

Jiang Xueqin: "We Are Already in World War 3"

Jiang Xueqin discusses how World War 3 has already begun, which now risks escalating to all-out war. Jiang is the host of the popular educational channel Predictive History: <https://www.youtube.com/@PredictiveHistory> 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> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

#Glenn

Welcome back. We are joined today by Zhang Xueqin, who is very renowned for making accurate predictions. Some of them have been the re-election of Trump, Vance as his pick for vice president, and, very relevant for today, also predicting that the U.S. would go to war with Iran. Now, the war with Iran, I thought, was a very interesting prediction of yours because on so many levels it doesn't make a lot of sense that the U.S. would do this, because it seems to be such a huge mess. It's very difficult to defeat Iranians militarily, and there's no good way for them to declare victory and go home. So I thought a good place to start would be to ask you why. How did you see, or why did you correctly predict, that the United States would attack Iran?

#Jiang Xueqin

Right. So I believe that the best evidence that the United States would eventually attack Iran is that in January 2020, Trump ordered the assassination of Qasem Soleimani, who was the Iranian envoy to the Middle East. He was basically the Iranian ambassador to the proxies—Hezbollah, the Shia militias in Iraq, the Houthis. So killing an ambassador is basically a declaration of war. So I felt that if Trump had won re-election in 2020, then he would have most certainly gone to war against Iran. And I didn't know why he wanted to go to war against Iran. I had many hypotheses, but I was fairly certain that if he had won the election, then he would have declared war against Iran.

#Glenn

Yeah, and... how do you see this war now developing, though? Because, you know, if you were to assess it, one of the things that makes it complicated is that there are so many actors involved with their different interests. Of course, at the heart of it, one can say it's the U.S.-Iranian war, which is

often referred to. But, of course, Israel is a key participant here. The Iranians have several close regional allies. And, of course, you have the great powers of Russia and China. So how do you see this war playing out?

#Jiang Xueqin

Right. So I think in the first month of this war, the United States was focused on decapitation, basically trying to kill as much of the Iranian leadership as possible, hoping that that would force a global settlement where the Iranians would surrender and the Americans could basically enforce regime change. The Iranians have proven to be much more resilient, much more creative, much more resourceful than the Americans gave them credit for. And so now the Americans have moved to phase two of the war, which is essentially a war of attrition, economic strangulation, where they are trying to destroy Iran's capacity to finance this war, mainly by destroying Iran's capacity to export oil to China, as well as to control the Strait of Hormuz.

That's where Trump has declared a naval blockade against the Strait of Hormuz. And so I think that this is where the war is gonna go. It's gonna be a slow war that's gonna be out of the headlines, very much like what happened in Gaza, really, where maybe for the first few weeks the entire world was disgusted by what the Israelis were doing, but they declared a ceasefire, and then slowly the attention of the world shifted elsewhere. And that's what Trump, I think, intends to do with Iran, where he's going to try to apply as much military, diplomatic, political, and economic pressure as possible to force a global settlement and try to divert people's attention away from the war.

Quite honestly, I don't think there is an off-ramp for Trump because the consequences of this war are just so vast. So, for example, if you look at the GCC nations, the UAE has suffered a great deal in this war. They cannot afford for Iran to emerge the victor in this war and to control the Strait of Hormuz. So the UAE is essentially all in on defeating Iran. Saudi Arabia and Iran have a rivalry going back decades, where both vie for supremacy in the Islamic world. And so Saudi Arabia sees Iran as a long-term threat as well.

So even though Saudi Arabia has been trying to promote a diplomatic solution, their best interest is to also see a defeated Iran. Bahrain is right now under a lot of threat because most of the population is Shia Muslim and their leadership is Sunni, and their leadership is not very popular there, and Iranians are very much intent on promoting revolutions across the Islamic world. So these three nations—Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahrain, possibly also Kuwait as well—they want to see this war fought to the end. The Iranians don't want to go back to the status quo where they were sanctioned. They now have control of the Strait of Hormuz.

They want economic relief. They see the Strait of Hormuz as their main leverage point against the Americans. So they also want to see this war fought to the end. The Americans are stuck because of the petrodollar, where if they leave, basically these GCC nations would start trading in multiple currencies, including the Chinese yuan and gold. And this would collapse the American economy

because it's so dependent on investment from the GCC nations. The GCC has trillions invested in America, and they'd be forced to repatriate these trillions back into the GCC in order to pay reparations to the Iranians.

Then this would spell catastrophe for the American economy, especially the AI sector. Israel is intent on the Greater Israel Project, and they see this as an opportunity to redraw the map of the Middle East in order to achieve the Greater Israel Project. Israel wants this war to continue for as long as possible because they believe that the Arabs and Iranians will destroy each other in the process. And when the smoke clears, they would have achieved the Greater Israel Project. So essentially, in the Middle East, there are too many powerful individuals who want to see this war fought to the end, and no one can really countenance a defeat.

