

Hello! And welcome to the lawyers, guns, and money podcast this is the first podcast of 2,023.

[Robert Farley] 14:12:50

And what we're going to do is a little bit of a

[Robert Farley] 14:12:53

Retrospective, about 2,022, especially with respect to national security policy joining tonight to me today are Cheryl Rofer and Dan Nexon. How are you guys

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:13:02

Good.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:13:04

Thank you, Dorie.

[Robert Farley] 14:13:06

Outstanding, so retrospectives are difficult and they're complicated.

[Robert Farley] 14:13:13

But I guess starting with Cheryl, maybe we can go around for just a little bit and say, you know, what about what?

[Robert Farley] 14:13:20

What is it that you think you'll remember about 2,022?

[Robert Farley] 14:13:24

I think that the biggest story is going to be similar for all of us.

[Robert Farley] 14:13:26

You know. But what about 2,022 happened that you don't expect to happen

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:13:30

Well, obviously Russia's war against Ukraine is something none of us expected to happen.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:13:37

Another war of empire.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:13:42

In, the twenty-first century. No, although certainly the signs were there.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:13:50

At the end of 21 and the beginning of 2022.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:13:55

Let's see. Another surprise was Iran, and we can get to this, maybe a little bit later.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:14:04

The riots and demonstrations against the Government and the Hijab.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:14:12

requirements for women. And along with that the the pretty much collapse of the Jcpoa.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:14:26

I think it's effectively dead, for now the Iranian Government is just to distracted, and along with that Iran's selling drones to Russia.

[Robert Farley] 14:14:39

Dan, what about you? What really strikes you as the the big things from 22

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:14:48

I mean, it's hard to beat that list. I think that anyone would have to put the Russia Ukraine more at the top of it, and the repercussions of that war ranging from the fairly unified Western response on the sanctions front on the expansion of NATO front now although Turkey

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:15:09

Still holding that up that would have to be like Number One.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:15:12

I think the second big story would be from a Us.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:15:16

foreign policy perspective, the collapse of the Jcpoa, or apparent collapse, or near collapse, or whatever state it's in, and Cheryl is already illuminated, that the third would be.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:15:27

The by Administration's continuing upping the ante in its competition or great power.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:15:33

Rivalry, whatever we're calling it now. Strict competition with China, and particularly the decision to slap export controls on us semiconductors.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:15:41

The last thing, which is a sort of a story that may not amount to anything, but was had, I think, some legs, particularly in outside of the world, in Africa, was the was the Biden Administration's Us.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:15:57

Africa Summit, which I know that a lot of African leaders and African commentators saw as something of a breakthrough in terms of us.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:16:06

Us. Treatment of the African Union. I know it's Member States as being important enough to justify or to be parties to that kind of son.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:16:19

I think that was sort of a that might probably isn't gonna amount to anything.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:16:22

But I thought that was kind of an interesting development

[Robert Farley] 14:16:25

Yeah, really, the only thing I can say is to with respect to myself is to confirm both of your thoughts that Iran and Russia are the biggest and much interesting stories I would also add, and this was a little bit surprising to me.

[Robert Farley] 14:16:41

But perhaps it shouldn't have been. You know, the part of the Us.

[Robert Farley] 14:16:45

China story is China's, the the absolute inability of China's covid policy to continue to manage Covid within China, which certainly became a pretty big story in the last month of 2,022 but it's something that is ongoing right now and so I think that that because it

[Robert Farley] 14:17:05

Affects both China's trade policy, and therefore transform policy profile, and it also affects the stability of the Chinese state.

[Robert Farley] 14:17:13

The stability of the Chinese economy, that both of those are kind of a big deal that I think we we perhaps not fully grappled with yet, but they're gonna have implications that ripple into 2,023.

[Robert Farley] 14:17:24

You know, beyond those, you know, stuff that's almost almost unconnected with with Russia Ukraine, which is sort of hard to find.

[Robert Farley] 14:17:32

But there has been stuff, right? I mean, we had a successful election in Brazil that that displaced pol scenario.

