

Karen Kwiatkowski: U.S. Military Breaks Down & Economy Crashes

Karen Kwiatkowski is a retired U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, worked at the Pentagon Analyst, held various roles at the National Security Agency. Follow the Substack of Lt Col. Karen Kwiatkowski: <https://substack.com/@karenkwiatkowski> Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glennndiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glennndiesen> YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@GDiesen1> Support the research: PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glennndiesen> 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>

#Glenn

Welcome back. Today we have the privilege of being joined by Karen Kwiatkowski, a retired U.S. Air Force lieutenant colonel who worked at the Pentagon, held various roles also at the National Security Agency, and is also an author focused on topics such as military intelligence. So I've been following your work, so it's a great honor to finally have you on the program.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

Well, thank you so much for having me. I'm happy to be here.

#Glenn

Well, there seems to be this growing sentiment in the United States that the U.S. foreign policy establishment has become overly interventionist. This is nothing new, but I want to get a bit better understanding about this relationship between military intelligence and foreign policy, because you would assume that the latter would be informed by the former. Because often one gets the impression that foreign policy is influenced almost more by ideology rather than on intelligence, at least that the two would be in competition, especially with wars such as Iraq, in which I get the impression that the U.S. intelligence community had some different assessments and opinions than what the administration went with. I was wondering if you could speak a bit about this.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

Yeah. Well, I mean, I spent 20 years in the military. I'm not an intelligence officer, but I worked with them, and I'm a consumer. When I was at the Pentagon, I was a consumer of intelligence products. And in seeing what intelligence was producing and recommending—their products, what their

assessments were—and using that in my work there, I got to also see how that was abused, misused, cherry-picked, you name it. And this is back in 2002, 2003, in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq. So it was an invasion based on lies, and the lies that were produced used intelligence work and product, but they didn't use it completely.

They picked through it as if this was a menu, and they took certain things. In fact, in the case of 2002 and 2003, we took things that we knew not to be true, things that had been subsequently or concurrently discounted. But because it was presented, you know, in top secret or secret from an intelligence at some point in time, the policymakers that worked inside the Pentagon, you know, the political appointees—Office of Special Plans in particular was what I watched—you know, they would choose and create a new story, a different story, and they would then sell that through leaks to major media, which is interesting because we see that as a way of understanding our government today. What is being leaked to Axios? What is being leaked to, you know, Wall Street Journal? What is being leaked to The Washington Post and New York Times?

What are they reporting? Who is Trump mad at for leaking, and who is he not mad at? Anyway, so the same process works. I'm sorry about all the background noise here. I have geese and ducks and a dog. So anyway, the intelligence is there to be used by the policymaker. Obviously, intelligence is there to be used by the military decision-maker and to guide their decisions. But what we see is that they use it as a cachet to put a stamp of authority or legitimacy on what they already want to do, which is then, like you said, driven by ideology. And it's also driven by friendship, alliances, the oligarchy, if you want to call it that, the people around the government, the hangers-on, the beneficiaries, interested parties who have funded this or that politician. And I'm not just talking about AIPAC. I'm talking about anybody.

You buy a politician, you expect to get something from it. So that's our system. So those folks like to see and use intelligence when it supports what they already want to do. So bottom line is, they don't listen to intelligence. They do not use intelligence to inform a wise decision. And, of course, we also have a Constitution that is supposedly—if you're going to go to war, that war should be discussed, debated, and approved, authorized by Congress prior to. Now, we have the War Powers Act, which says you can do anything you want for 60 days, but that's not actually what it says. It doesn't say you can do anything you want for 60 days, but Congress likes to not do its job.

It just likes to lay back, and that's because many in Congress want wars also, because for us, for the American government, war is a moneymaker. War is a way you return favors to your donors. In particular, war for Israel is a way that you satisfy not just AIPAC, but your friends in Israel, which Trump in particular, but Biden certainly. I mean, look at Biden's—he had a very pro-Zionist staff. You know, he had Anthony Blinken. You know, these guys, they come to office with their own agendas. And intelligence is just used to serve them for that agenda rather than inform them. So it's not like normal war.

Like you would think, you know, it's certainly not like defense. You know, in defense, you say, well, someone threatens us. We must study him. We must make sure our intelligence is very good so that when we defend ourselves or respond to this attack or potential attack, our limited resources—all the resources are limited—our limited resources are used most effectively. That's what a defender does. We say we're defending something, but really we're always on offensive war. We're always doing expeditionary war, and the purpose of it really, it's ideological on the one hand, but really it's to make money for the system that we have evolved.

#Glenn

Well, with the war against Iran, well, it seems that whoever bought the politicians, as you said, the Zionists, obviously have a key stake in the U.S. policies here. Would it be primarily then only the Zionist lobby who was pushing hard for this war, or was it a wider struggle for hegemony? Well, again, how do you see the people who cherry-pick this intelligence? Because it does remind me a little bit of academia. You get academics who already have a conclusion they want, and they go out and cherry-pick the evidence and the references to serve this. It sounds similar.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

Yeah, yeah, it really is. And actually, it's a human thing to establish what you want the truth to be, or what you want the story to be, and then go find evidence to support that. So that's very normal that people would do that. When governments do that, of course, obviously, you can see why they're doing it, why they manipulate things to get what they want. And, of course, ideologies are involved. Friendships are involved. Alliances are involved. Money is obviously involved. Favors. In fact, to me, government is nothing but a huge favor machine. It exists to reallocate common resources to—you'd think to the country for the benefit of the people—but really it doesn't work that way. It is allocated to... If I want to build housing, I don't just build housing.

I find a housing guy that donated to my campaign, and I make sure he gets what he needs. So it's this reallocation of resources. That's the game they're playing. And war has a lot of resources, so a lot of reallocation opportunities there. But I think for the Iran thing, you know, we've been on the path—the United States has been on this path to Iran—for decades, right? Because this plan, if you go back to the Project for a New American Century, if you go back to the documents that were written by one of the neocon think tanks, and certainly a lot of the people, some Israelis, you know, I forget the name of the article. It was—oh my gosh, I should have done that. But anyway, it's a program of Israeli expansion that requires the reduction of power, or the introduction of chaos, or the breaking down of various states that pose a regional risk to Israel.

And that list, it's very famously exposed by General Wesley Clark after he retired, in about 2006 or 2007. He was on a show and he said, "Yeah, yeah, there were six or seven countries, and these are them." And we've gone through six of those seven, okay, one by one: Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya,

Syria, you name it. And we didn't do Iran. So why didn't we do Iran? Well, 93 million people. Nobody can—you know, Iran's history. It's a formidable enemy. It's got great allies. It also—it's very different than these other little countries that we manipulated. And, of course, that manipulation is not just military. You know, we go in with, just as we see in Ukraine, we go in with economic pressure or punishment. We go in with political pressure or punishment. We manipulate elections. We do color revolutions.

