



## **Prof. John Mearsheimer On Israel, Iran, Lebanon, and Widening War in the Middle East**

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**Glenn Greenwald (GG):** Good evening, it's Thursday, October 3rd. Welcome to a new episode of System Update, our live nightly show that airs every Monday through Friday at 7 p.m. Eastern exclusively here on Rumble, the free speech alternative to YouTube. Tonight, ever since Israel began bombing Gaza after the October 7th attack, one of the most pressing questions has been whether this would lead to a broader regional war expanding not only beyond Gaza to Lebanon, but to the West Bank, to Syria, to Yemen, and most of all, most dangerously, to Iran. That is no longer a question. By every metric, regional war has indeed broken out in the Middle East. There still are questions about the extent to which this escalation will deepen, but that regional war has now begun is beyond question. Nor is it a question whether the United States will be drawn into this conflict. It already has been. The Biden administration, whatever that means these days, has been steadily increasing the amount of US military assets and service members deployed to that region with the explicit goal of protecting Israel from the start of this war and from the start of that other war that the US has been arming, funding and fuelling the one again in Ukraine against Russia. Remember that one? There has been no more prescient and informed analyst than a good friend of our show, University of Chicago Professor John Mearsheimer. Among other works, he was the co-author, along with Harvard professor Stephen Walt of the 2006 book *The Israel Lobby*, which documented the extensive pro-Israel factions in the United States that ensure that American policy continues to align with and promote the interests of Israel. We'll spend the show discussing every aspect of this multi-front war in the Middle East, the US role in it now and what it might be in the future, the latest developments in Ukraine, of which there are many, how the 2024 election is impacted by all of this and how the 2024 election might impact these policies in the future and much more. Professor Mearsheimer is always one of the most popular guests that we invite on for good and self-evident reasons, and we are very happy to have him back with us tonight to analyse all of these complex and highly consequential issues.

Before we get to that, a few programming notes: first of all, we are encouraging our users to download the Rumble app because it works both on your smart TV and your telephone. I was talking about this earlier today, talking to my kids about it, and they couldn't believe that there's actually an app that works not just on your smart TV or your telephone but that works on both. No one can believe that that's even possible. But the Rumble app can do that. Once you download it, it means that you can follow the programs you most like to watch here on the platform. And then if you activate notifications, which we hope you will, it means the minute any of those shows you like and follow begin broadcasting live on Rumble, you'll be immediately notified with a link by text or email, however you want, and you can click on the link and begin watching the show as soon as it starts going live. That really helps the live viewing numbers of every program and therefore the cause of free speech that Rumble is fighting for every day. As another reminder, System Update is also available in podcast form. You can listen to every program 12 hours after they first appear in our broadcast live here on Rumble on Spotify, Apple and all other major podcasting platforms. If you rate review and follow our program there, it really helps spread visibility of the show. Finally, every Tuesday and Thursday night when we're done with our live show here on Rumble, we move to Locals, which is part of the Rumble platform where we have our live interactive aftershow where we take your questions, respond to your critiques, hear suggestions for future guests and shows. Tonight being Thursday, we will do that immediately after the show concludes. That show is available only to members of our Locals community. So if you want to join, which gives you access not just to those twice a week after shows, but multiple interactive features, we put a lot of exclusive original content only on the Locals platform, including, for example, the interviews that Michael Tracy did in the spin-room after the vice presidential debate that we didn't get to show last night. Those will appear exclusively on locals. It is the place where we publish written professionalised transcripts of every program we broadcast here. We publish the transcripts there. And most of all, it is the community on which we really do rely to support the independent journalism that we're doing here every night. Simply click the join button right below the video player on the Rumble page and it will take you directly to that community. For those of you who've been watching, we are very appreciative. And for now, welcome to a new episode of System Update starting right now.

For the last 4 or 5 days, we heard that Iran is some kind of a uniquely dangerous terrorist state because they launch roughly 150 ballistic missiles aimed almost entirely at military targets inside Israel. Many of them landed injured or damaged military installations, didn't attack a single civilian infrastructure, and not a single Israeli was killed. Meanwhile, just in the last ten days, the Israelis have killed dozens and hundreds and above a thousand people in Gaza, in Beirut and now in the West Bank as well, which they airborne with a fighter jet provided by the United States, of course, in the last 12 hours. Here's just a few of what Israel, which we're told is the victim here, the besieged group has been doing: from The New York Times, earlier today. *Massive Explosions Rock Area South of Beirut*. Quote, "Shockwaves were felt throughout the Lebanese capital as Israel kept up its bombing campaign aimed at Hezbollah leaders and weapons." Quote, "A series of massive explosions rocked the densely populated neighbourhoods just south of Beirut at midnight on Thursday as Israel kept up its bombing campaigns aimed at Hezbollah leaders and weapon stores. Shockwaves shook buildings

across the Lebanese capital. From the Middle East eye which reported earlier today that *At least 18 people were killed in massive Israeli strike on Tulkarm in occupied West Bank*. The attack is the first such missile strike by Israel on that community since the second intifada in the early 2000. So the first such bombing campaign in the West Bank in roughly 20 years. Quote, "The Israeli army confirmed the strike on the town in the northern occupied West Bank, describing it as a joint operation carried out by the Shin Bet Internal Security Service and the Air Force, according to a brief statement by the military. Faisal Salama, a camp official, told AFP that the attack had been carried out by an F-16 fighter." There are reported death tolls headed toward, I believe, 20 now. It was a massive strike on a café that killed a lot of people, not in Gaza, where you can blame Hamas for the hostages or whatever, but in the West Bank.

From CBS News earlier today, they reported on the following. Quote, *Dozens were killed in new Israeli airstrike in Lebanon and Gaza as some nations ramp up Lebanon evacuation plans*. Quote, "At least seven health and rescue workers were killed in an Israeli airstrike on an apartment building in Beirut overnight, an Islamic health organisation said Thursday as Israel's battle against the Iran-backed groups Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza raged, fuelling concern of a wider regional conflict. The strike in Beirut's residential Bachoura district hit a multistorey apartment building that houses an office of the Health Society, a group of civilian first responders affiliated with Hezbollah. It was the second airstrike to hit central Beirut this week and the second to hit the health society in 24 hours. The Associated Press said no Israeli warning was issued to the area before the strike. Residents reported a sulphur-like smell and Lebanon's state-run national news agency accused Israel of using phosphorus bombs in the strike, which are prohibited by international law for use near civilian populations." Obviously, Israel does not care about international law that has been demonstrated over the past several decades, certainly over the past year in Gaza and now again in Lebanon. From CNN yesterday, reporting on the United States and its effort to try and weigh in and have some influence on the use of all the weapons it's sending to Israel, the headline was: *Biden – the nominal president – says Israel shouldn't strike Iranian nuclear sites, but US officials recognise Israel has a right to respond to the attack*. Quote, "Biden hopes Israel will adopt a measured approach –" Good luck with that –" that can both uphold its right to strike back while avoiding action that could prompt further retaliation and tip the region into full scale war." Quote, "No one is saying don't respond, one a senior administration official said. No one's saying, quote, 'take the win'. How that message will be received by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu remains to be seen, particularly as his political standing appears more assured following successful efforts to degrade Hezbollah in Lebanon. Quote, 'Iran made a big mistake and it will pay for it', Netanyahu said at the start of the security cabinet meeting Tuesday. Biden's efforts at influencing his Israeli counterpart over the past year have been largely ineffective and the two men have not spoken since August. Biden told reporters Wednesday he plans to speak to Netanyahu, quote, 'relatively soon', but didn't appear to have a conversation in the books."