[Robert Farley] 14:17:40

You've had a lot of other stuff happening across Latin America, including some stuff that is, you know, directly impactful on the United States, such as you know, what appears to be a slow motion economic collapse in Cuba which is which is going to be a fairly big idea a fairly big deal you

[Robert Farley] 14:17:57

have. You have increasingly tense relations on the Korean Peninsula?

[Robert Farley] 14:18:01

You have a Taliban which has been sort of largely unrepentant and certainly unwilling to modify its behavior, which was something that was considered a big deal at the end of 2,021.

[Robert Farley] 14:18:13

But then I'm nobody started talking about in 2,023 or 22.

[Robert Farley] 14:18:18

So there's been a lot of stuff here, and it is fascinating that this doesn't even talk about things like the the Armenia Azerbaijan ongoing conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh so there's been a lot that has gone on this year but it

[Robert Farley] 14:18:32

Has, I think, as we all agreed, been absolutely swamped by what's going on with Russia.

[Robert Farley] 14:18:38

Ukraine. So perhaps, instead of starting with Russia, Ukraine, because I think it's going to dominate the conversation, why don't we sort of reel back and start with Iran? Right?

[Robert Farley] 14:18:48

I mean, I think we were all hopeful and optimistic that there was going to be something I don't know if I was optimistic that the Jcpoa.

[Robert Farley] 14:18:56

Was going to come back. What's going to was going to come back onto the stage and 2,022.

[Robert Farley] 14:18:58

But I was certainly hopeful. So so what exactly has gone wrong with us, Iran relationship?

[Robert Farley] 14:19:05

Over the course of this year.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:19:10

I think. Is it? There's been great difficulty in the negotiations to try to bring the United States back into the Jcpoa.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:19:23

and the amount of information coming out has not been great.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:19:29

In 2,015, I could infer the technical things that were happening behind the scenes, because I knew what it takes to run a centrifuge operation, etc.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:19:44

Etc. And so I could pretty much figure that out this time around the negotiations are all about procedure.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:19:54

Who's going to do what first? What's sanctions will be taken off or not?

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:19:59

What actions Iran needs to take, and all of those are easier to conceal.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:20:07

And there's just been no information out. So it's impossible to infer.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:20:11

What's gone wrong. From time to time one or the other side will say, Oh, it's all them, and which doesn't necessarily mean it's them.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:20:22

But sometimes you can kind of infer the yes, it is or no, it isn't so.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:20:29

It. It's not at all clear what has happened. But I do think that now, with the civil Unrest in Iran, it it's just not going to be possible for everyone to make any kind of agreement

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:20:50

I mean my gut instinct. Is that what we're seeing is the can is one dimension of the continued hardening.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:20:58

A anti us access right or block, or whatever more you want to call it.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:21:06

But this isn't an axis of evil right? It's a it's a coalition of states that have very strong opposition to aspects of us foreign policy or regional policy, and that is very much centered in some respects on Russia and Iran, and we see that not only in the fact that the Iranians are selling fairly it sounds like operationally, at least initially important drones, but you know my understanding is that Iranians are in are in

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:22:12

Theater, helping to operate those, those that equipment.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:22:17

At least that's what I've read, and I wouldn't surprise me in the slightest.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:22:19

So you should be talking potentially about active Iranian participation in that conflict.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:22:26

And that's and I think the the sort of worsening relations with Iran I would imagine that there's a whole cascading effect there, because you know, the Us.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:22:34

As always, has to continue to balance whatever it does with Iran, with fears of abandonment, or backlashes of various kinds, by its major allies in the golf and in the Middle East, and is that cycle of animosity increases it makes that position more difficult for

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:22:58

The United States. I doubt that has anything to do. The specific reasons why the negotiations haven't gone well, I mean, I think, fundamentally, even under more permissive domestic and international conditions.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:23:12

It would be difficult to imagine the Iranians just being willing to re-enter what was a fairly generous agreement to the United States after what happened with the trump Administration, with no assurances or no mechanisms that prevent us from simply playing Iran for suckers after the

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:23:30

22,

[Robert Farley] 14:23:31

Right. I mean, so I I think about this in terms of sort of the conversation that happened in the United States, and I I think it was a genuine and a useful conversation for the first 18 months of really, for you know, almost the first well, roughly, this first 18 months of the biden administration where

[Robert Farley] 14:23:51

Iran was kind of centered, and people having a lot of conversation, especially on the Progressive side.

