evidently untrue. And of course, the most egregious thing to me is that the people of Ukraine are paying the bill for this absurdity on the Western side.

In the name of democracy and standing up for the heroic people of Ukraine and all this, we condemn them to death because we will not facilitate a diplomatic outcome, which has always been on the table and is still, miraculously, on the table. We could have had this over and ended the killing, and then set about finding an actual European-wide security architecture where everybody can live in peace, where there wouldn't be any war and nobody would be dying. All of that is in our power as a collective West to achieve, and we refuse to do it because we have this fantasy that it's still 1992, and we can just tell a weakened Russia what to do, and they can't do anything about it.

Although that's just not true, and it's self-evidently not true. And so what that's going to mean is that Russia's never going to surrender and capitulate from a position of strength. So by doing this, you just doom more Ukrainian people to death. And if it goes far enough, you doom your own economies to collapse, or at least a severe recession. And if it goes far enough, you could actually spawn a war between the two sides, which would only harm us even further and move us further away from peace. So any way you want to look at it, this kind of delusional thinking across the entire West is as bad in Europe as it is in America.

#Glenn

Thank you so much for taking the time. We should definitely have started rethinking in the ’90s not having Russia on our side of the ledger. I think making an enemy of Russia has been a mistake. I think historians will look at this as the most extraordinary exercise in self-harm. Anyway, thank you so much for taking the time.

#Daniel Davis

Thanks, Louis. Always a pleasure. Thanks.