You know, the CIA—I say we. I don't do that. CIA does that with my money. They take my little tax dollar contribution, add that to millions of others, and then they run operations in foreign countries to change their governments, to ensure either that they do our will or, in the case of the Middle East, they do Israel's will, or this supports Israel's greater plan. So Iran was always at the end of this. And I think a lot of people never thought that the United States would take on Iran. And the reason we didn't think that is because for 35 years, maybe longer, we've been gaming in the military: What does it take to go into Iran? What would it look like? How would you conduct an invasion? How would you leverage that country? How would you bring that country to its knees? How would you change that country's government?

We've played all these games on paper, on tabletop. And in no case do we prevail. In no case did we come up with an idea or a set of ideas that would work. So it's pretty, like, logical that we probably wouldn't do Iran. But then Trump did this. And, of course, he thinks it's great. Trump says, you know, all these other presidents should have dealt with Iran, but they didn't, and I did. And that's pretty nutty, considering what this war has done to our military and how it's exposed our long set of—a big set of weaknesses that our military has in our strategies. The whole imperial project, you know, has been exposed as really like a curtain's been pulled away.

You know, on The Wizard of Oz, we see there's nothing there. And that's frightening as an American, because we kind of relied on all the other countries respecting our great military force. And now we see, well, we can't even—first off, it's not that great. Second off, we have no idea how to apply the force effectively. You know, the loss of interceptors, mid-range and long-range missiles, if you look at how we've utilized them, you know, we send up two or three PAC-2, PAC-3 interceptors, five or six, 10 or 11 to intercept one incoming missile. Those things cost a lot of money, so very inappropriate application of our resources.

With our missiles and things that we've fired into Iran, which have been extensive, I mean, you can look at all the places we've bombed in Iran. But in recent times, in fact, since it kicked back up recently, you have people in CENTCOM saying, you know, well, we can't find new targets. We're hitting the same targets two or three times, and the Iranians are pointing this out. Some of those targets are not military. Of course, we know that. They never have been. They weren't from day one. I mean, when we hit the school, that was an AI-advised or an Israeli-advised target, or maybe the Americans came up with it. But that was seen as part of the psychological war.

You know, why don't we kill a bunch of kids of the senior officers? That'll be good. That'll break their heart. I mean, break their will. Of course, it broke their hearts, but not their will. Yeah. Anyway, we don't know how to fight. We don't know how to fight with what we have. Our system is not designed to prevail in an expeditionary war with any type of target country that can fight back. And if you look at all of our wars that we have fought in the Middle East and elsewhere, we haven't won any of them. Some people say that we did win the first Gulf War, the first war in Iraq. But the thing about that, they didn't have a Navy. They had an Army.

Didn't have a Navy. Didn't have an Air Force. And we planned that operation by the book. You know, Norman Schwarzkopf. I don't know if you remember Norman. You know, he got huge credit for being not just a genius, and I think he is a smart man—I think he was a smart person—but he got a lot of credit for the military discipline and planning that he put into that operation. Of course, it was unlimited funding, right? Another thing planned in advance, unlimited funding planned for every scenario against a weak enemy, against basically a fourth-rate army operation. And I'm not sure we won that. In my book, I don't call that a win. It's not a fair win.

That's like beating up on a woman, right? That's like if a guy goes, "I had a fight." "Well, she weighed 110 pounds." Okay, yeah. Maybe you shouldn't boast about that. So I don't think we've won anything. We don't know how to... We haven't trained. We haven't practiced fighting against somebody that can fight back. And then... you know, we didn't plan, like, what happens if something crazy happens? What happens if the unthinkable happens and they fight back and their government doesn't fail and they unify and we can't support our long logistics tail? What happens then? It was as if our military never thought about that. Now, that's not entirely the fault of intelligence. The intelligence is supposed to say, these are possibilities. These are the enemy's strengths. Our intelligence doesn't necessarily tell commanders, in my experience, what our weaknesses are.

That's operations, right? I mean, that's your training. There are other G-numbers: your J5, your J3, your J8 for your money. These are the guys that tell you how prepared your army is. The intelligence tells you what you're going to face when you go against this enemy. And they studied the enemy. So I think our intelligence was not bad. I think that all the warnings about going up against Iran were made. And they didn't want to hear them, and so they didn't hear them. And look, Tulsi Gabbard, you know, Trump publicly humiliated Tulsi last, in the 12-day war, you know, publicly humiliated Tulsi when someone asked him, "Well, didn't she—didn't Intel provide you this information that said this is what you might run up against, or that—or didn't we tell them there weren't—they didn't have nuclear weapons in two weeks?"

And he goes, "Well, I don't care what she said. I don't care what she said." And that sums it up. The presidents don't care what the intelligence says. And unfortunately, while not believing the intelligence, they tend to believe their operations, their planning, and their financial staff, who tell them, "Oh yeah, we can do this." You know, who is it? Yeah, Bradley Cooper, Admiral Brad Cooper of CENTCOM. You know, he's can-do. Sure, whatever you want, sir. We'll do it. Three bags full. We

will do whatever you want, without the slightest idea of how he's going to do it and how he's going to deal with Plan B, Plan C. They don't even have those plans. So now they're asking the—well, you saw this.

They're sending an email out, you know, "Hey, guys, any creative ideas on what we might do?" Can you imagine being in the military and getting word that a message came down soliciting ideas from the troops on how to make the war go better? I mean, that is absolutely—I'm floored by the fact that that actually happened. It's nuts, and it's so embarrassing from a command perspective. Why would you risk life and not have the slightest idea what you're doing? So I do blame our top commanders, obviously the politicians, but I think our intel is not bad. And, of course, Israel doesn't think our intel is bad either, because our intel in the region is all Mossad-provided. We really have no HUMINT of our own in that region.

#Glenn

Well, the intelligence did show that, yeah, Iran, well, in terms of its objectives, they weren't pursuing nuclear weapons. And again, all of these war games that were played out also predicted that this would be, well, very unlikely to be successful. But as you said, from the late '90s to at least early 2000s, it became evident that, well, it was going to be done anyways. As General Wesley Clark pointed out, that was the final big finale after knocking out the former six countries. Then Iran would be the head of the snake, essentially, to knock out in the region. So it kind of had been decided, irrespective of what the intelligence would say.