[Robert Farley] 14:23:56

There were. There were questions about how enthusiastically the Biden Administration was pursuing the Jcpo.

[Robert Farley] 14:24:01

Away. It had really failed to a lot of us that that, reentering the Jcpo was going to be a slam dunk, you know.

[Robert Farley] 14:24:09

That was probably always wrong for the mention. The reasons you just mentioned, Dan, which is, that the Iranians had good reason to make demands upon us that that we simply we simply could not.

[Robert Farley] 14:24:19

Yeah, you cannot. There is no answer. The United States cannot give an answer to what do you do?

[Robert Farley] 14:24:23

If trump becomes president again right? I mean that that it is not within our constitutional system to establish guarantees with respect to Iran.

[Robert Farley] 14:24:31

And so there's nothing we can say about that. You know.

[Robert Farley] 14:24:34

We we, and and so, you know, I think from from my perspective.

[Robert Farley] 14:24:40

And and I, you know I think we should be reluctant before we say we give the button administration a break on questions like this.

[Robert Farley] 14:24:46

But I mean the Iranians really are, here, even for the first 18 months.

[Robert Farley] 14:24:51

The Iranians. A lot of parts of the Iranian Government were playing an obstructionist role with respect to the Jcp away.

[Robert Farley] 14:24:59

And now it's very interesting to me, because, you know, on the one hand, you can think about the protests, and I think the protests themselves as much as the support for Russia have effectively killed the Jcpa.

[Robert Farley] 14:25:11

Because this made it impossible to take any risks on behalf of Iran.

[Robert Farley] 14:25:14

In the United States right diplomatically to take any risks on behalf of Iran and and that's something you can almost say is is exogenous, right?

[Robert Farley] 14:25:23

I mean, it's a dictatorship. They're gonna have nasty prices. They're gonna kill a bunch of people.

[Robert Farley] 14:25:28

And if they happen randomly to do that while you're negotiating with them, then then that's bad.

[Robert Farley] 14:25:32

But yeah, if Iran had decided to take a different tack with respect to the Russia, Ukraine war, it could have created significant problems for us allies in the Middle East, right?

[Robert Farley] 14:25:49

So, so, essentially, what Iran has done is that Tehran has made it very easy for the United States to paint Iran into this axis of authoritarian States by becoming directly supportive of Russia's war effort right if Iran had undertaken it set a different Choices there then I think you could have

[Robert Farley] 14:26:15

Gotten really interesting questions within the Us. Foreign policy establishing about like Look, Israel, Saudi, Arabia.

[Robert Farley] 14:26:22

These are countries which you know heck, do you know our relationship with them is tense, anyway, and and they're really not getting on board with respect to Russia.

[Robert Farley] 14:26:33

And if, yeah, in fact, even Israel is getting less on board with respect to Russia.

[Robert Farley] 14:26:37

But but Iran has not attempted at all to complicate the Us.

[Robert Farley] 14:26:42

Position there. In fact, it's made it much easier, right?

[Robert Farley] 14:26:44

You know, however problematic, is Israel and Saudi Arabia may be with respect to the war, neither of them have become directly engaged in virtually in combat operations.

[Robert Farley] 14:26:54

Right, but certainly in theater, and directly supportive of the war. Effort.

[Robert Farley] 14:26:58

And that's an indication to me that you know there, there's there is virtually, even if the protests were to go away, there's virtually no prospect for a return to the Jcp.

[Robert Farley] 14:27:09

Away, or really almost to return into anything like the Jcp.

[Robert Farley] 14:27:13

Away, because I mean you. Now have factions in Iran that are seem to be to be sort of really hostile to the idea of diplomatic engagement with the United States in a consequential way, for Iran's foreign policy. So I'm curious.