Now, it isn't as though the United States has remained out of this. The United States continues to provide all the bombs and the money that Israel is using to attack all these

different countries. So Netanyahu is perfectly happy if he doesn't have to get on the phone with Joe Biden and hear Joe Biden reading some sort of notes that somebody else prepared in some kind of an incoherent way as he half-drools and dozes off in the middle of the sentence. Because obviously the Israelis do not care in the slightest about what the Americans want, what the Americans believe, what the Americans think. And since the United States has proven over and over, the Biden administration has proven over and over, that it has no intention, no willingness, maybe no ability to use any leverage that it has over Israel, like holding back those weapons or holding back money, then, of course, the Israelis have gotten the message very clearly that they can do whatever they want. It doesn't matter how much Biden whines about it in private or in public, it has no effect on Israeli behaviour at all. So it's just kind of a fascinating dynamic in our discourse that the Iranian attack on Israel was extremely calibrated only for military targets and obviously deliberately restrained attack. They could have done a lot more. One that didn't injure, let alone kill, a single Israeli or harm any civilian infrastructure, is being depicted as this mass terror attack that is a severe and unprecedented escalation in the Middle East while Israel continues to flatten apartment buildings, schools, health care facilities, killing all sorts of physicians and doctors and nurses and first responders and children. And yet in American discourse, Israel continues to be the besieged victim whose help we must continue to provide. And that is how you know what real propaganda is and who controls it. We'll be back with this quick announcement and then we will immediately get to our discussion this evening with Professor Mearsheimer.

We all have two ages: our true age and our biological age. Now, in my case, both of those ages are very, very young. But in some people those are different. So our biological age suggests how healthy or unhealthy we are inside. And you want your biological age to be years younger than your true age. That's what ultimately health is about. And that's where our longtime sponsor, Field of Greens, comes in and helps me to explain how you can best do that, because unlike any fruit or vegetable or green product, Field of Greens isn't watered down extracts. That's the way a lot of those products that pitch themselves as being good for your health are constructed. Field of Greens, though, is an organic superfood. It's whole fruits and vegetables. Each fruit and vegetable was selected by doctors to support a specific vital bodily function, whether it be your heart or your liver, your kidneys, your metabolism, your immune system, all things that your body needs for that biological age to be not just equal to you, but much younger than your actual age and the amount of time that you spent on the earth. And only Field of Greens is backed by a better health promise. This is something that they've offered from the start, meaning at your next check-up, your doctor either will notice your improved health as a result of taking Field of Greens or you get your money back. It's a 100% backed guarantee. You're not to look back and say, Oh I should have paid attention to nutrition when I was younger. Field of Greens is a key to better health today and what matters most, it's something that you can just take even in the midst of a very busy day, you don't have to prepare vegetables and all sorts of other nutrients for your body. They have already done that for you. And we can get you started with 15% off in free shipping if you visit [fieldofgreens.com](https://fieldofgreens.com) and use the promo code GLENN. That's promo code GLENN at [fieldofgreen.com](https://fieldofgreen.com).

At this point, I don't think Professor John Mearsheimer needs much of an introduction, certainly not to our audience. He's appeared on our show many times. He's always one of the most popular, if not the most popular guest who appears for very good reasons. I think there are few people more informed and independent and courageous and willing to break from orthodoxy if he feels it's necessary in international relations generally. We've had it many times to talk about the multiple wars the United States is involved in, including in Israel and including in Ukraine, but other places as well. And he, as I said, is the author of a very relevant book, which is *The Israel Lobby* that he co-authored with Harvard professor Stephen Walt that documents the power of the pro-Israel faction of the United States, that continues to ensure that American policy is constructed, whether under the Republicans or Democrats, to promote the interest of the Israeli government and the state of Israel. And we are always delighted to welcome him to the show. Professor Mearsheimer, it is great to see you as always. Thank you for taking the time to come on.

**John Mearsheimer (JM):** Thank you for having me, Glenn.

**GG:** Absolutely. So, from the start of October 7th, when we've had many discussions about what was going on in the Middle East, one of the concerns that we often discussed – and I know you've talked about in other venues as well – is the real danger that this could escalate, namely the Israeli bombing campaign in Gaza, but also the skirmishes that have been ongoing with Hezbollah in the northern part of Israel, in the southern part of Lebanon. And it seems like I think it's pretty clear to say that that has now escalated. There is something resembling a regional war. Hopefully it won't go to its full extent, but it seems like it's there. Is there any doubt in your mind that, A, there is now a regional war with Israel involving multiple other countries, including Iran, and that B, this is something that Netanyahu has pursued and even wanted?

**JM:** Well, it's clear to me that there are sort of three major conflicts that are somewhat interconnected, but also somewhat independent of each other. One is what's been going on since October 7th in Gaza, and that's the conflict against Hamas. And then there's the conflict in Lebanon, which, of course, involves Hezbollah. And then there's the conflict involving Iran. And all three of these conflicts are very dangerous conflicts. But at this point in time, it appears to me that the most dangerous of those three conflicts is the Iran-Israeli conflict because of what happened on October 1st. I think the potential for escalation is great there. I think the situation in Lebanon is really dire and it would be wonderful if we could put an end to it, which we won't do. But I think the possibility of escalation there is not as great as it is with regard to Iran.

**GG:** So we'll get to Iran in just a little bit. And I entirely agree that that's the most dangerous component of this. But let's just stick to Lebanon for a moment. For a long time, we've been hearing about this massive stockpile of precision, long range weapons or at least weapons that can reach deep into Israel that Hezbollah has and is able to use. And we've seen them use some of that nowhere near their full capacity. But now what we're seeing as well is some kind of a ground invasion on the part of the Israeli military into Lebanon. And the last time this

happened in 2006, it was a very bloody, difficult, protracted war for Israel. And it seems like already in just the first 2 or 3 days, we've seen a good number of IDF soldiers killed. Just in terms of the part of this which has become the ground invasion into Lebanon, how extensive do you think that's likely to go and how difficult do you think that will be for Israel?