#Glenn

Yeah, no, I agree. There doesn't appear to be any pathway to a political settlement that would be acceptable to both sides. But in terms of the interest of the U.S. to reduce the intensity of this war, as you said, just to max pressure on blockading its ports, trying to suffocate its economy – it's not clear to me why the Iranians would accept playing this game, though, to allow the Americans to fight this war on their premises, on their conditions. So wouldn't the Iranians have an interest to essentially put down their foot and open up this blockade by hitting back hard at the U.S. bases in the region, shutting down the Red Sea, whatever else they can do in order to prevent the U.S. from... yeah, well, going through the slow suffocation of Iran and calling it peace.

#Jiang Xueqin

Right, so I completely agree with your analysis. I think that the Iranians, for the first month, were winning this war. They were proactive. They had the initiative. They were basically controlling the tempo of the war. With a ceasefire, this dynamic has completely changed. Now the Americans actually are more proactive. I would say the Americans are now dominant, actually, in that region. And I think that why a ceasefire was negotiated was that China applied a lot of pressure on Iran for the ceasefire. The GCC nation-states trade a lot with China, and in mid-April, the UAE leader, MBZ, visited China on a state visit and basically told the Chinese, listen, we're in a lot of trouble. And the reality is that China trades with everyone.

So yes, they get a lot of oil from Iran, but they actually get more LNG from Qatar. So the Chinese state crowd is trying to focus on win-win global peace. And so China doesn't really care how this war started. It doesn't really care who started this war. It just wants this war to end. And China right now is very focused on opening the Strait of Hormuz. So I think the Chinese applied a lot of diplomatic pressure through Pakistan. Pakistan was a front man, but China was working behind the scenes. And so I think it was only because of Chinese involvement and Chinese security guarantees that the Iranians agreed to a ceasefire. But this ceasefire, and this is really important for people to understand, actually caused a rift between the political leadership and the military leadership.

The political leadership in Tehran wants to see a negotiated political settlement as soon as possible because they're really afraid that if this war goes on for too long, the Iranian economy would collapse, Iran would be isolated diplomatically, and the population may revolt against the government. The military leadership under the IRGC wants to see this thing fought to the bitter end because the Americans killed their leader, Qasem Soleimani, and they killed their spiritual leader, the Ayatollah Khamenei. So now there's this rift between the political and the military leadership, and I think this could have tremendous consequences as this war continues.

#Glenn

Well, do you see a likely pathway here to a world war? I talk to people who argue that we might already be in this world war, given all the great powers being involved in this kind of military hostilities. But, for example, for the United States, it's not able to put an effective blockade on the Iranian ports, given that it's too far from the coastline, too wide a region to cover with too few assets, not enough supply and support. But, you know, for example, at some point the Americans will get the idea, given that most of the Iranian energy tankers are heading towards China, why not just cut them all off at the Strait of Malacca or one of these choke points, which the U.S. has traditionally looked at to destroy the Chinese economy? And also, of course, you see now Russia, at least reportedly, providing more and more support for Iran, not just intelligence but weaponry. Again, it's hard to know exactly what's being done due to the fog of war here, but do you see a pathway into a world war now?

#Jiang Xueqin

I think we're already in World War III. It's just that the way we understand war is different in the 21st century than in the 20th century. So, 19th-century war was essentially about armies clashing on the battlefield. Like, World War I was just trench warfare, and it was easy to see this war because these armies were just killing each other in the trenches. World War II was about destroying the state's capacity to fight the war, so basically targeting civilian populations. So, for example, the firebombings of Germany and Japan were what allowed the Allies to win the war in the end. It's something that's not really discussed, but the firebombings were really destructive, killed a lot of civilians, and basically destroyed the state's capacity to manufacture the weapons necessary to fight a war.

And that's how the Allies won. So that's 20th-century warfare. 21st-century warfare is different in that it's ultimately about economic strangulation and forcing your opponent to submit and causing domestic unrest. And I think World War III, the two main combatants are America and Russia. And already we're seeing this massive war in the oceans, where American ships are trying to target and board, basically seize, Russian shuttle fleet tankers. These are just acts of piracy. And the Americans have already, I believe, seized two Russian oil tankers. And so I believe that in the future, what's going to happen is that the Russians are going to arm and militarize the shuttle fleet. And so we

should see a massive war in the oceans in the next few years. So this war is primarily economic between Russia and America.

Another aspect of this war is sabotage, right? So we're seeing these Ukrainian drones striking at Russian oil refineries. We're seeing oil refineries being destroyed all around the world. So basically it's economic warfare, it's economic strangulation. Now China is key to this because the American strategy vis-à-vis China is different from the American strategy vis-à-vis Russia. So America just wants to destroy Russia economically. But actually, China is very important for America to maintain its debt financing. So right now, America has about \$39 trillion in debt, and it needs China to continue to buy U.S. Treasuries. So America is trying to create a situation in which China is forced to buy U.S. Treasuries and allow America to maintain the Ponzi scheme. And so it doesn't want to destroy China economically.

Because if you destroy China economically, then China is just going to choose the nuclear option and offload all its U.S. Treasuries, causing a panic in the global economy. So what America wants to do is basically try to pressure China into an economic settlement. And so if you look at what happened in Venezuela, right? So on January 3rd, America kidnapped Maduro. And you can make the argument that the entire point of that was a signal to China that America controls the Western Hemisphere. This is something called the Monroe Doctrine or the Trump Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. And China has invested trillions of dollars into South American infrastructure—ports, refineries, railways, etc.—because China needs the food, resources, and energy from South America.