[Robert Farley] 14:27:28

I'm curious your thoughts on any of that

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:27:29

Well, of course, by withdrawing from Jcpoa trump enabled that faction that you just mentioned the hard liners by giving them, as Dan said, this great gift of you can't trust the United States.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:27:50

I'm kind of devastated that we won't be able to get back to the Jcpoa.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:27:58

Although not surprised because it was just a failure agreement, it was far more than any of us had expected.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:28:09

I can remember when the preliminary drift came out in the spring of 2,015.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:28:13

We were like, Wow, this is more than we expected, and then the actual agreement was more than that.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:28:19

So, and Iran was abiding by it. So trump really damaged the United States with that one

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:28:31

Yeah, I mean one of Trump's legacies is likely to be a nuclear armed Iran when push comes to shove.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:28:36

Yeah.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:28:38

And of course, as is always the case when that happens, we blamed on.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:28:45

Suppose it's soft line policies of the type that brought us the Jcpa.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:28:50

In the first place. But yeah, this is really an unforced error, and it goes back to my sort of frustrations with decision, making the trump administration.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:28:59

You know that essentially, the decision to pull out of the Jcpa was not?

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:29:02

Motivated by any real assessment of changes in the status quo ante.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:29:07

With respect to Iranian the Iranian nuclear programmer, Us.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:29:10

Iran iterations that were motivated by trump being unhappy about how to affirm an Obama policy every time he had to recertify compliance with Iran Deal.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:29:24

And so, you know, it's just it's like stupid reasons, even.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:29:28

It it would be I would be at least more comforting if there was a you know, sort of policy argument that really, fundamentally underheard that decision.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:29:36

And there was as best I can tell, even though there are plenty of opponents of the deal.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:29:41

Who moved into decide what policy would be like after the the Jcpa.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:29:47

Withdrawal. One thing I do, wanna I mean I don't know.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:29:51

It's hard to disentangle the all of these geopolitical developments.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:29:56

But I would caution us not to overlook the degree of geopolitical situation in.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:30:02

I hate the terms geopolitical. By the way, really dislike it.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:30:04

And you know my whole thing, that if anybody calls themselves the duplicate analyst, they are immediately suspect, especially on Twitter.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:30:13

But the international political situation in the Middle East as best I can tell how.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:30:20

Already hearted, and quite considerably by the end of the trump administration, in particularly the the de facto Israeli saudi uae, etc.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:30:33

Alliance, and that block of those out, those countries being positioned against an Iran backed by Russia, more in more roundabout way by some other players that had become much more pronounced, and it had even gone in a more to your a direction through the Abraham records the Abraham records.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:30:54

Or whatever they call it, those those the normalization deals.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:30:56

So I think I think that that the situation in the Middle East and you had the the assassination of I can't remember his name, but the Iranian general the situation the least had already deteriorated in a way that was going to make be starting the Jcp.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:31:12

O, a more politically difficult setting aside domestic political considerations, then it you might have hope for a year or 2 before the election.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:31:23

Actually, the Us. Government will turn over in 2,021

[Robert Farley] 14:31:29

No, I'm I think it's I mean that that that seems correct to me right.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:31:29

Got it

[Robert Farley] 14:31:35

You know I I find it interesting to sort of wonder how much of that sort of derives from sort of intentional strategic policy from parts of the Trump administration to essentially foreclose options.

[Robert Farley] 14:31:49

You know this is a crew which is, you know, especially on the foreign policy side, was not known for its ability to think strategically and long term with respect to American foreign policy, but this is one where I think you're right.

[Robert Farley] 14:32:06

I mean, they they sort of set out to preclude a certain kind of policy that the under the United States could undertake.

[Robert Farley] 14:32:12

Towards the Middle East, and they succeeded. You know that that they succeed in changing the game in ways that made it very difficult for the us to to do anything differently.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:32:23

I mean, some of the people involved in this policy were highly competent, new. Exactly what you're doing

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:32:31

One thing I will add to your list, and I know that you want to have questions.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:32:36

You want to go into sort of questions, but I do think that if we don't get to it at some point, we should at least mention that there's an interesting kind of shift in conventional wisdom over the last year and part of that shift has been you know if you want to put it in terms.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:32:51

Of stock or betting markets, that that the the attitude towards the value of the United States as a future investment, as it were, or political investment versus China has has flipped considerably in the last 2 years, that is, to say, there's a lot of optimism comparatively about

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:33:13

The trajectory of United States compared to there was toward the end of the trump administration, and a lot of pessimism about China, and it does.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:33:25