**JM:** Well, let me just make one sort of prefatory point before I answer that. The Israelis are pursuing three different strategies towards Hezbollah. One is the decapitation strategy where they killed Nasrallah, and that's not going to work. The second is the punishment strategy, where they're basically murdering huge numbers of civilians or forcing them out of their homes. And that's not going to work. And therefore, it's not surprising that they're talking about or they've executed a ground invasion. And what's interesting about it is there's hardly any news on what's going on. I searched all the Israeli newspapers that I read today to see if I could get some sense of what's going on. And it's very hard to find anything. Yesterday, there were all sorts of stories that an Israeli force in Lebanon had been ambushed and there were eight killed – eight IDF soldiers were killed – and there were many wounded soldiers. And this, of course, is what we expected, because the IDF was going into a hornet's nest, number one. And number two, the IDF is basically exhausted from the Gaza campaign. So it wasn't surprising to see that they had all this trouble right off the bat. But if you look at the newspapers today in Israel and even in the West, there's just hardly any news. And as you and I both know, if the Israelis were making significant progress, we'd be hearing about it. And the fact that we're not hearing anything makes me think that they're already in deep trouble, which I would not find surprising. I'm not saying that's the case. But you see, the problem that the Israelis have, again, is decapitation doesn't work. Punishment doesn't work. And now a ground invasion doesn't work. So where does that leave them? It leaves them facing Hezbollah. And this Hezbollah is capable of still firing rockets into Israel. By most accounts, they launched 150 rockets into northern Israel yesterday and they launched 130 rockets into northern Israel today. So the idea that Israel is silencing Hezbollah or is on the verge of defeating Hezbollah is simply not true.

**GG:** I think the interesting part of what you said about the Israeli media report is that pretty much every Israeli media report is under very strict censorship. In fact, when you had a terrorist attack in Tel Aviv, it was only about 12 hours later when the Israeli media began to report on the number of victims, their names. And when they did so, they basically said, we're able to report this because the government has cleared this for publication, meaning they decided that they were going to allow them to publish this information. Yesterday, as you said, there were clear reports in the Israeli press that there was an ambush and eight IDF soldiers were killed. I think they confirmed one more death today. And you have a lot of news reports from Lebanese media, from regional media, from Al-Jazeera, from informal channels like Telegram and even from Twitter that are suggesting that there's a lot more damage to the IDF already imposed than the Israeli military or the Israeli press has been able to report. But let me ask you this. This argument that you made where you said decapitation doesn't work, I think a lot of people believed that when they started with that pager attack and the walkie talkies that made everyone so excited about the genius of this attack, followed by the killing of Nasrallah and other top leaders of Hezbollah, I think a lot of people felt like,

well, if you decapitate the leadership of Hezbollah and you render their communication devices unusable because they're now weapons in the hands of the Israelis that, of course, are going to hamper Hezbollah to a significant extent. Why isn't that true?

**JM:** Well, first of all, just on decapitation, we have a rich literature in the international relations scholarly world that shows that decapitation simply doesn't work. And some of the best evidence that it doesn't work comes from the Israeli case. The Israelis have been running around the Middle East assassinating leaders for a long, long time, and it's never had any significant consequences. And if you kill Nasrallah, somebody will come in and replace him. And when they killed Nasrallah's predecessor in 1992, and Nasrallah came in, the end result was they got a more effective leader. And you may get an even more effective leader or an equally effective leader this time. So just, you know, decapitating, knocking off the head of an organisation like Hezbollah is not going to fundamentally change the nature of the situation. They're still going to have 40,000 fighters who are well positioned and well prepared to take on the Israelis and who have many, many thousands of rockets and missiles that they can fire at Israel. So, you know, the decapitation strategy just doesn't work. What you have to do is you have to go in and you have to degrade those Hezbollah fighting forces in southern Lebanon. You have to eradicate them. Look, just go to Gaza for a second. As you know, they've been fighting against Hamas for a very, very long time. And their goal, according to Prime Minister Netanyahu, has been to decisively defeat Hamas. They have not decisively defeated Hamas. They have not even come close. Well, if they didn't defeat Hamas, they're certainly not going to defeat Hezbollah. That terrain is much more advantageous to the defender in Lebanon than it is in Gaza. And furthermore, Hezbollah is much better armed and much better prepared than the fighters in Gaza are. So the Israelis are in a hopeless situation. They're not going to win in Lebanon.

**GG:** I think people sometimes forget the climate and the discourse that emerged after 9/11 in the United States. And I don't know if you recall this, but one of the things the US military's propaganda arm did was they issued playing cards to identify all the leaders of the Baathist regime. Saddam Hussein was the ace of spades and then everyone else had the ace of diamonds and the jacks, and they would publish these. And every time they killed one of them, they would kind of cross them off on the website. The media would celebrate this. And after about two months, most of them were gone or driven underground or killed. And obviously, the Iraqi insurgency did not get crippled. In fact, it was a very strong insurgency that continued for many years. And you even see that in law enforcement. If there's wars the government has with drug gangs, they kill the gang leader or the biggest trafficker, and then someone else gets into that place. Obviously, the gang doesn't go away, and a lot of times they're even more violent or less reasonable or more radicalised, something that obviously might happen in Lebanon as well. But nonetheless, let me ask you this. We talked a lot last time about Israeli motives. And I know they're hard to discern politically, but just in terms of the military strategy, clearly, Netanyahu and other key members of his government seem to be thinking and saying "this is the moment we've been waiting for for a long time where we have the kind of license to finally destroy all of our enemies", particularly coming from Iran and its proxies like Hezbollah and Hamas and even Iran itself. But as you just said, in order to

destroy Hezbollah, something far more formidable than destroying Hamas, they're going to need to do a ground invasion. I presume the Israelis know everything that you just got done saying, which is the last time they tried that, it was almost like a Vietnam situation. It would be very, very difficult. Hezbollah has been preparing this for many, many years with the help of Iran – a very, very sophisticated military. So what do you think is motivating Netanyahu in terms of the goal, the strategy of what they hope to achieve by doing a ground invasion into Lebanon and flattening a lot of apartment buildings in Beirut?

**JM:** You can give two answers to that, Glenn. I mean, I've thought about this question, which you've asked many times, because it is the \$64,000 question here. One answer which sort of pops in my head immediately is that they're just plain nuts. They're out of control, and they think that they can use this big stick to reorder the Middle East quickly and easily. And it's all going to work out. And you just sort of say to yourself, they can't possibly believe that. And if they do believe that, then they are irrational in the extreme. That's one answer. The other answer is the ultimate goal here is to expel the Palestinians from Gaza and from the West Bank and to create a rather homogeneous greater Israel. And what they need to do is a huge conflagration. The two big ethnic cleansing that have previously taken place involving the Palestinians were in 1948, of course, the famous Nakba. And in 1967, in the wake of or the process of the Six-Day War, when they drove a couple of hundred thousand Palestinians out of the West Bank. And these two previous examples show you that you really need a major league conflict to provide an opportunity to do ethnic cleansing. So one could make an argument that they would actually welcome a conflagration with Iran and they would welcome seeing things spin out of control because this would give them the opportunity to do the cleansing that they really want to do. So that's the sort of rational explanation. But if you don't buy that explanation, I just think they're nuts, because what they're doing both in Gaza and against Hezbollah in Lebanon and with regard to Iran, which we'll talk about, makes no strategic sense to me.