So what Trump is trying to say to China is that if you want to buy anything from North America, you have to go through us. We will collect a tax. And the tax is for you to open up your financial market and for us to be able to sell stablecoins to your population. So stablecoins are just digital currency backed by U.S. Treasuries. So the entire strategy is institutions buy U.S. Treasuries, and then individuals can buy U.S. stablecoins. And so the United States is invested in having the Treasury economy do well and in forcing the Chinese to buy more U.S. Treasuries and more U.S. dollars in order to sustain the U.S. economy. And that's a strategy for the Americans going into the next five years. And that's why Trump is actually visiting Beijing in a couple of days.

It's a three-day visit, and I think they're going to prepare the groundwork for a grand bargain between China and the United States. And there'll be three areas to look out for, I think, in these negotiations. And these negotiations will take place over the course of the next year. The first is trade. And again, I think what's going to happen is that China will agree to buy more resources from the Western Hemisphere, specifically LNG from America, in order to sustain its manufacturing sector. Okay, that's the first thing, the trade. Second is that, the second issue is Taiwan, where in order to better facilitate trade between the United States and China, Trump is going to declare that Taiwan and China are the same political entity.

He's going to refute Taiwanese independence. So that's the second thing. And the third thing is that I think you'll see massive cooperation in AI, where both nations agree that AI is the future, and they

will agree to share technology and cooperate in developing AI that is safe and effective for the entire human race. So I think that when Trump visits Beijing, the signal will be given that there'll be a rapprochement between the United States and China. And again, the entire goal of the United States—and I can't state this clearly enough—the entire goal of the United States is to turn China into a vassal of the American empire.

#Glenn

Yeah, but surely China must see, you know, the path they're on, that the U.S. isn't really seeking peaceful coexistence, but instead, that as two equals in a multipolar system, it's seeking to, I guess, essentially restore its dominance. But how do you make sense of... how do Europeans fit into this? Because at the moment it looks as if they're preparing themselves for buying energy from America, and then America can essentially sell its energy to the Europeans while importing cheaper energy, for example, from Russia. I mean, is this also essentially setting up the Europeans as vassals? Because economically it appears to be going in that direction.

#Jiang Xueqin

Well, unfortunately, the European leadership has already been vassalized. So you go back to 2022, when the war between Ukraine and Russia first started. The Europeans froze \$200 billion of Russian assets at the behest of the Americans. This destroyed the legitimacy and credibility of the European banking system. The Europeans stopped buying Russian energy, and this destroyed the European economy. The Nord Stream pipeline was destroyed, and the Europeans knew who did it. Everyone knows who did it, but they insisted it was the Russians who did it.

So, in many respects, the Europeans have already been vassalized, and now the Europeans are already discussing drafting men to go fight in Ukraine. If the Europeans did not provide the financing and the political support to the Ukrainians, this war would have been over two years ago. So unfortunately, the European leadership has already been vassalized. This is going to create a lot of discontent within the European population. We're already seeing that with the rise of the AfD in Germany.

#Glenn

I think the public is slowly awakening to the fact that their leaders are not serving them anymore. You made some other predictions, though. You argued that the U.S. would likely send in ground troops against Iran. I've heard this from many others as well, but it also is one of those things that appear to defy logic, because Iran seems to be built up like a fortress with its mountainous regions. It's blocked by international waterways, and of course, a very powerful, large population—powerful in terms of having high industrial capacity, producing cheap weaponry that can be decentralized and not easily reduced. Also, I'm wondering, how do you see the logic of ground troops here?

#Jiang Xueqin

Right, so the reason why you use ground troops is that it's not sustainable to use airframes in a war of attrition. They cost too much, they're too easy to shoot down, and eventually you will have wear and tear. And we're already seeing that, where there is now friendly fire, there are a lot of accidents, and a lot of American planes are being shot down. These are \$90 million planes, \$100 million planes. You can't afford to fight a war of attrition in the air for too long. So what you do is you send in ground troops because they're cheaper and more cost-effective. And what you do, you have two goals. The first goal is to secure the Iranian coastline. So what you're trying to do is you're trying to deny Iran's capacity to collect tolls and to exert control over the geographical routes.

And so you use ground troops in order to basically hunt down Iranian artillery, Iranian underground missile bases. And the second reason why you use ground troops is you want to set up forward operating bases within ethnic enclaves in Iran, primarily the southwest area—sorry, the southeast of Iran by the Pakistani border. These are the Balochs. And then the northwest of Iran, and this is where the Kurds are based. What you're trying to do is you're trying to stir up ethnic tensions in Iran and force the IRGC to confront these ethnic groups on the ground. And so they'll be exposed to air power. And so you're forced to use ground troops if you want to continue this war. It's not sustainable otherwise.

#Glenn

Well, it seems that one of the reasons why the Iranians can absorb a lot of pain is because they reasonably see this as an existential threat. It's a bit like the reason why the Russians and Ukrainians are willing to accept so many sacrifices, because they both consider this, again, for good reasons, to be an existential threat. But for the United States, you would think that they have a more limited appetite for casualties. So how do you see the U.S. essentially being in a position to push this, to continue this war? Because the ground troops would mean a lot of pain.