It links into the various apparent form, you know domestic and foreign policy fibres of Xi.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:33:32

Jinping administration. Primarily the Miss, the Shiing Ping regime.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:33:36

Primarily the mishandling with Covid, and the effect that's had on the Chinese economy.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:33:40

But the way that that signaled a more personalist, less well informed and less well vetted decision making process in China on the one hand, the sense that the Us.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:33:53

Maybe has weather things much better than we would have expected. I tend to think that we're sort of swinging from one irrational exuberance to another rational sequence.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:34:03

But I do think that that that change is palpable in the the discourse, at least in among Western foreign policy.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:34:13

Western foreign policy community. And I think that is interesting and potentially consequential for

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:34:21

Various set of background factors that do inform form, policy.

[Robert Farley] 14:34:27

I I have thoughts on this. Cheryl. Do you have thoughts

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:34:31

You've covered a lot there, and I think I'll just take a pass on this one

[Robert Farley] 14:34:40

So, you know I I think that's really an interesting observation, right?

[Robert Farley] 14:34:45

And so if we go back to, if we go back to the beginning of 2,022, I mean what we have.

[Robert Farley] 14:34:51

We have to? We. We have to remember that China and its backers, right China and its will for your difference. I mean, China doesn't really have allies in you know, even the same way that Russia has allies China't really have allies.

[Robert Farley] 14:35:04

But China and people who were supportive of the Chinese narrative were able to essentially make an argument that, hey?

[Robert Farley] 14:35:11

We've come out of Covid and look. China did great right.

[Robert Farley] 14:35:16

China did awesome right. It demonstrates, you know, the resilience and the nimble.

[Robert Farley] 14:35:24

This, and flexibility of China system, good governance. This demonstrates that you know China could be much more efficient on the world leadership stage.

[Robert Farley] 14:35:31

Blah blah blah. And so you know, Covid, really was central to a narrative about Chinese legitimacy on the international stage, right?

[Robert Farley] 14:35:37

And and you could see this in sort of how Chinese diplomats and how Chinese political leaders talked about, talked about China, right?

[Robert Farley] 14:35:46

And that's changed right? I mean, that was that was that was, I mean, I think it was changing a little bit across 22.

[Robert Farley] 14:35:53

But and a lot of people were saying, along the whole time.

[Robert Farley] 14:35:56

It's like they. They have not yet paid the bill for Covid.

[Robert Farley] 14:35:59

That they're gonna have to pay. But now it appears that they really are, and you know, so I mean, I can say that when I was when I was recently in Korea, you know a lot of the conversation I mean that there was very little positive conversation about China from either from an economic a political or a military point of

[Robert Farley] 14:36:17

view because there did seem to be this growing skepticism about you know whether this is a country that's quite politically mature enough or mature is perhaps the wrong word.

[Robert Farley] 14:36:29

But but that has a foreign policy. Sensibility that is sufficiently sophisticated and mature to be able to play the leadership role that it wants to play on the international stage.

[Robert Farley] 14:36:43

And I think certainly I I felt that from the Koreans I think absolutely the Europeans are feeling this, and the Europeans are feeling this in a really hard way, which is why they're even willing to talk about export controls right?

[Robert Farley] 14:36:57

I mean, just China's a big deal for them, and they all been much more willing to talk productively about joining the Us.

[Robert Farley] 14:37:03

Export control system and insulating their own markets from from Chinese technology that I ever thought that they would be willing to.

[Robert Farley] 14:37:12

You know I can't speak to Africa at all, but I can't speak to India, and you know the Indians are as careful as they possibly can be.

[Robert Farley] 14:37:20

But but sort of Indian willingness to entertain and tolerate Chinese nonsense is, is dropping pretty dramatically.

[Robert Farley] 14:37:28

I think you would say the same thing about Japan, and really other places.