But I think often that assumption is also shared in Europe, though. That is, yes, well, maybe the war games aren't working out, but the assumption is always that America has unlimited capabilities. And if it only shows the intention to do something, then it can pull it off. And I think when they went into Iran and things started to go very wrong, that was kind of the slogan everyone was repeating on TV: that it's always going to be a short-term pain, obviously, as the war games had suggested, but it will be a long-term gain. So let's just pull through, absorb the cost, and we'll get out at the other end.

But no, I think this is the problem when a policy has already been set, irrespective of the intelligence. But also what you said, though, it seems for a political realist such as John Mearsheimer, the assumption is often that states will pursue hegemony because it's the most ideal security situation if one is all-dominant. And this is usually how states think, but... One also sees, though, that hegemony can be a curse because if you think you can do everything, then there's no balance anymore. And this often makes the war hawks elevated within that system. Also, when one is all-powerful, there's no need to make priorities. One can be everywhere at all times.

Also, when you're all-powerful, one can afford to make a lot of mistakes and absorb those costs effectively, well, seemingly indefinitely, at least until the final straw. But also, war becomes something far away because you don't take too much pain yourself. And I was just wondering, you know, after a while the costs begin to accrue, as it does for all-powerful states. Do you see the U.S.

military being in real danger now? Of course, we have the depletion of weapons. The image, of course, when everyone thinks the U.S. military is almighty, people are a bit cautious. We can't follow them up the escalation ladder. Now the Iranians kind of prove this: we can. So how do you see this impacting the U.S.? Because it's not a good thing to have the most powerful country in the world slip like this.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

Yeah, it's actually, yeah, it's a very unusual situation. Not maybe through history, but in our lifetimes, I think that's pretty unusual. You know, there was this belief that we had all this power, and our power was part of our energy of economic liberty and, you know, whatever, whatever. So this American empire was really solid. That was this belief. But, you know, we've known for a long time. As you know, \$40 trillion in debt, growing at \$2 trillion a year. That's what we have. We can't pay that back. \$40 trillion is a lot of money. We can't pay that back. There is an increasing reluctance around the world to invest in such an indebted country.

And this is without the wars. So this has been known for a while. Before we revealed the logistical and operational and leadership weaknesses of our military with this onslaught against Iran, we now said, well, not only broke... But our military production system, which we all know, the military-industrial complex, we know how it works. You know, high-value, very expensive items with long logistics tails make you the money. Lots of cheap ammunition, lots of cheap drones that you can reproduce rapidly? No, we didn't invest in that. We didn't do that because that's not profitable. So our military acquisition system is driven by profit.

And that's fine because, you know, that's the marketplace. It's driven by two things: profit and ownership of politicians. So you can be sure, and that's what we've seen, real competition in military technology, production, cost, reliability, any of these good things that you would want to have: low-cost, reliable, deadly equipment that survives the field and is easy to maintain, all these good things. None of that makes a lot of money for our big five defense corporations, so they don't pursue that. And our military budgets, for decades, for decades, are not written by Congress, and they're not written by the executive suite.

They are written by the very contractors who are going to get the money. So they say, you know, this is the next best thing. We're going to have this. We'll dominate. It'll be all good. But really, it's only good for getting big fat contracts, having a lot of waste and fat in your companies. You know, that's really unaccountable. You know, we complain that the Pentagon itself has literally, you know, billions and billions of dollars nobody can track. And we say, well, we can't pass an audit. But, you know, these companies that are parasitically fused with the Pentagon as part of the military-industrial complex.

If you were like a corporate raider and you said, "I'm going to look into these companies and I'm going to get all the fat out of them and I'm going to reorient them so that they are highly

competitive, sharp, wonderful, good buys, yada yada," you would have a field day, okay? Because these are very fat, obese companies which have developed not efficiencies, but inefficiencies in order to profit. So the whole system is broken, and that's what you're seeing. I mean, when you take half-a-million-dollar systems or \$100,000 missiles and you waste them against something that costs the enemy \$15,000 or \$20,000, and they have literally hundreds of thousands of those, and you only have a few numbers of your expensive interceptors or whatnot, that's a sign that you're in big trouble.

We knew that, really, if we didn't know it before we went into Iran, which we should have, and I think Intel probably did, we certainly found out the first week of the war. You know, the ratio of our loss to their loss, our investment versus their investment, our effectiveness versus their effectiveness. And we also have no excuse for saying that you can bomb somebody from the air into a regime change. How many decades have we been trying to do that? It has never worked. We know that it doesn't work. Even our politicians suspect that it doesn't work. So, anyway, our mistakes and our errors that have compounded in the way we do our military work have been open to the whole world to see now, just in the past five months, honestly.

I mean, of course, people that study the U.S., even in our war colleges, people that do analysis... Well, I'll give you an example. Doug McGregor—you know him, right? So when he was a major, when he was in the military, active duty, he's looking at stuff that's wrong in the Army. And he says, "You know what? We're organized in such a way that it's going to fail." And he wrote, remember, *The Broken Phalanx* or something. And he proposed radical Army reorganization with the way we fought on the ground. This is like, I think, back in the probably the '80s, early '80s. And then they patted him on the head.

They said, "Great, that's real nice. But it doesn't fit into our acquisition system. It doesn't promote the guys that we've already promoted, and they've got their guys coming up." So, honestly, for anybody who studied the old Soviet Union in the late '60s and '70s, when it started to really become sclerotic, poorly led, corrupt, inefficient, lied about everything that the government was doing, that the state was doing—of course, that was a big state, right? I mean, the state, the people, it was a quasi-communist system. You look back at that and you can see so much of what is going on in our country, except we don't have communism. So it isn't that ism that has done it for us.

It is human nature and the nature of power and growth and lack of accountability, lack of visibility. You know, nothing that our Pentagon does is—it's not just that you can't audit the finances. The average American has no idea how any of it works. And that's why I think it's really hilarious that, you know, Cooper said this or had this message sent out to the troops. I don't think the troops have any idea how we got to where we are today in Iran. And they are—I'm talking about the ones that are in theater, that are hiding in hotels or wondering if they're going to get, you know, bombed—have vacated these bases far, far to the east. You know, they're asking them, "Got any bright ideas?"

And they're like, "We're totally confused. I don't see why we're here, what the mission is, what the objective is." So again, um, and I have to blame the military to some extent because, you know, all of the guys in our military, and I think the Europeans as well, they study Clausewitz, and they study Sun Tzu, and they study, you know, who's the big Navy thinker that talks about the use of naval...? You know, we study past wars. We look at the mistakes and errors. We look at the philosophy of war. So all of this was easily predictable. But where did all that go? It was totally dominated by political military leaders and the politicians.