#Jiang Xueqin

Right, so what people don't appreciate is that the United States is in a lot of financial trouble. So right now, the United States has \$39 trillion in debt. And so they're forced to spend \$1 or \$2 trillion financing this debt, paying interest on this debt. Right. And there are no good options here. If you default, what happens is that you cause private banks that are financing the U.S. government right now, the Federal Reserve basically, to collapse, in which case all the savings that these Americans have put into the banks are wiped out. So default is not an option. So your only option is war.

And the idea of war is to force other parties to pay and absorb the U.S. debt, right? So when you go into Iran, what you're trying to do is you're trying to cause economic strangulation throughout the world. The Europeans are very dependent on Middle East oil. If the Europeans cannot pay for Middle East oil, they're now forced to pay more for American oil. So American LNG costs 15 times more

than Russian energy. And so what America wants to do is force the entire world to buy U.S. energy and resources from the Western Hemisphere. And the U.S. will finance this, meaning that the United States will lend the world the money to buy U.S. weapons and U.S. resources.

This is very similar to the early 20th century when, because Europe was in World War I and World War II, America was able to sell its resources all around the world and make a lot of money for itself. And so what America's trying to do is it's trying to force the world to absorb the \$39 trillion in debt. And you're right in that the Iranians are fighting very hard because it's their home and they don't want to lose their families. And the Americans are also forced to fight very hard as well because the alternative is economic collapse, civil war, and possibly the collapse of the American state.

#Glenn

Yeah, well, you argue that we're already in World War III, but it's fought differently than the first two world wars. However, one of the big risks here is that the current conflicts now between the great powers can continue along the existing trajectory. The delusion of escalation control, that's something that worries me a lot. That is, the Europeans think, for example, they can continue to attack Russian cities and the Russians won't retaliate. They can block Russian ships, they won't do anything. They might be able to cut off China's access to energy and they necessarily won't do anything. And, of course, the U.S. can have an economic crisis tomorrow and things can easily spiral out of control. It just seems to me that the path we're currently on seems very temporary. Do you see, I guess, a clear path forward in terms of the great powers beginning to escalate against each other? Because it doesn't seem sustainable in any way, what's happening now.

#Jiang Xueqin

Right, so I think the calculus is this. The calculus is that if you do nothing, you might have a situation like the 1848 revolutions, when all the monarchies in Europe in 1848 were at the precipice of being overthrown by popular rebellions. And if you do something, you might end up in World War I, where millions of people just died in the trenches and it seemed as though the world was about to end. So if you're the elite in Europe and America, you would much prefer the World War I option as opposed to the 1848 option. And that's a stark choice facing the global elite right now. You either do nothing and then your populations revolt against you because you're incompetent, you're greedy, you're corrupt, or you send them to die off in the trenches of Ukraine, to send them to die in the mountains of Iran in order to reduce the political tension at home. And I know this is very blunt and I know this is very stark, but at the end of the day, the elite have dug themselves a huge hole.

#Glenn

Yeah. Well, a key actor here, though, is Israel. We see, again, the ambitions being quite clear. But at the same time, they seem to have a lot of profound problems. They have very deep divisions in

society, something that seems to border close to a civil war. You have this Greater Israel initiative, which puts them at odds with all of their neighbors, almost. Their main protector is the United States, which is in relative decline. You have the emergence of new great powers in the region, which are less empathetic to Israel. And even the United States is losing, you see, again, quite a fascinating trend, which is that the standing of Israel, how Americans perceive it, it's in free fall. I haven't seen this in my lifetime, at least, the way the Americans are now turning a bit on Israel, at least the population. As you said, the elites or political establishment, they still, you know, continue as if nothing has happened. But what is Israel ending up here?

#Jiang Xueqin

So unfortunately, Israel has become a death cult. It's very eschatological, and it's only a minority of people, right? You have these religious extremists who've taken control over the Israeli government, and they believe that what's happening in the Middle East will lead to the coming of the Messiah. So as long as they stick together and as long as they push history forward—they want to accelerate the process—then God will save them. So on the calculus, it's very diabolical, it's very cynical. But what they believe is this: the world is headed towards collapse, the world is headed towards decline.

And so there's going to be chaos throughout the world. And if Israel is able to accelerate this chaos, push this chaos forward, then what's going to happen is that, first of all, Israel is going to be better positioned than everyone else to take advantage of this chaos because Israel has initiative. But also, it's going to force all Jews around the world to unite behind the idea of Israel, because the world will rightfully see Israel as a chaos agent. But that's good for Israel, because if the Jewish people are united, if the nation of Israel is united behind a common cause, then God will stand behind Israel and defeat the entire world. And unfortunately, that is very much the calculus of these religious fanatics in Israel today.

#Glenn

Yeah, actually, I wanted to ask—I forgot—I wanted to ask another question about Europe as well, because one of the things that looks very concerning at the moment is the possibility of a direct Russia-Europe war, which would be, I guess, a significant component of a world war, simply because the Europeans, I think, they bet everything on this war—that is, to use the Ukrainians to defeat Russia. But now they kind of... yeah, this incrementalism—they got pulled in deeper and deeper. And now the situation they're in is that now that Ukraine is faltering, they have to escalate, essentially. They have to get more involved, send more long-range missiles.