**GG:** I recall very vividly because it was such a remarkable statement that shortly after October 7th when the Israelis were saying, we need to destroy Hamas and get our hostages back, and that's the goal of our military operation. The former Israeli prime minister, Naftali Bennett, gave an interview to The Economist, and he was much more candid, I think, about what at least he and his group of allies were thinking. And they're pretty close to the Netanyahu government. What he said was: what we really need to do now, what we intend to do now, is to show the region that there are no limits on what we're willing to do. No one can stop us. There's nothing anyone can do to stop us. And there's no moral or ethical limits that we will observe in order to defend ourselves. And what we intend to do is put the fear of God or the fear of Jews, is how he described it, into the hearts and minds of every Arab in the region that they will remember for generations, so that they will be too afraid to ever again oppose us or attack us. That's at least a coherent rationale, whatever you think of the morality or ethics of it, but is it something that you think is a viable strategy for achieving that goal, namely making people just simply too scared to watch the Israelis what they're going to do and not want that to be done to them?



**JM:** No. As I said before, when I was describing the three strategies the Israelis have available for Lebanon, I said one was decapitation. Two was punishment and three was invasion. And what you're describing is the punishment strategy. Punishment is where you go out and you murder huge numbers of civilians. It's by the way, what we did in World War Two in Europe, but especially against Japan starting on March 10th, 1945, and going forward to August 9th, when we dropped the second bomb on Nagasaki. I mean, we were basically burning Japanese cities to the ground, murdering huge numbers of people. And we thought that would get the population to turn against the Japanese government. And earlier in Europe, we thought the bombing of places like Dresden and Hamburg would get the German people to turn against the German government. It doesn't work. Punishment is not a viable strategy. So the Israelis, who have a rich history of inflicting massive civilian casualties on people in the Arab world have never seen that strategy work. It doesn't work with the Palestinians. You had a first intifada. You had a second intifada, then you had October 7th. And if you continue to have a greater Israel, that's an apartheid state, you're going to have another October 7th or another intifada, because people absorb huge amounts of punishment and they don't cave in almost all cases, and they come back to fight another day.

**GG:** Let's talk about – as grim as all of that is – what you described as the most dangerous aspect of this, which is the involvement of Iran now. In April after the Israelis destroyed an Israeli consulate in Damascus, something that every sovereign country would view as an act of war, the Iranians responded in a way that was designed to look impressive, to look spectacular, but that was really designed to really not impose any real damage on Israel by using a bunch of older drones and slower cruise missiles that they anticipated would be intercepted, if not all of them in large part. They gave advance notice to the United States and therefore to the US allies in the region, like Jordan and others that allowed all those missiles to be intercepted. In this case, after things like the assassination of the political leader of Hamas who was on Iranian soil at their invitation to attend the inauguration of the Iranian leader, the newly elected president. Obviously, the killing of Nasrallah, the bombing of Beirut. The Iranians felt like they had to actually finally respond, and they did so by this time not using cruise missiles and drones, but ballistic missiles, including, obviously many that couldn't be intercepted by the Iron Dome. A lot of them hit Israel and fell on military targets in Tel Aviv, but it didn't destroy any civilian infrastructure. It didn't injure, let alone kill even a single Israeli. Do you think that, although a bit more serious, this act was also an act of deliberate restraint on the part of Teheran to do something, but nowhere near what they're capable of actually doing?

**JM:** Yeah, I think the evidence is that there was a significant amount of restraint here. I mean, they signalled clearly to us, the United States and they knew we'd tell the Israelis that they were coming. And they, as you pointed out, did not go after civilian areas, did not kill a single Israeli citizen. They did kill one person, unfortunately, it was a Palestinian in the West Bank who was killed by falling debris. But it was a somewhat restrained attack. But nevertheless, we're talking about 180 ballistic missiles and a good number of those ballistic missiles got through and did some damage, we're not sure how much. And the key point here, in my mind, is that what the Iranians have done is put us on the escalation ladder for sure,

because the Israelis are going to retaliate and the Iranians have said they will counter retaliate. And of course, if the Iranians counter retaliate, the Israelis will counter-counter retaliate. So we're going up the escalation ladder here. And then when you start talking about what the target set looks like, there's two sets of targets in Israel that make me extremely nervous. One, are the nuclear sites in Iran that the Israelis are talking about going after. And then there are the oil refineries and the oil fields, because the Iranians have said very clearly that if their oil facilities are attacked, they will counter by attacking other oil facilities in the broader Middle East. And this will lead to a huge oil crisis. And we'll have, I think, a catastrophic effect on the international economy. The last thing we want is for the Iranians to be using ballistic missiles against oil fields or oil refineries in the Persian Gulf, in other countries, the Gulf states, Saudi Arabia, you name it. And if the Iranians are desperate, they've made it clear that's what they're going to do. So we're going up the escalation ladder. Now, I would note to you, before October 1st – October 1st is when the Iranians attacked – it looked like the Iranians had been cowed into not attacking. Remember, Israel killed the Palestinian leader in Tehran on July 31st, and for the whole month of August and the whole month of September, the Iranians did not attack as they promised that they would do. And it was beginning to look by the end of September why the Iranians were wusses, that they were unwilling to really stand up and deliver the promised attack. And then Nasrallah was killed last Friday, I think it was September 27th, and the Israelis got away with it. Iran didn't do anything.

**GG:** And there was a senior Iranian commander killed along with Nasrallah in that bunker as well.

**JM:** Exactly. And the Iranians did nothing at first. And again, look, this is why everybody was saying after Nasrallah was killed over the weekend, you know, the 28th, the 29th, even on the 30th, that the Iranians were incapable of responding to the Israelis. The Israelis were in the driver's seat. They were going to remake the Middle East. Then comes October 1st and the Iranians have this large scale attack. It is restrained in the ways you described. But nevertheless, it was a big enough attack that the Israelis have to retaliate. And once they retaliate, the Iranians have said they will counter retaliate and we're going up the escalation ladder. And I don't know how we get off the ladder and I don't know where we end up as we go up that ladder, because, as I said, you can tell some horror stories as you begin to move further up the ladder.