#Glenn

Yeah, exactly. Well, nowhere in Clausewitz or Sun Tzu was it argued that, you know, let the weapons manufacturers finance the think tanks that will create the information that goes into the media that informs policy recommendations, who hire, you know, out-of-office politicians and, you know... Let reality and foreign policy be put up in the marketplace to be bought up by the arms manufacturers. I mean, it's a predictable disaster, I guess.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

That's very well put. I'm sure there were some profiteers in all wars long before the age of the internet. But yeah, the way we do wars—and it's not really war because... And I think that's kind of how it works, to shield Americans from it. For most Americans, there's no war going on, right? And that's—we never—I think Vietnam came a little bit close to feeling like a war because we had the draft, and so many people would be recycled back, and they weren't volunteering to go multiple tours in Vietnam. Only a few were doing that. Most were doing their tour, and they were coming home, and they were sharing stories or dealing with their problems that were caused by service in that war in their communities.

And so I think that brought a sense of the war home. And 58,000 dead is a lot based on our population back in the '70s. But we don't have that now. We don't have that kind of realization of what really is going on. So Americans don't know what's going on. They look at their gas price, and it goes up and down. You know, they listen to what Trump says. It's back and forth, you know, taco every week, lying about stuff, saying nobody—we can't verify any of it. The average American can verify nothing. Only the people that are, you know, intently studying what's going on have a sense of the level of this disaster for the United States.

And I'm not even—I mean, it's a disaster for the countries, too. It's a disaster for Iran in many ways, although they're performing well. I mean, they've... But there's no sense of that in our country. I don't know how the Europeans look at it. Probably maybe the same, in the sense that they don't really feel it. Although the energy crisis must wake people up more in Europe than it does in America. Because four-dollar gas, while that's not good... We have so much inflation for so many years now since COVID that people just expect it to go up, and they don't even make the connection

to the war, even in the gas prices. It's like, you know, everything's going up kind of thing. So we're just oblivious to it.

So this is really a state-prosecuted, not a people-prosecuted war. It's a policy wonks' war situation to make money for their friends, which, in Trump's case, he really goes overboard in how he can make money. Trump always chickens out. His reversals are timed with the market and also timed with his friends' investments and maybe his own investments. We don't know exactly, but it's very blatant that, well, there's no morality at all. And, you know, I'm not saying war can ever be moral, but in the case of us attacking, and us on Israel's behalf attacking Iran, that's an illegal war. I mean, by any definition, that was an illegal attack. Nobody really cares, but the Iranians have justice on their side.

The Iranians have, you know, when they say "sacred defense," it's legit. And all of the people in Iran, even the unhappy, even those that might be unhappy with their government—and who isn't? Who is not unhappy with their government? I mean, my God, you know, I grant everybody the right to be unhappy with their government—but they have, you know, they've unified. They are the wronged party here. You know, that can't be changed. And what should Americans feel about this? Well, we have a politician, a guy we elected, who ran on no foreign wars, bring troops home, put America first, was elected, even got the popular vote the second time.

And, um, he just threw that all away. We have no control. The voters, people who supported him, have no control over what he does. Uh, this war is not our war. It's an illegal war. How responsible is the average American for this? I don't think we, the average American, feel responsible for it. I don't even think we feel the war. And I think the only weird thing that has happened is we've watched, for three years now, almost three years, we've watched Gaza get decimated. We were watching a real-time erasure of Palestinians in Gaza. And that actually, because we watch things that are entertaining and we are connected because of the internet, and the whole world does this too.

But Americans, younger Americans who are on social media more than maybe the older ones who are still remembering the great victory of World War II, we have become activated that some unjust things are happening. But how many of those who are "Free Palestine, Israel is just being very dark with what they're doing, illegal war criminals," all this, how many of them realize that we fund every penny of that? But this United States overwhelmingly funds what Israel is doing. There's no accountability line that Americans have a sense of yet. And I don't know if we'll get there. I don't know if we will develop that.

You know, the other danger, kind of what you're talking about, like when everything breaks. I think our finances are breaking at the same time our military backbone is breaking. And our system is showing that it's not just flawed, it is dysfunctional. And so we have to change it. I'm looking. I am trying to discover the voices in our country, particularly in our government, and I haven't found any, honestly, who are saying now is the time to rethink, to revamp this used car. This car we've been driving for 45 years is broken, and we're tired of fixing it, and it's not worth it to fix it. What does real American defense look like if we're an empire? We need to debate that. We are an empire. We

don't debate it. We assume that that means we're a republic, that it's just the American way to be a global hegemon, even if we can't afford it and even if we can't enforce it. So we are at a moment where major change has to happen.

If we go bankrupt and if the military is successful, that the Pentagon is successful, Congress is successful in refusing to address the flaws and simply pouring more trillions of dollars into the Pentagon for the same old stuff, it's going to break our country. That's what I think. I think we will be broken. We could possibly be broken just by loss of our debt, right? If we can't debt-spend, if no one will buy our Treasury bonds and we don't have the capacity to print more money—I mean, we don't really print it, but, you know, to make more money available, spending in debt—if that stops, if that machine stops, our country will fall apart, okay? If our military continues on the path that it is, we have no military, and the whole world sees this. So, you know, I don't think other countries are going to come beat us up. But, I mean, fundamentally, we don't have any defense, and we're broke.

You know, there are other hegemonies in the world. There are other interests in the world. Why wouldn't they see a broken United States as a huge opportunity? And again, I think Israel does see a broken United States as a huge opportunity, but that's a different thing. You know, Israel is our ally. They would never do anything to harm us. So that's one thing. But if you think about the world as great power politics—Russia, China, maybe others—we have exposed our weaknesses, both in leadership, in thinking, in strategy, in military capability, and in finances, all at the same time. That's a crisis. And who's dealing with it in our government as if it was a crisis? Nobody. Trump's up there just lying and saying, "Oh yeah, I talked to this guy, talked to that guy." He didn't talk to anybody. He's making everything up. Anyway, it's very frustrating.

#Glenn

I also ran a poll once. It was making a good argument. It was making the point that the decision isn't whether the U.S. pulls back on the empire or maintains it. It's reaching the end of the road. So the point was, either we do it in an organized way or it's going to fall over our heads. And I thought that was a good point.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

Why did he say that? That's good. That is a good point.