They have to intercept Russian ships, talking about putting a naval blockade on the Russians—all of these things to compensate for things going poorly on the battlefield. And this is happening at the same time that the Americans are signaling that, you know, this is for you to fight. So again, if you want to fight the Russians, you fight with Ukrainians and Europeans. If you want to fight the Iranians, use the Arabs. If you want to fight the Chinese, you know, use some of the frontline states

in East Asia. But so you have the Europeans escalating, the Americans seemingly walking away and not being prepared to defend the Europeans.

And while this is all happening, the Russians—the main pressure they're under is they have to restore their deterrence because they let the Europeans and, well, NATO overall just walk all over them and give in every time. So if I were to make a prediction, it looks as if the Russians are preparing to strike back, to retaliate a bit like the Iranians, to restore their deterrence. And the Americans very likely will then leave this to the Europeans. But the Europeans do not have that much fighting power, it seems. So where do you see this going?

#Jiang Xueqin

Right. So you look at the National Defense Strategy of the United States, which was published in January of this year. It lays out a vision for the world. And right now, the Americans are actually implementing this vision. The vision is this: America retreats into fortress North America—greater North America, right? And that's why Trump has been aggressive towards Canada, Greenland, Mexico, Colombia, Honduras, Nicaragua, Cuba, right? Because it's all part of greater North America. And then what's going to happen is that the American economy is going to focus more on manufacturing and resource extraction. So the Pentagon has reached out to Ford and General Motors in Detroit and said that they would like these companies to manufacture more munitions and drones.

And these companies are probably happy to do that because it's more profitable to make weapons than it is to make cars. So that's a vision for greater North America. And in order to create markets for American weapons, what you do is you create divide and rule throughout the world, right? So imagine a situation where Russia is fighting Europe in Europe, Japan is fighting China in East Asia, Iran is fighting the GCC and Israel in the Middle East. Well, now the entire world depends on American resources and American weapons in order to sustain these wars, and this would be of tremendous benefit to America. So America right now is trying to create conditions where the world is in complete chaos, and America can just sit back in North America and profit, right?

And that's why I think that when Trump goes to China in two days, it's going to be extremely conciliatory, where he makes a lot of generous offers to China and China reciprocates. And so it seems as though there's now peace between China and the United States. But then what happens is that Trump goes immediately to Japan and encourages Japan to militarize against the Chinese threat. So what's happening is that before the conflict was between the United States and Russia in Europe, and then the United States basically subcontracted this conflict to the Europeans. And now, before the conflict was between China and the United States in East Asia, what the Americans are going to do is subcontract this conflict to the Japanese and the South Koreans against China. So it's all part of this diabolical, cynical strategy of the Americans to maintain their empire.

#Glenn

But a lot of this is premised on the ability to keep the wars essentially on a slow burner, not to get too intense. And I think that's one of the—again, it goes back to this delusion I mentioned about escalation control—because the war with Russia, I guess the benefit is that the NATO countries, to a large extent, allow them to manage the pace of this, that is, this slow, grinding war. And I think often the assumption in Europe is, you know, if the Europeans would enter this war directly, it's, well, first they send a few soldiers to the rear, you know, somewhere along the western parts of Ukraine to do other tasks, which would free up Ukrainians to go die on the front. But if this is not enough, you know, they could always have some special forces somewhere close to the front and managing weapons more, and then, you know, they could have a little bit on the front line just to tip the balance, you know, just to make sure the front lines begin to freeze and do not move significantly. But the thing is, I can't imagine, the way the Russians have been fighting the Ukrainians, that they would treat the Europeans the same way. The idea that in Europe they would simply be able to restrict the war to Ukrainian and Russian territory just seems as if this would escalate in a huge way very, very quickly.

#Jiang Xueqin

I completely agree with you. I completely agree with you. This plan of the Americans is cynical, and it's also going to end up being counterproductive. It's going to destroy their allies, and it may turn the entire world against America. But the reality is that America is desperate to maintain its empire, and it's willing to burn down the entire world in order to maintain its empire. So that's the situation we are in. I also point out that if you look at the battle lines in Ukraine, I believe the European Special Forces are already in the battle. So last year, it seemed as though the Russians had a major breakthrough. It seemed as though the Ukrainian front lines were exhausted. They basically broke down.

And now there's a certain new energy to the Ukrainian front lines, and they're winning back territory. So I have to believe that European special forces are already on the ground in some capacity in Ukraine. And because of mission creep, we should expect an escalation. Look, also, the Ukrainians are striking at Russian oil refineries, and this is going to compel the Russians to hit the Ukrainians much harder. The Russians have been extremely aggressive, methodical in their attacks against Ukrainians. They've not targeted Ukrainian power plants. They've not targeted critical civilian infrastructure. And now they will, because they appreciate that this war will not be between Europe and Russia. It will be a fight to the bitter end.

#Glenn

So when the Europeans become the new Ukrainians, that is, to fight to the last European, do you see the United States sitting this one out? Or would they...