**GG:** I guess that's my reaction, though, to this idea that the escalation ladder got triggered only on October 1st, because on some level it seemed like Israel was basically forcing the Iranians to retaliate by crossing every red line that they knew the Iranians had that would basically, in order to save face, as you said, they were looking like wussies. They were looking like a country that was too afraid to defend itself, no matter what the Israelis did to it. And it seems like what happened is that the Israelis had done so many things to the Iranians, including things that had long been considered unthinkable, like purposely killing Nasrallah, to say nothing of the assassination on Iranian soil and all the other things you recounted – that it seemed like it forced Iran to do something because if it didn't, that would be a green light to

Israel that they get to do whatever they want now without having any consequence. I mean, I guess I want to just add to that. It seems like within Israeli society there's this sort of. Let's call it a social contract, an unstated social contract that the Israeli government, the right wing government and the religious factions in it can do whatever they want in the West Bank, can menace the Palestinians, can fight with Lebanon, as long as the more urban, sophisticated, secular Israeli society in Tel Aviv stays safe. And that has been what's happened for quite a long time. And so on some level, this is now a signal to the people in Tel Aviv, not just northern Israel or Jerusalem, that they watch all those missiles flying over and landing in their city close to where they were, knowing that the Iranians now have that capability. On some level, is it possible and I guess it's the reverse question that we talked about with the Israelis trying to terrorise the Lebanese, is it possible that what the Iranians did finally now gives the Israelis something to think about at least before they start going wild?

**JM:** I think that's right. Let me just make one point of clarification. I think I did not state clearly who was responsible for taking us up the ladder. And I made it look like it was the Iranians who started all this. And you correctly laid out the story, which is that it is the Israelis who from the get go have been trying to take us up the ladder. Right. As I've said on the show before, both Iran and the United States have no interest in a war between the two countries. And this is why they orchestrated things on April 14th to make sure that the conflict on that day didn't escalate. But it's the Israelis who have been trying to drag us into the war, us and the Iranians. And it looks like they might succeed. So I misspoke when I gave the impression that it was the Iranians who started all this on October 1st. It's just that what happened on October 1st was a major step.

**GG:** Right.

**JM:** And it was a surprising step because it looked like the Iranians were wussies and not going to do anything. With regard to your distinction of the two different camps inside of Israel. I'm not sure that holds. The more secular Israeli Jews are remarkably hard line. I mean, Benjamin Netanyahu comes from that part of the society. And you were talking about Naftali Bennett's views on how Israelis should be or how Israel should deal with the broader Middle East in the wake of October 7th. The more secular Jews in Israel are, for the most part, remarkably hawkish, not to be underestimated. And that's not to say that there are people further to their right who are even more hawkish. But one does not want to underestimate how hawkish those what you described as more secular Israeli Jews are. And I think all of them believe that Israel is facing an existential threat and it is in an absolutely horrible situation. And it has to do something to figure out how to get out of this situation. And as both you and I know, there's only one way out and it's a political solution. And it has to be a political solution with the Palestinians, because that's the taproot of the problem here. Despite what Israel and its supporters in the United States say, Iran is not the root of the problem. It's the Palestinian issue that's the root of the problem. And the Israelis, whether you're talking about secular Israelis or you're talking about more religious or more right-wing Israelis, they are all, almost to a person, opposed to creating a Palestinian state. Let me put it differently,

creating a viable Palestinian state. And as long as they don't do that, this crisis or this conflict is going to go on forever and ever.

**GG:** Yeah, a lot of us generals and even administrations in the past, you know, have vehemently argued that. And you basically don't hear that anymore from the United States government. It's sort of the official position that we want a two state solution, but we're further away than ever. And there seems to be – I mean, the Reagan and Bush administrations, Bush 41, actually used to apply real pressure. And there was a lot of push back, as you documented in the book, among other things. And since then, we haven't seen that much. Let me ask you about the potential, the options for Israeli retaliation. I want to talk in a minute about the possibility of attacking their oil refineries and what that might do to the global market, the availability of oil and the like – when it comes to the question of attacking their nuclear facilities – and, of course, the Iranian position is, we don't have nuclear weapons, we have enriched uranium, but we haven't weaponized it yet, there's still a lot of steps that we would have to take in order to do that – what is the danger to the region and for the US if the Israelis were to opt for that kind of retaliation?

**JM:** Well, I think the thing that we fear the most is they will then develop nuclear weapons. There are a lot of people who think that given what's been happening over the past few months, the Iranians are beginning to rethink their position on acquiring nuclear weapons. And one could argue that if we attack their nuclear facilities, even if we don't, even if we attack their oil fields and oil refineries, the incentive for them to get nuclear weapons will jump up significantly. And there are a number of people I know that don't have a lot of hard evidence, but think there's a good chance that in the near future the Iranians are going to tell us that they're going to get nuclear weapons. I'm not saying that's true. I'm just saying that I know some people who think that. But all that just tells you that when you slam Iran, and especially when you go after its precious assets like its nuclear facilities and its oil facilities, you are giving Iran a huge incentive to get nuclear weapons. Because if Iran has nuclear weapons, we're not going to do this because the great danger is they'll use those nuclear weapons in retaliation.

**GG:** Yeah, I mean, the history of the last, say, 25 years is that you better get nuclear weapons, otherwise you might be vulnerable to attack. Unfortunately, that's the incentive scheme that has been unwittingly created. Let me ask you about this issue with the oil refineries, because one of the things the United States has had to do over the past two and a half years is do everything possible to restrict the ability of Russian oil to come onto the market as a way of punishing the Russians or starving them to do as much as possible to sanction countries that were buying Russian oil. It hasn't really worked, but it has made the need for the West and access to oil a lot greater, so much so that we even went to Venezuela to basically beg Nicolas Maduro to release a lot more Venezuelan oil. If the Israelis were to attack Iranian oil refineries and the like and impede their production of oil, let alone if the Iranians responded by attacking oil refineries in the Persian Gulf. Wouldn't that in some way almost make the United States need to turn to the Russians for more oil, or what would the solution be to that if there was really a major disruption of oil in the Middle East?

**JM:** I'm not sure. I mean, I don't think there's any short term solution. I don't think the Russians can solve the problem in any meaningful way. As you pointed out, the Russians have found other countries to sell their oil to. So it's not like they're sitting on all this oil that they're just dying to get rid of. And if we cut off the flow of oil out of the Middle East, you can substitute Russian oil for that Middle East oil. I think if you cut off the flow of oil out of the Middle East, that's going to have huge consequences for the international economy. I think we know that very well. Some people just say that the Iranians would never do that because it would hurt them as well as everybody else. And they don't want that. But we're positing a situation where the Israelis go after the oil refineries in the oil fields in Iran and do egregious damage to the Iranian economy. If that happens and you're an Iranian policymaker, you could make a very good case that you should make others pay for allowing that to happen. I would think the Biden administration would be scared stiff about this possibility, especially with an election coming up. If you want to guarantee that Donald Trump wins and Kamala Harris loses, all you need is some sort of cut off of Middle East oil and some sort of big impact on the international economy and ultimately the American economy. This would be disastrous for Kamala Harris.