#Glenn

Yeah, no, I thought that was excellent because often, you know, the argument is, no, well, you know, we have this responsibility, blah, blah, blah. But at the end of the day, you know, at some point the music stops, and then one is in real difficulties if one hasn't scaled it back in an orderly way. I did want to ask, though, if you see any of the same problems in the war now, the proxy war with Russia, because... I remember in the 1990s, there was a lot of openness, a lot of leading

American thinkers, diplomats, military leaders, politicians, who argued quite strongly that it would be a huge disaster to expand NATO. Of course, people like George Kennan at the forefront, arguing that this was going to be a disaster.

And all the way up to 2008, you have, you know, who later became the CIA director, William Burns, arguing, well, you know, if we do try to pull the Ukrainians into our orbit, there will be civil war and the Russians will reluctantly intervene. So they kind of knew the risks, you know, what this meant. Almost, you know, unavoidable that this would be conflict, this would be war. But as William Perry said in the 1990s, you know, everyone in the Clinton administration just thought, well, Russia's weak. And so it's not as if they disagreed with this assessment.

It's just that they're weak, so we can expand NATO. But again, as Kennan said, one day the Russians will be strong again, and then they're going to push back. And this is when we will come up with these slogans that the Russians are just imperialists. But again, now that Russia is strong again, somehow we all have to walk around and pretend as if NATO expansion was not even part of the problem, that this all happened in a vacuum, unprovoked, as the obligatory slogan is. How do you see this? Because, you know, you can come with a sea of evidence that we knew this would likely happen. It's been predicted, and yet it doesn't seem to inform policy in any way.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

Yeah. Well, I think it's two things that come to mind. One is, of course, NATO, and I've worked with the NATO people when I was stationed in Europe. This was, you know, over 25 years ago, but, you know, it was seen as an appendage of U.S. foreign policy. And we also—and Trump is very interested in doing this as well—you know, we use it as a market for our weapons systems, especially the profitable ones, right? Once you've fielded a system, now the real profit comes in as you manufacture multiples of these high-ticket, big-ticket items. And we wanted, obviously, a market, created a market, and we continued to do that.

But meanwhile, Europe, before the economy—before the COVID era, before what's happened now, where they've shot themselves in the foot with energy and deindustrialized to the extent that it's really difficult to get it back—but before then, European companies, both consortiums, multi-country consortiums, NATO groups or whatever, were putting together competing and indigenous weapon systems. Again, kind of emulating what we do, except there's a lot more state involvement, I think—direct state involvement—with the development and funding of weapons. But still, it's still the model. There's people getting rich, right? And there's target markets. And of course, with Europe, they have their own allies left over from, you know, the 1900s and before, where they can also export these weapons.

So it's all about marketing weapons. And I think they got caught up in that a little bit because there's money to be made. And of course, where the money is, then you get your politicians you can pay. And this isn't even about republics, democracies. You know, the kings of all the eras of kings,

whether it's European kings or anywhere around the world, the bosses always need resources, and certain folks have resources. And so therefore they have the ear of the king. So this whole system has kind of evolved to kind of plump up NATO and, you know, the way NATO talks about how great they are, about how powerful they are. It's an illusion, but the same way we do, but they do it like we do it.

So it's this, this, this whole thing. So there's something about NATO which is very inward-looking, and it's very out of touch with reality. And they want to be big and strong. They want to use up weapons and buy more weapons and be feared and be expansionist and be an empire. They're not doing it—they don't do it as well as we do. But of course, I should say we did, because now our empire is fracturing. So there's an intention to get weapons so you can use them, expand NATO so you can have more resources, so you can get bigger weapons systems, a bigger army, field more troops. I mean, obviously, the demographics of Europe are not friendly to fielding large armies.

And the Eastern European countries that they have been bringing in—and Ukraine would have been ideal—would give you a big army, right? So I'm sure they thought, "Oh, this is a military strategic move. Let's bring in Ukraine and have a million-man army of just Ukrainians, and they'll do whatever we say. That'll be great." And now we can... So they saw advantages to their expansion. But, you know, it's like the bureaucracy has grown, but they did just what Washington has done. They believed their own propaganda and forgot that NATO exists not in a vacuum, not under an umbrella of the U.S., but it exists in a world where everything else is changing too.

So, um, here you had Russia first, the Soviet Union, very costly and tough transition from the Soviet Union days to the Russian Federation days, right? I mean, they spun off a huge number of countries. The Russian Federation, you know, stands up. Twenty, thirty years have been working on developing their economy, their technology, and doing it while increasingly being painted as an enemy, as an expansionist enemy. And again, the way Europe treated Russia, the way we treated Russia, is very much like we treated Iran. So maybe there's something to be learned there. Like, if you're going to put countries under pressure, you're going to put coal, you're going to put carbon under pressure, you might end up with a diamond, right? And you didn't mean to.

And now you've got something you can't handle. And I think this is what our approach has done. But why they... I mean, I can see why Europe wants Ukraine. It's a very colonial way that they want Ukraine: the resources, people, cheap labor, land to run exercises, to do massive... We used to do our military exercises in Czechoslovakia. Before that, we did them in Germany. But Germans were like, "What are you doing? We're running around all over Germany, making a mess, making a racket." People don't like it. So we had to find new places. So we went to North Africa for a lot of our ranges and things. And then... then the Eastern European countries that spun off, we used them because they were weak. The powerful do what they will, and the weak suffer what they must.

That's kind of the policy. Well, it's the reality. And then those countries developed, became part of the EU. Now they're equal European members, and they don't want it either. So where are we going

to run all our actions? Where are we going to put all our biolabs? You know, where are we going to do the things that megalomaniacs in Washington and the defense industrial manufacturing sector demand to continue to grow? Where are we going to do it? Well, we need a place like Ukraine. So, you know, there's that. It's not moral. You know, there's no—there's no—see, that's the thing. You know, who was it? St. Augustine: the state is just a band of thieves writ large. I mean, there's not morality that guides this. It is power. It is profit.

It is, what can we get away with? And we accuse our enemies of that. We accuse Russia of that. We accused the Soviet Union of that back in the day. But really, it's all back on us. We do the same exact thing. And we've done it very stupidly. I mean, I actually think that we are in a—we are, our country, the United States—I can't say for Europe, I don't know. Europe's got, I mean, they have big challenges. But I think our country is very much like, you know, 1970s Soviet Union. You know, we've got—and seriously, look at Biden. We had a president who was senile. I mean, showing all signs of, you know, age-related problems. Nothing changed. We were able to run the government.