#Jiang Xueqin

The entire US strategy is for Europe to fight the Russians, to ask Europeans, as you say, and they'll sit this out because they have absolutely no interest. All they want to do is cause as much conflict in the world as possible and then continue to sell weapons and resources to Europe, and they will finance it, and thus force the world to absorb U.S. debt. It's very clear what's happening. Even the Europeans know what's happening. But unfortunately, the entire European leadership has been vandalized by the Americans, and the European leadership is very much afraid of their own population. These are bureaucrats who just want to maintain power. So it's going to basically take a public revolt for policy to change in Europe.

#Glenn

The last question on this topic, though, is given that the Russians and Iranians now—I think the Russians and Chinese—they kind of see that the U.S. push for peace in Ukraine seems a bit deceptive now. It wasn't a push for peace; it was outsourcing the war to the Europeans. And a key target in Iran seems to be the Chinese. How do you think, to what extent do you think they will come in now and make sure that the Iranians are able to essentially push back against the Americans—that is, to absorb the pain and strike back?

#Jiang Xueqin

Right. So unfortunately, the Chinese tend to have a very short-term, utilitarian approach to geopolitics. And so what we need to recognize is that the Chinese have strong economic relations with everyone in the Middle East, including Israel, including the GCC, including Iran. So they don't want to be put in a situation where they decide it will be Iran, and then they are forced into conflict with the GCC. The Chinese don't do things like that. They believe very much in balance and harmony. And so the Chinese have been applying a lot of pressure on the Iranians to reopen the Strait of Hormuz and to basically end this war as much as possible. Now, it can be unfair because it's the Americans and Israelis who are the aggressors.

But unfortunately, you can't reason with bullies. You can't reason with thugs. So the Chinese are stuck trying to reason with the Iranians. And the Chinese basically want this war to end as soon as possible and for global trade to resume as peacefully as possible. But unfortunately, the Chinese are not taking a long-term geopolitical approach to the situation in the Middle East. They don't really acknowledge the fact that the Americans are hell-bent on maintaining their empire. And in the long term, it's not really in the benefit of China to side with the Americans, but in the short term—and really, only the Chinese care about the short term—the Chinese are stuck working with the Americans.

#Glenn

What is happening within the United States then? I've heard you argue that it's quite a strong possibility that Trump may seize a third term, that the US might impose the draft again to get

enough manpower into the army. How do you see this future for the United States? Because again, I think a key issue for the Americans is they often have this grand strategy in place, but they often lose sight of the societal component. That is, for example, in the beginning of the 90s, all these new trade agreements which would give the Americans, would extend the intellectual property rights, would give the Americans competitiveness in tech, in finance, and essentially, yeah, the areas where there's high revenue and high dependence, while they in return outsourced their industries.

So a bit like a modern version of repatriating or repealing the Corn Laws, you know, just to divide the international division of labor. But again, the impact on the United States was quite disastrous. Again, the whole idea that we, that is, the Americans, will develop the iPhone and the Chinese can put it together—it didn't make much sense, because what happened was the manufacturing base of the U.S. has left. You have massive social problems, which is what has caused a lot of this chaos—political, economic, and social instability. And at the same time, you know, the Chinese essentially learned how to make that iPhone themselves. So now they don't have the lower parts of the global supply chains, they can produce anything, and also they're not dominating the top tiers anymore of these global value chains. But it seems that they've not yet again neglected that—all these wars.

I mean, if you're going to shut down energy competition around the world—the Russians, the Venezuelans, the Iranians, you know, you can go on—yes, it can create greater dependence on the US, but it's going to create shockwaves through American society, which will destabilize it to a great extent. Sorry, it's a very long way of asking: how do you see the possibility of a Trump third term and the draft, or other ways of managing, I guess, a population which is also, to some extent, in a pre-revolutionary era?

#Jiang Xueqin

Look, at the end of the day, the American empire is able to control Trump. And Trump is a chaos agent, but he is doing the bidding of the American empire, right? So everyone's attention is focused on Trump, and they think it's all Trump's stupidity that is leading to all this chaos around the world. But if you actually read the National Security Strategy, if you just think about game theory and how the Americans benefit from all that's going on, everything Trump is doing makes sense. The issue with Trump, why Trump is important, is that Trump is willing to do these things. Biden was supposed to do these things, but he didn't do them because he was afraid of looking like a complete idiot.

And he didn't want to be another Hitler, right? He didn't want to be the bad guy. And so it's actually very hard to find someone like Trump who's willing to be the bad guy, who's willing to be the scapegoat, and who's willing to act rashly, without thought. So back in 2003, during the war against Iraq, everyone knew it was about oil. Everyone knew it was about the American empire. And you had protests around the world against this act of aggression against Iraq. But now, in this blatant

act of aggression against Iran, you don't have protests around the world. Everyone's focused on Trump and thinking that if Trump would be gone in two years' time, then the world would return back to normal.

So Trump is extremely useful for the purposes of the American empire. That's why I think that he'll stick around, because the American empire needs certain things to happen, including national drafts. The reality is that for the past few years, America has been trying to onshore manufacturing back from China. And it doesn't work. And there's a really good reason why it doesn't work, because the American population has become complacent. It's become lazy and corrupt. Think about all these American young people who are trying to make their fortunes trading cryptocurrency or gambling online and spending all their time on OnlyFans.