**GG:** All right. So let me ask you about that, though, the question of what influence the US really does have on Israeli behaviour. There's been so many times when the Israelis basically humiliated the White House seemingly deliberately. Many times the Americans said that the Israelis had agreed to a ceasefire with Hamas, and then Netanyahu or his allies came out and said, we would never agree to a cease fire of that kind. Just recently, the Biden administration basically said that it had brokered a 21 day pause between fighting with Israel and Hezbollah. And it was the next day Netanyahu ordered the killing of Nasrallah and the further bombing of Beirut, making the United States look just completely hapless and impotent. So at this point, after so many times when Biden declared a red line saying that it was a red line for him, for Israel to invade Rafah, which was the only safe place for refugees. And Netanyahu not only did it anyway, but made clear that he doesn't care about Biden's red lines at this point, even though it would be terrible for the US to have Israel attack their oil refineries in Iran or to their nuclear facilities, does the US really have any leverage or power at this point at all, especially right before an election where they don't want to be seen to be impeding Israel?

**JM:** Well, Glenn, as you know well, we have the leverage. The question is, will we use it? And I don't think so. I mean, many, many times over the past few years, after writing the lobby book, I've said this time we've had enough, I'm sure, and we're going to use that leverage and force the Israelis to change their behaviour. And I've been wrong every time. I cannot think of one case where we used our leverage to get Israel to change its behaviour on a key issue. The Israelis just thumb their nose at us. And this is especially true of Benjamin Netanyahu. I mean, whatever you think of Benjamin Netanyahu, he is a brilliant politician. I really am amazed at how good he is at manipulating public opinion in Congress and in the United States more generally. He's very skillful. And you put him up against Joe Biden and you have the sense that it's Bambi versus Godzilla. And given the power of the lobby and

given Netanyahu's political skills and Joe Biden's situation as a lame duck, who I'm sure is not firing on all cylinders, I find it hard to imagine. I hope I'm wrong. I hope this will be the first time where I'm wrong. But I don't think so.

**GG:** If you listen to the State Department briefings where Matthew Miller is saying we would like the Israelis not to do this, but at the end of the day, it's their choice. We can't dictate to them. But in this case, I just want to kind of put this in the the proper expression of what it really means is that it seems like the Democrats who are running the executive branch, whoever that might be, are so captive to Israel, so fearful of using that leverage that you just described, that of course, they have, that they're willing to risk some sort of potential global recession or oil crisis in the United States where people have long lines for oil and for gasoline, or the oil prices are skyrocketing or even willing to risk their own chances in this election in 38 days if the alternative means having to stand up to the Israelis. I mean, that's how extreme it seems to me to be. Is that the way you see it as well?

**JM:** Yes, I think you described it very well. I mean, I have nothing to add to what you say.

**GG:** It's just so alarming to watch this happen. While I have you here and I've asked you this before and and you have often said whenever I've asked you, I've seen you say in other places as well, that if anything, what you described about the Israel lobby and the power of it in the 2006 or 2007 book, I always forget what year it was –

**JM:** 2007.

**GG:** Yeah, 2007 – that, if anything, the power is certainly the same, but probably even greater. As you know though, one of the most, I guess, formidable arguments against that view is that the reason the United States doesn't use leverage against the Israelis is because we're perfectly happy with the Israelis doing what they're doing, kind of eliminating its enemies, going after Iran, who the United States considers to be a main adversary in the Middle East. In the way it's trying to align itself with Saudi Arabia and sort of create an alliance between the Persian Gulf states and and and Israel. Is there any truth to that? Do you think that it's not necessarily the Israelis controlling the United States, but more the United States trying to create the appearance that they're opposed to what the Israelis are doing, but in reality are perfectly fine with it?

**JM:** No, I think that argument is wrong. And let me just sort of lay out why I think that's the case. But before I do that, let me just point out that that is the main alternative argument to the argument that Steve might lay out in the book. First of all, with any two countries and here we're talking about the United States and Israel, of course, there are going to be situations where they have common interests and the United States is going to support Israel and be happy to see Israel do its dirty work, so to speak. This was especially true during the Cold War when the United States and the Soviet Union were competing with each other in the Middle East, and Israel was occasionally an important ally for the United States. We had common interests. But there are also going to be many cases where two countries have

different or competing or conflicting interests. And what happens in those cases tell you whether I'm right and Steve is right or whether the alternative view is right. And I would argue that if you look at all of the cases, almost all of the cases where the United States is pushing in one direction and the Israelis are pushing it in the other direction, the Israelis win in almost every case. And when you look at the process, you do what we call in the social sciences process tracing. You look at how the decision was made. You see that the lobby and Israel itself weighed in big time in the American decision making process and got its way or got their way. And that supports the argument that Steve and I lay out. So I think if you look at the empirical evidence carefully, we are right. And the other side in this debate is wrong.

**GG:** We sent a reporter, Michael Tracey, to the spin-room, that place where all the surrogates go after the debates. The vice presidential debate was this week and he was able to interview a whole bunch of different people in Congress. And one of the people he interviewed was Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett, who was a very young I think she's in her early 30s, a black woman from a very blue district in Texas. She's kind of made a name for herself by being very vitriolic in her opposition to Trump. So she's perceived and often described as sort of this leftist, almost squad like member. And when Michael used his opportunity to interview her, he asked her about not just Israel, but also her repeated votes to fund the war in Israel. And she sounded like Marco Rubio or Lindsey Graham talking about how the Israelis are the victimised party. And she said that she had gone on a trip to Israel and part of it is just that almost every member of Congress goes on those trips to Israel where they're all kind of educated by the Israelis about the situation. But then also they looked this year where AIPAC succeeded in doing the hardest thing there is to do in American politics, which is removing incumbent members of Congress from their jobs by pouring millions of dollars into the primaries of two Israel critics, Jamaal Bowman and Cori Bush. And so do you think that whatever members of Congress are more willing to be critical of Israel, that that is a very effective way to keep them in line, to intimidate them, to say, look, what we do to people who step out of line, and if you want to keep your job, you better sound exactly like Jasmine Crockett sounded when she talked to Michael on Tuesday night.

**JM:** I mean, absolutely. You start off by saying that these people argue that they've been educated in... the gist of this line of argument is that they've come to see the light. You know, there is a really serious case, a serious intellectual case for supporting Israel, and that's why they're doing it. This is hogwash, right? This is not why they're supporting Israel hook, line and sinker. It's because of the lobby. They saw what happened to Bowman and Bush, and they don't want it to happen to them. So if you look at the Black caucus inside the House, for example, you'll see that almost all of those people support Israel down the line.

**GG:** Vehemently. Not even paying lip service to –, at least the White House will say, too many people have died in Gaza, the Israelis need... we are always encouraging them to be... not even that! Not even a willingness to include that standard rhetoric about oh, its unfortunate how many civilians are dying. Not even a willingness to include that standard rhetoric about oh, its unfortunate how many civilians are dying. Just all out defence of Israel from the places that you would think would be the least likely to offer that.