We don't need that guy. And I remember back at the tail end of the Soviet Union, they went through a number of old leaders. And people just, you know, they were like, well, you know, this guy's an alcoholic. This guy is not all there. You know, they're not very effective. They don't really stand for the country in any way, really. But the system was running on, like, autopilot. And I think ours is running on autopilot. But when we crash, it'll be much more damaging to the rest of the world than when the Soviet Union fell apart because their economy wasn't a massive portion of the world economy, and trading was not the way it is now.

We're not as interconnected as we were then. We were not as interconnected as we are today. So when the United States falls, it's everybody's problem. And I think that's what's happening. And I don't see people—well, you're talking about it. People are talking about it. People are thinking about it. But where are the people in power that are recognizing this? Because, like you were saying, Trump said—which I'm going to have to find that quote, because that's very wise—it would be nice to have a controlled landing from our empire as opposed to... No, not Trump, Rand Paul.

#Glenn

Oh, who?

#Karen Kwiatkowski

Rand Paul. Oh, of course it was Rand Paul. Yeah.

#Glenn

Sorry. No, no, no.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

I'm sorry. I said Trump said that. I'm like, I'm shocked if he actually said that, because that would be out of character for Trump. Okay. Sorry. No, Rand Paul. Yes, exactly. You know, we... the plane is crashing, okay? We... it is unsustainable. The whole world can see it. It would be one thing if the whole world didn't see it and we could feel a little, well, maybe we can make some changes and we can adapt. But now the whole world sees it, so time is of the essence, honestly. I think Americans are going to be shocked when it happens. I don't think most of them have a clue. They understand parts of the system are broken, but they don't understand the depth of the problem. Nobody understands what \$40 trillion in debt does. Nobody understands that.

Nobody understands that our country has made promises of entitlements and other things to future—not even future populations. The people that are already on the planet right now in the United States have spoken expectations, unspoken promises, whatever, of up to \$250, maybe more, trillion in debt—medical and Social Security, all kinds of things for the country, whatever. We don't have that money. We can't even pay our actual people. We owe the \$40 trillion, too. We are—I think this year we ended up with the interest on our borrowing, the interest on our debt, exceeding that of the Pentagon budget. And the Pentagon budget is the bulk of our budget that Congress actually deals with on a routine basis. So it's crashing. And, you know, I don't know how to communicate that. I don't know how to... Honestly, not sure how we would land this plane at this point. I'm not sure it can be landed. I don't know. It's very...

#Glenn

Well, that was the main concern, though, for Elon Musk. That's also why he supported Trump's "no more wars," because his main concern, apparently, is that the U.S. is heading towards bankruptcy. And again, it's just almost like laws of physics. There's no way of stopping this, but... Just a quick comment on what you said before about the U.S. selling weapons to countries in Eastern Europe, because in the 1990s, the New York Times had a long range of articles on this topic. That is, on one hand, you had people who wanted to preserve the relationship with Russia and cement a proper post-Cold War peace, possibly have an inclusive European security architecture that also accommodated Russia. On the other hand, all these articles by the New York Times pointed out that there was going to be a real bonanza in Eastern Europe.

All these countries who could buy American weapons now. And essentially they went for the money. And it's interesting. And also about the attractiveness of Ukraine, there's a fascinating article by George Soros in 1993 where he actually writes that, for the Europeans and Americans, they have reservations about when troops come home in body bags. They don't care for this. So ideally, NATO would have a partnership with the Eastern Europeans, so NATO can come up with the military technology and, yeah, essentially, the Eastern Europeans come up with the meat. This is more or less the equation. Yeah. When I read this, I always think about where we are now with Ukraine, because in NATO we don't appear to be counting casualties when they're not our own boys.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

And it's really, I mean, the level of destruction of the demographics and the society and culture in Iran—I mean, in Ukraine—it's just, it's... It's not well reported, you know, for years. I mean, this has been going on now for four years, on five—under five years—with this war. But back in the United States, I mean, I will say this: we don't see Ukrainian flags on all the little Facebook, you know, pictures for everybody. You know, they're not identifying with Ukraine anymore. We're seeing it has fallen out of favor, probably because Trump doesn't like losers, in that sense of, well, it looks like they're losing. But couldn't that have been predicted, that they would have? I mean, who goes up against—we won't even go up directly against the Russian military.

Why would we think Ukraine could do it even with our help? And then, you know, it was very revealing that this was about money and arms because early on in this war, particularly after Boris Johnson blew up—well, the United States and Boris Johnson blew up—the peace potential agreement in Istanbul, when it was like, back to war, back to war, we dumped, Europe dumped, and the United States dumped all of the old stuff. It was like we raided our closets. What do we got? We don't wear this anymore. Throw that to them. And it was almost like, we're getting ready for that big bonanza, not so much with Eastern Europe acquisitions, but our own country saying, hey, well, we don't have anything now. We got rid of our old stuff.

Now it's time to buy all new stuff, almost as if this was a revolution in military affairs when it really wasn't. It was a money grab, a territory grab, a big gamble. But, you know, Americans now, I think, understand it's not going well. But who wouldn't have predicted that? Because... and also, how could... See, I don't understand. I don't know exactly. I'm not an expert on Ukraine at all. But I don't understand how Zelensky and the people around him... And I know there are Nazis, there are extreme nationalists, there are people that are ideologically so... They hate Russia so bad. This is everything to them. But I don't know how anybody could have convinced Zelensky or even the army guys that we'll give you arms and you fight Russia and you'll win.

How could you sell that? I don't know how anybody could have that sold to them if they were in charge of a country. Okay, we're going to fight a war. It's going to be on your territory. You're going to fight basically a pretty, you know, serious army, the Russian army. And they can, you know, it's Russia, so it's evil Russia. And they can draft people. They can bring people in. They don't have a free market system, which they do, but I mean, I'm just saying, you know, they can just mandate. The state can say, "We're going to convert our whole economy to weapon construction," and that's what they have the capability of. Why would you believe? Why would any Ukrainian say this is a great idea? Yeah, I don't know. Let's have a war between NATO and the U.S. and Russia. Let's fight it in Ukraine and let the Ukrainians fight for them. And yeah, they'll help us.

We'll send contractors. We'll give them some surveillance data. We'll monitor how they're doing, send them all our old stuff, and then eventually we'll send them a few items that are kind of good,

like maybe old F-16s that really don't constitute a full capability of any sort. But we'll throw them some bones. Who would buy that? What Ukrainian would buy that? If I was a Ukrainian, I'd be really upset with my government. In retrospect, I mean, they should have been upset from day one. Maybe they were. But in retrospect, you know, that country has been ruined.