I mean, the empire has made America an extremely corrupt and lazy place where young people aren't able to contribute effectively to the economy. The problem isn't the lack of manufacturing jobs. There are lots of manufacturing jobs in America. The problem is you don't have young people in America who want to work these blue-collar jobs. They don't want to work for like \$10 an hour. They'd much rather gamble and try to make a million dollars in a year. So you need a national draft not to fight wars, but to discipline your population, to train your population to be much more compliant, to be much more desperate, and to have real skills. That's the reason why you need a national draft.

#Glenn

Yeah, well, it's a big benefit of democracy, I guess. That is, you can reduce violent opposition if people think they can change things at the ballot box. That is, they always assume in the United States that, well, once the opposition comes into power, because they're always speaking of peace, then things will go back to normal. But you had this since Clinton, you know, with all this interventionism, and then Bush would come—George Bush—people forget this now, but during the debates, he was criticizing nation-building. We don't do nation-building, we're America. And then, of course, he had Afghanistan, Iraq, you know, he took it to the extreme. Then you have Obama, he was going to introduce change. And again, more of the same. There was no difference. And Trump, he was the peace president. Biden was going to let the grown-ups take over again, and he provoked a war with Russia. I mean, you can't really make this up. Whoever comes after Trump, there won't be any difference, I think.

#Jiang Xueqin

That's right. And don't forget this, but Clinton, in 1992, when he was running for the presidency, he was a Bernie Sanders Democrat. He was populist. He was anti-free trade. He was anti-NAFTA. And then when he came to power, he became a neoliberal. He was more conservative, more pro-business than even the Republicans. So it doesn't really matter who you elect. The empire is still going to be in charge.

#Glenn

Yes, a good point. But how does this all end then? Because the U.S. empire, it can't really go on if it loses in Iran. And I don't, as you said as well, there's no good pathway to a victory in Iran. Not that the American military isn't all-powerful and, you know, it's always powerful. And it's not as if Trump has too many restraints on himself. He can knock out nuclear reactors if he wants. There doesn't seem to be any limits. But again, the Iranians' ability to fight, it doesn't really require them to have an army that is as powerful as the Americans. They have the cheap missiles, cheap drones. They have the favorable geography.

#Jiang Xueqin

So what do we...

#Glenn

How do you see this thing playing out?

#Jiang Xueqin

I think for the next year, it will seem as though the Americans are winning. Trump's going to go to China, and eventually China and the United States will come to an agreement that's going to look very good for America, and the Chinese are going to agree to buy up more U.S. debt. And this war in Iran, even though in the long term America's going to lose this war, in the short term the Americans are going to be able to inflict tremendous damage on the Iranians, especially economically. So in the short term, it will look as though the American empire is winning.

But in the mid to long term, we know exactly what happens in these situations, which is the empire breaks out in civil war. Just look at any history. Empires in decline have many characteristics: corruption, decadence, low fertility rates, mass immigration. And then two very common symptoms of an empire in decline are, one, wars overseas, and two, civil wars, right? So if Trump seeks a third term, and I have very good reason to believe that he will seek a third term, he will get a third term, this is going to ignite a civil war in America between two major factions. You have the Wall Street financiers who have been in control of America since the Clinton years, basically.

And then you have the tech oligarchs, people like Larry Ellison, Sam Altman, Peter Thiel, who are trying to displace the financiers and control Washington, D.C. in order to create an AI surveillance state that would benefit them. And Trump is very much their agent, their champion in this cause. And so how a civil war would start is that these two different factions would finance different opposition groups, and these opposition groups would have militias on the ground, creating as much civil chaos as possible. And so if Trump were to get a third term, you can expect that there will be a lot of violence, political violence throughout America in his third term.

#Glenn

One of the reasons I was initially optimistic when Trump was running was, well, first of all, he was talking about ending wars. But again, what he says doesn't necessarily mean that much. But the overall issue, I thought, which was genuine, was the idea that he, well, genuinely, we believed that in order to save the American republic, they would have to start to wind down the American empire. That is, the American empire had exhausted itself. It's exhausted its resources, it's being balanced internationally. If you're going to double down on empire now, it would possibly kill the republic.

And I thought that genuinely this is... I thought this was good for the world, in order to scale back the empire, save the American Republic as an important pole of power in a multipolar world. I thought all of this made sense, but he seems to be going all in now on restoring the empire. But how do you see this imperial decline? Because it's not the first time in history we've had an imperial decline. You talked about mass immigration, you talked about economic inequality, social disruption, the political system beginning to fail. And it is concerning to see American institutions no longer working as they were supposed to. So what is it that you see in the American imperial decline?

#Jiang Xueqin

So the main characteristic of American imperial decline is hubris, right? Where Washington, D.C. has become a bubble. And it's impossible to reason with anyone in this bubble. They are, you know, it is very much an insular, incestuous community of people who think alike. So remember back in Trump's first term. And I think in Trump's first term, he was very much MAGA. He very much wanted to end these wars overseas. He was very naive, and he wanted to build a wall in Mexico to stop immigration. He actually wanted to fulfill his campaign promises, which is rare in American politics. And in his first term, what happened? What happened was the entire American media started to attack him.