**JM:** Absolutely.

**GG:** It's really remarkable. Yeah. Let me ask you about the election, because obviously the Israelis know that what they're doing is taking place in the context of an election in the United States that is rapidly approaching. And while the Democrats are certainly no models of standing up to Israel and putting restraints on them, to put that mildly, if you look at the Trump campaign and the people he's most closely surrounded by, but also who's financing his campaign, particularly Miriam Adelson, who is giving him \$100 million. And she, of course, is the widow of Sheldon Adelson, who is a multi-billionaire, who has always made clear that he funds American politics to keep everybody in line with Israel. He had bought newspapers in Israel that were the most hard line ones as well. And you listen to how much Trump is saying that we're going to make Israel great again. We're going to do everything for Israel. Is there, do you think, as part of the motive of what the Israelis are doing, any kind of an attempt to affect the 2024 election in a way that would help Donald Trump win?

**JM:** I think that's a possibility. It's very hard to tell with Netanyahu what his motives are. But you can make a case that he's probably interested in doing everything he can to help Donald Trump. And the way you do that is you just create havoc in the Middle East. And that allows Trump to say, when I was president, there was hardly any havoc in the Middle East and in fact, I did not start any wars, I'm not a warmonger and if the Democrats are in power because they're weak and because they're idiotic, what you get are wars here, there and everywhere, so re-elect me. That would be the message. And this is why I think if a major conflagration breaks out, let's assume one breaks out and the whole oil issue doesn't come into play. So there's no real economic threat here. But what we see is just war in the Middle East, the widening war. The American people are going to say this is not good. And this happened on the Democrats' watch and Trump will make hay of that. And he'll say that, you know, I'm not interested in fighting wars, I'm not a warmonger, re-elect me. And I think that will be an effective argument.

**GG:** Well, let me ask you about the argument not politically, but substantively. Whatever else you think about Trump, it actually is true that he was the first American president in decades not to involve the United States in a new war. He inherited the bombing campaign against ISIS in Iraq and Syria and did what he said he would do, which was escalate that bombing until it ended. But it is the case that a lot of wars have broken out in the last four years under Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. That did not break out when Trump was president, including for all the talk about how he was a Russian agent willing to hand the Russians everything. The Russians invaded Ukraine, not under Trump, but under Joe Biden. And it's a war that has continued to this day. Is that a coincidence or – I think Trump's theory is because I talk so tough, because I make clear that I'll destroy people if they mess with the United States and it's kind of this Reaganesque peace through strength that it deters people and it's weakness that's provocative – do you think there's a truth to that version that Trump is offering, that argument that he's making?



**JM:** I think there's some truth to it. Let's just talk first about the Ukraine war and then talk about the Middle East. I think if Trump had been president, he had been re-elected in the 2020 election and we would not have had the Ukraine war. It's clear to me that the Russians were very interested in avoiding a war. And then once the war started shutting it down and at the same time, I believe that Biden had no interest in accommodating the Russians. He had no interest in working out a diplomatic solution. And I believe that he bears a huge amount of responsibility for this war. I think that Biden's basic instincts are those of a warmonger. And I think that's not true of Trump. I think Trump is not that interested in fighting wars. And I think in the case of Ukraine, I can't prove this. We can't run counterfactuals. But I think if Trump had been president, we would not have had a war in Ukraine. The Middle East, you know what happened on October 7th? That's a different issue. I think if Trump had been president, October 7th would have happened anyway, because Trump, as you pointed out, wouldn't have behaved any differently towards Israel than the Democrats did. The interesting question is what Trump would have done after October 7th. I've often thought that there is no other president who we have had in the past who would have been as accommodating to the Israelis as Joe Biden has been since October 7th. I just have the sense that George W Bush and Barack Obama, just to take two cases, even Bill Clinton would have put their foot down at some point along the way. They would have tried to get tough with the Israelis. And, of course, Biden hasn't done that at all. So the question is, what do you think Trump would have done if he had been president? And to be honest, Glenn, I don't have a good answer to that. I think that he might have put his foot down. But I'm not 100% sure. So I think on the sort of Middle East, I don't see a lot of difference as to whether you had Biden or Trump in the White House. But I think with regard to Ukraine, it did matter.

**GG:** Yeah, I mean, it's sort of like, you know, the Democrats are going to endorse and support and pursue every war because they've been doing that for quite a long time and started this ingrained philosophy in the Democratic Party now that that's a positive way the United States affects the world. Whereas Trump may do the same thing in certain cases, but he's also a big question mark. So there's at least some unpredictability there. And he even has been critical of Israel and Netanyahu on several occasions for doing things like stupidly posting to social media, you know, soldiers in Gaza celebrating gratuitous violence and ransacking homes and kind of being critical of Netanyahu in other ways. All right. Well, let's get to Ukraine, because that is a war that is still going on, even though we don't talk very much about it. And I have to say it's very frustrating, but I had you on the show, I think maybe a month or two after the Russian invasion in February of 2022 and then many times after. And the thing that you've always been most consistent about, the thing that you've always emphasised emphatically and from the start was that Ukraine has no chance to win the war against Russia. Russia just is bigger, has more people to send to the war. It's a war of attrition. The Russians are more skilful, they're more powerful. And that has clearly proven to be the case. And two years ago, if you said it as you did or I said it as I did, you got put on an official list of being Kremlin propagandist, even though it's now been proven true. One of the things that I have seen over the past month, is that more and more people with influence over Western foreign policy are starting to say that openly. You had the president of the Czech Republic, who has been a fanatical supporter of Ukraine for obvious reasons, who came out

and said just last week or the week before, we have to accept reality. And the reality is that the Russians are not going to be expelled from Ukrainian soil and we cannot keep pursuing a war that is futile. And you even had Richard Haass, who was the long time president of the Council on Foreign Relations until last year, who went on Morning Joe, which is like ground zero for cheering the war in Ukraine. And he gave a very thoughtful, prolonged explanation, not a comment in passing about we all love Ukraine, but it's time to admit the reality that they are losing the war. They will continue to lose the war, and we need to figure out a way to foster some sort of an agreement. Now, there are a lot of people in the West who still treat that with contempt, that very idea. But do you think in a way that that signals finally some weakening of this idea that we're going to fuel this war forever?