I mean, absolutely ruined. And I don't think there's going to be a Ukraine with those borders. I think Russia is going to end up—they're going to keep Odessa. If they don't, they may not even stop at Kiev. They say, "Well, it's a Russian city, Kiev. Let's have it." Kiev—I'm sorry, Kyiv. It'll go back to Kiev soon. This is not good for Ukrainians, but this is the deal they made. This is the deal Zelensky made. Of course, he does have several castles abroad, so maybe he's being well compensated. I don't know.

#Glenn

Yeah, but he clearly took that deal, though, because when the Russians went in February of 2022, Zelensky gave a speech on the same day or the day after, and he confirmed that, you know, we have already been contacted by Moscow. They want to start negotiations about a neutral Ukraine. So he knew what this was about. And then in the following month, in March of 2022, he does an interview with The Economist, and he says very openly that, well, there are those countries in the West who would prefer a long war with Russia so they can weaken Russia, even if this means the demise of Ukraine. And then in April, he walks away from the Istanbul talks under pressure from the West and chooses war. I mean, you can't make this up. This is extraordinary.

But again, as you suggested, in the West, the so-called pro-Ukrainians, as they identify themselves, they don't even want to discuss Ukrainian casualties because it undermines support for the war. So the pro-Ukrainian thing is to look the other way when the casualties mount, dismiss it as Russian propaganda, and, you know, don't worry so much about those people being snatched off the streets and, you know, sent to their deaths. I mean, it's a very—yeah, absurd way of looking at what pro-Ukraine should mean. But again, I think someone's going to be held accountable after this war is done, I think, and when they realize what actually has happened there and all the lies that were told. But until then, of course, yeah, they control the narrative. So what can you do?

#Karen Kwiatkowski

Yeah. Well, I think little bits of that narrative are—there's holes in it. I mean, people are discovering, you know, I think that the snatching of, you know, the groups that are government people taking the people off the street, sending them to the front line—those images are catching. I mean, they did, you know, when they start to come out, people would see that, where people in America, people around the world who weren't paying close attention to the Ukraine war or the history of it or anything like that would see that and say, well, something's wrong there because those folks don't want to fight.

Wonder why they don't want to fight. Well, because they're not really—it's not a fair fight, honestly. You know, we're making them go and die so that we can, you know, harass Russia or make a point, or—it's just, I think both of these wars, Iran and Ukraine both, are revealing the incredible moral weakness of the United States and U.S. allies. And again, you can throw Gaza in there, but obviously Israel's moral weakness—that's an understatement. You can't even—there's no comprehension of Israel's foreign policy as anything remotely moral. There's nothing moral about it. But people are seeing that.

And so when states themselves, when governments themselves, become questioned by their people and not trusted—and Trump has done a lot to cause people not to trust our government. You know, he's lost, I would say, half of MAGA, half of his voter group. Certainly the Democrats, the independents, the libertarians, and the paleoconservatives who voted for Trump, hoping, you know, feeling that he would be the better choice, he's promising peace or whatever—they are done. They're done. Some of these folks are going to vote Democrat. I know Republicans that tell me they're going to vote Democrat. So, not because they want Democrats, but because they're so angry at being betrayed once again, you know, by this, by the lies and the pro-war whatever.

So, but people that are disconnected from their government—this is also, I mean, this is how the Soviet Union kind of collapsed. Sure, their money was no good, right? The ruble was a joke. So is the dollar, you know. The government and the people connected to the government have all the privileges, and the rest of the people don't really. You either get with them or work with them, or else you're going to be impoverished and have nothing. But the cynicism level in Russia in the '70s, preceding the actual fall of the Soviet Union, was huge, right? And I think we're seeing that same level of cynicism in the United States.

Not that we have solutions for our military problems, but what's this? Just a kind of persistent cynicism about government and about the state, and about, like, if it says anything, we automatically assume it's lying to us. This is not healthy, right? This ends governments. This topples empires. This loss of faith in both the money and loss of faith in the power, loss of faith in the moral goodness of your government—that breaks them. And so, you know, the plane is crashing. The plane is off the flight plan, okay? It has departed from the flight plan. The air traffic controllers are saying, "Hey, hello, hello, get back on your flight plan," and nobody's listening to them. And so a crash is coming.

It's not going to be pretty. I don't think Americans—we are not like... See, the Soviets, and other countries, I'm sure, too. But the Soviets had suffered already. They knew what suffering looked like. They knew what deprivation looked like. That's what the 1970s, all the years of the Soviet system, had done, had provided them, made them tough and hard. Just like all these sanctions made the Iranians independent. They were able to become kind of autonomous in many parts of their technology and economy. Okay, nothing like that's happened to Americans. Okay? We are not ready for this crash. Americans, we are three days—well, in three days, no trucks moving.

And we saw this. We've seen this before. We saw it a little bit with COVID. We've seen it sometimes when you have a major hurricane or something like that. But three days of no trucks to the cities is empty shelves everywhere, okay? And Americans can't deal with that. I mean, I would suggest half—half the people in our country have no idea how to cook food. They don't know how to cook food, you see what I'm saying? Much less grow it, much less access it. They don't have friends. They don't have a network beyond a bunch of people that live just like they do. So that kind of—they're not prepared. And I'm not saying you have to be like a, what is it, a prepper.

You don't have to be a prepper to be prepared. But I don't think we're prepared logistically. Most people are not. Most Americans—not the wealthy ones, not the ones that hang out with Trump—but most Americans are paycheck to paycheck now. And many of them are two paychecks to a household. So they're paycheck to paycheck, but that's two. So if one of those paychecks gets their hours reduced or loses their job or has an accident, then they're not making it. They're not making it. So that's what we have to work with. So we don't have—like, they don't have, like, a month's supply of food and fresh water stored. They don't have that. So we're not ready for anything.

We're not ready for a weather disaster. We're not ready for a political disaster. We're not ready for a military disaster. And you say, well, Americans have guns. Yes, they do. We have guns. We have lots of ammunition. And that's great. But not in the cities. Not in the cities they don't. And that's where the crisis will be most felt. So when that plane crashes, you'll see what happens. And we've seen it before in a lot of places, in some of the African countries. You get revolution, you get civil war, you get all kinds of things, you get conflict, you get danger. And Americans aren't really used to that. We're not used to that.

You know, we can talk about, oh, we have a murder rate. Our murder rate's been dropping. We're not even in danger of being killed by our neighbors. You know, we are not—we're not used to it, so we're not prepared for it. We're not mentally prepared for it. Where we are, I think, is we're cynical that government will give us an answer. And that's a positive step. We're learning that government's not the answer. This is what I say as a libertarian. As a libertarian, I think it's good that we are understanding that our government is in it for itself. The state is in it for itself and its friends. And if you're not that friend, which most of us aren't, it could care less.