His own cabinet leaked unflattering information about Trump. American generals refused to follow Trump's orders. Trump ordered a withdrawal from Syria. They ignored him. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mark Milley, called the Chinese and told them, "Ignore this guy, he's not in charge." That's treason. There was the Russiagate hoax, where they insisted that this guy was an agent of Putin. And they had this huge investigation. Former FBI Director Robert Mueller was forced to exonerate Trump. So in the first term, all of a sudden you see they were trying to destroy Trump. And in Trump's mind, that 2020 election was stolen from him.

And even today, he insists that it was stolen from him. January 6th seemed like a deep state conspiracy to impeach him, to make sure he could never run for president again. So that's what happens in Washington, D.C. If you try to defy the empire, they will find every way to destroy you. Once Trump left office, they raided his house at Mar-a-Lago because apparently he had some confidential files. Everything in Washington, D.C. is confidential. Everyone in Washington, D.C. has

confidential files at home. Why did they target him? They conducted lawfare against him. They tried to bankrupt him. They tried everything they could to destroy him. So that's what happens when you try to defy the consensus in Washington, D.C.

#Glenn

Well, again, I think it's important to draw a distinction between the U.S. Republic and the empire. Because if you think that the republic itself is falling apart, you would expect to see a massive lack of social cohesion. You would see cultural and moral collapse, growing economic inequality, etc. I don't know. And we see a lot of these things. Are there other variables you're looking at when you're assessing the health of the patient that is the American Republic during these efforts to restore the empire?

#Jiang Xueqin

Look, I think that the American Republic is one of the most resilient systems in the world. They have 50 states, and all 50 states are different. So go back to COVID, right? You go to Canada or Europe, where you have to take the vaccines because the bureaucracy can enforce its will on you. But in America, if you didn't like the bureaucracy, you moved to another state and you could avoid the vaccines. So that's a great thing about America, and that's what makes America so resilient. I understand the American empire is in decline and it's going to collapse eventually, but I would not bet against the American Republic. There are certain areas in America that continue to be very dynamic—for example, Texas and Florida.

#Glenn

I often make the comparison between the U.S. and Europe because in Europe they often think of themselves as being more stable, the governance is more responsible. But even they look at the U.S. as a big echo chamber. At least in the U.S. you do have different views, you have different pockets. In Europe now, it's really one big echo chamber. It's one position you can have on key foreign policy issues. Everything is framed in normative language where essentially, if you don't agree with your government, it's because you have bad intentions, you are, you know, treasonous. I mean, at least in the United States they do have conversations. In Europe it's dying off very quickly. But yeah, my last question was, how do you see, typically from watching civilizational decline and all, how do you see the U.S. empire going here and the wider political West? Do you expect the continuing gradual decline as we've seen over the past years, or just, you know, a quick collapse?

#Jiang Xueqin

Yes, I think there are three major symptoms of an empire in decline. They are bureaucratization—you have this huge imperial bureaucracy in Washington, D.C. that's no longer accountable to the people; financialization, where Wall Street is in control; and individualization, where everyone sees

themselves as an island. You lose social cohesion, you lose the capacity to stand together. But at the same time, I see in America a growing movement of people who want to restore the American Republic. And these people are what we call Christian nationalists. You know, and Tucker Carlson definitely falls into a camp that believes that America is a republic and it should be a Christian republic. And I think that that really is a solution to imperial decline, where if America were to embrace Christianity, then I think that would save the republic.

#Glenn

Yeah, no, all this wider idea that religion helps to keep, you know, a state or a civilization together, and also to keep its morality and vigor. These are ideas of Tocqueville, though. He argued that American liberalism, the focus on individualism, what made U.S. liberalism sustainable in terms of not just succumbing to complete hedonism, a little bit like the direction it's taken over the last few decades, was because the spirit of religion would always balance the spirit of liberty—that you would have this balance, that liberty wouldn't begin to degrade itself into this horrible hedonism. But he also warned that over time, the liberal ideals, the individual focus, would begin to seek to liberate themselves from any restraints, which includes religion. So it just seems very difficult for Christianity, essentially, to restore some common identity in America today, though, in order to, I guess, revive the idea of a collective consciousness, a common cause, something along these lines.

#Jiang Xueqin

Right. I completely agree with the sentiment. You know, America was founded on two pillars. The first pillar, of course, is Enlightenment secularism, and the second pillar was Puritanism, like Protestantism. And so I can agree with you that America has shifted too extremely into the Enlightenment. It's embraced secular, liberal democracy, and it needs to restore balance by returning to its Christian roots. But I still think that America has so many advantages. It's still a very prosperous place where people are hardworking, where you still have a lot of freedom, where people still take the Constitution very seriously. And once they start to fully embrace their Christian heritage, I think that a lot of the great advantages of America can be restored.

#Glenn

Well, no matter how this new world war pans out, at least the world will look very different when this begins to come to an end, which I don't see happening for many years to come. But nonetheless, thank you very much for taking the time.

#Jiang Xueqin

Thank you, Glenn.