**JM:** Well, I think that privately, virtually all Western policymakers understand that Ukraine is doomed. Privately. I think publicly, very few will put it in those terms. And when they talk about a deal, they always talk about some sort of deal where the Russians basically capitulate and give up gains here and there and accommodate the Ukrainians and so forth and so on. And the problem is that that's not going to happen. What's happened here, Glenn, with regard to the Russians and this is, I think, true with the Iranians, I think both the Iranians and the Russians have come to realise that you can't appease or accommodate the United States. There's only one way you deal with the United States and that you play hardball from the get go. And if you show any signs of weakness, the Americans will take advantage of you. So I think the Russians and here we're talking mainly about Vladimir Putin, have no interest in accommodating the United States in any way. They're going to take all they can get. They're going to drive a hard bargain and they will drive a hard bargain whether Donald Trump is in the White House or Kamala Harris. I think a lot of the Trump people at the top believe that if Donald Trump is elected, he'll be able to talk Turkey with the Russians, with Putin in particular, and they'll be able to work out a deal. That's a pretty good deal for the United States and for Ukraine. You know, not a perfect deal, but it'll be a good deal better than a deal. Kamala Harris would have worked out. I don't think for one second the Russians will treat Trump any differently than they would treat Kamala Harris. You want to remember when Trump first came into office in 2017, he made nice with the Russians, but by the time he left office, he was every bit as tough on the Russians as Barack Obama was and George W Bush was. And furthermore, even if you believe Trump has changed, Trump is not forever. He can only be president for another four years. So if you're the Russians, you want to drive as hard as you can. And again, you go back to Iran. If you're the Iranians and you're dealing with the Israelis and the Americans, you want to play hardball and you do not want to think you can accommodate either one of those countries.

**GG:** And Putin has said that many times. You know, look, I've spent years trying to take them at their word, trying to make peace. And I've learned that that does not work. And it's interesting because I just want to note, if you stay submerged in Western media discourse and the propaganda of Western governments media, you see the world in such an inverted way. I mean, it's so notable that you say that the Iranians and the Russians have concluded that the only way to deal with the United States, the only thing they understand is hardball military force, because that's what we're told all the time about US adversaries, that they don't

understand the language of civilised diplomacy or discourse. They only understand military force. And then the other interesting aspect about that is we have heard forever that Iran and the mullahs are this fanatical religious death cult, this apocalyptic religious fanaticism where they actually value death and they want to die and they're crazy and they're insane and they don't use restraint because they value death. And we spent the first 20 minutes talking about whether the party in the Middle East might be actually insane and unhinged. And Norman Finkelstein was on my show two weeks ago arguing for this very strongly, that it's actually the Israeli government that has fallen into this religious/militaristic fanaticism, where the normal considerations of rational governments are no longer in play. Just in the little bit of time that we have left, Ukraine is barely talked about anymore. It's just sort of there. It keeps going on, but we don't pay much attention to it. Talk about some of the recent developments that have made it even clearer than they were before that the Ukrainians are starting to really crumble now.

**JM:** Well, I think what's most important is that support in the West is withering away. I mean, first of all, Donald Trump may get elected and he's made it clear that he's not interested in supporting the Ukrainians over the long term. But even if Kamala Harris comes back or gets elected and the Democrats stay in the White House, she's not going to get another big aid package through Congress. Almost everybody agrees on that point. So there's not going to be much more aid from the West moving forward, certainly from the United States, but even from countries like Germany. The Germans have signalled that they're at the end of their rope. The British are at the end of their rope. So what this means is that the Ukrainians, who are heavily and I mean heavily dependent on economic and military support from the West, are in deep, deep trouble. Then if you go to the battlefield and you look at what's happening on the battlefield, it's absolutely horrible what's happening to the Ukrainians. The casualty exchange ratio, as I always like to emphasise, is what matters. How many Ukrainians are dying versus how many Russians are dying. And given the huge Russian advantage in firepower and in air power, many, many more Ukrainians are dying than Russians. And the Ukrainians have fewer soldiers and fewer people in their population to begin with. So in this war of attrition, the Russians are going to win. And what you see happening on the battlefield are not only huge casualties, but the Russian steamroller is moving forward and capturing more and more territory. And then my final point would be that winter is coming and the Russians have already destroyed a huge portion of the electric grid in Ukraine. And it's quite clear that they're poised to destroy what's left of that electric grid, which means that many civilians in wintertime are not going to have heating, they're not going to have warm water and so forth and so on. This is a disastrous situation. There's stories in the newspapers that say maybe 400,000 more Ukrainians will leave the country and move into Western Europe because of the harsh conditions that are facing them as a result of the falling apart of the electric grid. So when you put all these factors together, the Ukrainians are definitely doomed. I mean, this is a horrible situation and this is why I've been arguing for God knows how long they ought to shut this war down as quickly as possible to minimise the number of Ukrainians who die and to maximise the amount of Ukrainian territory that they can keep. The longer this war goes on, the more Ukrainians die and the more territory they lose. But my message doesn't seem to get through to many people.

**GG:** Yeah, it's remarkable. I mean, it was clear from the beginning that while the argument was that we need to do everything possible to save Ukraine and the Ukrainians, what we were actually doing was sacrificing Ukraine and the Ukrainians at the altar of our geopolitical goals regarding Russia. And even those haven't even been met. So the whole thing has just kind of been a disaster. Well, anyway, it's a running joke whenever we have you on that, we always want to spend time talking about the Pacific and the US relationship with China. But there's always so many crises brewing that unfortunately we have to spend our time on those. We're going to hold out hope and do that. Maybe we just have to have you on once to talk about nothing, no matter what else is happening, besides China and that entire region in the Pacific where there's a lot always going on, just not quite as pressing as these raging wars. But we are always thrilled to have you on and we're very appreciative of your time. And it's always great to see you.

**JM:** Thank you very much, Glenn. I would just note, I'm going to China Sunday, and then after I'm in China, I'm going to Indonesia. So at some point in the not too distant future, I'll be well-poised to give you my views on China after my visit.

**GG:** That'll be a good pretext to have you on to talk about. You'll be highly motivated and we will want to hear about your trip, so let's try and do that.

**GG:** Okay, good. All right. Have a great evening. All right. So that concludes our show for this evening. As a reminder, System Update is also available in podcast form. You can listen to every episode 12 hours after the first broadcast live here on Rumble on Spotify, Apple and all other major podcasting platforms. If you rate, review and follow our show there, it really helps spread the visibility of our program. As a reminder as well, every Tuesday and Thursday night, once we're done with our live show here on Rumble, we move to Locals where we have our live interactive aftershow. That aftershow is available solely for members of our Locals community. Tonight being Thursday, we're about to go do that. And if you want to join the Locals community and get access to those shows and the other features that we have, interactive features, it's a place where we put a lot of original content, including all of those interviews we conducted at that debate that we didn't have time to show you on the show. It's a place where we publish written professionalised transcripts of every program we broadcast here. We publish those there the next day. But most of all, it is the community on which we really do rely to support the independent journalism that we do here every night. Simply click the join button right below the video player on the Rumble page and it will take you directly to our Locals community. For those who have been watching this show, we are, as always, very appreciative and we hope to see you back tomorrow night and every night at 7 p.m. Eastern live exclusively here on Rumble. Have a great evening, everybody.

**END**

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