And we're starting to get that. People are getting it. But we're not prepared for a bankruptcy. We're not even prepared for our Moody's rating being downgraded, our credit rating as a nation being reduced, which then makes it impossible to borrow money. And all these people that are living paycheck to paycheck, most of them borrow money to cover the gaps. So we are very close to bad things in our country, I think, economically and politically. And we don't have our own plan for doing it. We're just like, well, I hope everything works out. At least the war is over there and it's not here. To me, it's scary. Maybe I'm overly pessimistic because I've been watching this for so long and not seeing it really improve itself, but I'm a little bit worried.

#Glenn

No, but I think the shock is going to be big because this looks like the U.S. has always gone from strength to strength, from the initial colonies on the East Coast and expanding westwards, and then after reaching, you know, the western borders or periphery, and then, of course, at the end of the 19th century pivoting into the Pacific, then becoming one of the two great superpowers, then becoming the sole global hegemon for the first time in the world, and then the assumption that the best days are always ahead, and then go for a crash. I think it's going to be a massive shock, and yeah, one should be concerned about that. Anyways, well, did I ask where people can find you and your work?

#Karen Kwiatkowski

Oh, yeah. Well, I do have a Substack, I guess, Karen Kwiatkowski Substack dot com. You can— and I try to put the interviews. I don't put all interviews there because sometimes I forget to go back and get the thing. But I will definitely put yours there. And I write about once a week. I write something. And, like, the thing, a lot of it is more serious. Like, you know, I am concerned about some things, so I write in a, I think, a more critical manner. I'm not an academic. I mean, technically I could be, I guess, but I don't write in an academic way. But usually I'm writing about serious matters. But sometimes I try to write humorous articles, and so I did that. I did that this week. Trump's off-ramp. I said, well, I think there's an off-ramp for Trump in Iran, and here's how I would present the off-ramp to him. It was basically my conversation with Trump.

Well, one-way conversation. I was looking at some of the comments, and one guy got really, really mad and said, "Well, none of this is going to work. I can't believe..." And I'm like, you know, some of it—like 80% of it—was sarcasm, but I have not done sarcasm as frequently as I used to, so people didn't expect it. But, yeah, I've been writing for Lou Rockwell for, I don't know, since 2003. And so there's a lot of stuff I've said out there. I don't know how important any of it is, but I do know that I think—and all of us do this, I mean, you do this—everybody who's talking on any podcast of any topic, whether it's political or not, we're just trying to help people think about things in an easier way than it would be if they had to do all the work themselves and all the research.

So we say, well, I've looked at some things, and here's what I think about it. And we share that, and I think it's positive. The problem is, most of our critiques are of the state, and the state has power, including over our livelihoods, our communications, our finances. And so, you know, it's interesting. The time we live in is a little bit interesting. We're kind of like court jesters in a way. You know, we are able to say things that need to be said, and sometimes it's funny, sometimes it's not, but we're protected by the king. But I'm not sure we're protected by the king. We're kind of like court jesters who are not protected by the king. If we go too far, I mean, so many people are being silenced for their various criticisms of the state. So...

#Glenn

Well, that's another thing. When things break down, you see the personal freedoms go away. So, yeah, one has to see how long one is allowed to speak freely because, well, so far the smears have begun, the censorship, the cancellations. In Europe, they also sanction people. You can have—I mean, formally—you can have the sanctioning. You can't leave the country. They seize your funds. It's for saying the wrong thing.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

This is really... And I think that's actually maybe helping people understand the nature of the state. You know, it's not like it's a democracy or republic. It's not about that. It's about power and authoritarianism, which exists in all governments. That's part of the definition of government: it has to have some authority. And that authority is an attractive tool to be leveraged. And that's what I think is happening in Europe, certainly. You know, authoritarian—some would say totalitarian—tendencies are emerging. They're leaking out. They're being leveraged and used. But I did see the court case of David Miller, I guess, in England. Anti-Zionism is protected speech. It's a protected belief system. Did you see that?

#Glenn

No, I didn't see it. I met him before, but I hadn't seen it.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

Well, he had a court case, I guess. I don't know how it worked out. It's out there in the news this week. But they said that anti-Zionism is a philosophy that is protected in some way. It's protected speech about—if it's his belief and he speaks about it, then he's protected. And that came out of a British court. And they're terrible. They're awful. So I don't know how that worked, but it looks like kind of a success. So, I don't know.

#Glenn

Interesting sleight of hand there, because I saw Marco Rubio recently made a comment about why people who criticize Israel should not be allowed entry into the U.S. And he goes on, you know, saying, you know, "We will stand with our Jewish community," you know, like, you know, and I'm thinking, yeah, of course you should. Why wouldn't you, you know, look after all ethnic groups in your country? Like, you shouldn't accept, tolerate, you know, anti-Semitism. And then he does this little switch: therefore, don't criticize Israel, which is the country. So now, you know, it's quite fascinating how they make that leap every time. Yeah.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

Well, and again, the money does that, I think. It has to be the money. And then blackmail. I mean, obviously blackmail. There's nothing new about blackmailing people, or anybody in power, right? Blackmail is an old, old mechanism of control throughout society. But I think there's a lot of that that goes on too. It's hard to say where we're going to end up. You know, people are taking down surveillance cameras throughout America, you know, the Flock cameras. There's this huge movement. It's kind of like a... I don't know if it'll be long-lived or short-lived, but it's hilarious, really, because all over social media, it's like a thing. It's like a pet rock or something. You know, it's like this new thing.

So people are—and they're being put in—they're being, you know, brought to court and charged for defacing or damaging Flock cameras. And all the people on social media, it's just hilarious to see them say, "Oh no, I can vouch for this guy. You're saying he tore up a Flock camera at 12 noon? No, no, I had lunch with that guy. I know where he was. It's not him." So it's none of this—you know, they're volunteering and having fun with it. It's, like, really kind of interesting to see. So maybe our revolution in the United States, and for you in various European countries, maybe your revolution will be also fun and entertaining, and it will have some lighthearted moments. So I'm hoping, I'm hoping. That's, you know, I'm an optimist.

#Glenn

I was going to say, on that very optimistic note, that we can end it there. So, well, I won't take so much of your time. So thank you so much for coming on the program.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

Well, thank you so much for having me.

#Karen Kwiatkowski

It's been tons of fun talking to you.