[Robert Farley] 14:37:31

And so I mean, so that's a long-winded way of saying, Yeah, Dan, I think you're exactly right in terms of thinking about how China's stock has dropped internationally

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:37:40

I think you're right to emphasize. It's not simply a matter of domestic mismanagement, or the Chinese not being able to effectively calibrate some of their foreign policy.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:37:54

It's also, I think, the degree that Chinese rhetoric on Taiwan was making Beijing look reckless.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:38:03

And how that in in part of that recklessness, I think, fed into the fact that from a kind of us alliance perspective things look pretty good I mean, it's not just that the stock of China has dropped in Japan.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:38:17

Now in Korea, and also but it's also the case that Japan's military buildup continues.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:38:24

You have closer security cooperation almost across the board.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:38:27

India is an interesting I don't really know that much about what's happening with us.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:38:33

India Security Corporation used to be China, obviously in India, captured most headlines in terms of bucking us on Russia.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:38:41

But by and large, I think. You see, you you continue to see mounting evidence that us foreign policy appears to be paying dividends with respect to this amorphous thing called strategic competition.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:38:55

Alright. Now again, this could go south. Variety of reasons, including

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:39:02

Circumstances in American domestic politics, or in the domestic politics, of other states. And this is another.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:39:08

This is sort of other story here as well, about how 2020 to how 2020.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:39:16

Sorry about how 22

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:39:19

Despite the poor, the the unexpectedly or port showing of the Republican party in the midterms, or shall we say the initiative of the Republican party to meet basic expectations, performance, and what structurally look like a very favorable midterm election for them?

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:39:35

By and large, both in the United States and in Europe, where the far right has been the most successful electorally we continue to see a normalization of the far right that I think, is going to have long term consequences for alright shockwaves that have yet to come for international relations and particularly that's something I think I know

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:39:55

we're gonna turn to, which has to do with the hardening of the far right position on Russia, for example. And I knew in the United States and increasing skepticism of NATO and of Ukraine within the Republican Congressional Caucus

[Robert Farley] 14:40:11

Well, how about we take? I'll go ahead. Show

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:40:12

Yeah, say, on on Covid, in China.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:40:19

They are in the throes of what looks like the worst that we had in the United States right now, and that has to affect lots of things within the country manufacturing defense.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:40:35

I I've actually been writing a post which I'll maybe have up in a few days about the effect of Covid on national security, and at first I thought, Boy, any nation that can come out of the pandemic with minimal sickness will be ahead of things I suspect

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:40:58

That's what the Chinese thought, and but it turns out I I think the fact is that Covid is just too transmissible.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:41:11

We let it get out of control early on, and everybody's got it.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:41:16

So there may be some differentials, and have different countries handle it.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:41:22

I think we won't really know the effect on military preparedness for another 20 years. When we can finally get into the documents and see how many sicknesses there have been, and that kind of thing, because no country is gonna let you know about that anytime, soon

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:41:41

I mean, there's also the factor, as I understand it, that the Chinese vaccine continues to underperform

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:41:48

Yeah.

[Robert Farley] 14:41:49

Right, and that China refuses to allow sort of the most successful international vaccines into, and and that as also one which is then tied back to the point that you brought up Dan, which is this question of the mobilization of the far right right and in the end I mean certainly a lot of this most modern iteration.

[Robert Farley] 14:42:10

Of the far right is going to say that it wasn't inspired by, or it was founded in in response to Covid Covid mitigation measures.

[Robert Farley] 14:42:24

Now we know that the story is a lot more complicated than that.

[Robert Farley] 14:42:25

But but their self origin story is very much a pandemic self, origin story, right?

[Robert Farley] 14:42:32

That that's how they think that they were self radicalized.

[Robert Farley] 14:42:35

You know much of the sort of the transnational right, and that that's such a huge conversation, too.

[Robert Farley] 14:42:43

But let's let's pivot a little bit to, and it's really hard, just sort of in the context of this particular podcast.

[Robert Farley] 14:42:51

To, to grasp the enormity of the Russia Ukraine war, but you know, to make the conversation more manageable, I guess.

[Robert Farley] 14:43:02

Maybe my question is for you, for each of you. W.

[Robert Farley] 14:43:08

What is the sort of most surprising development international development that can be traced to Putin's decision to invade Ukraine in February of 2,022, right something that even if you had thought the war was gonna happen this particular Iter, this particular manifestation, of

[Robert Farley] 14:43:25

The international reaction to the war really surprised you, or or sort of really threw you off

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:43:33

Well, I'm not sure if you would include this, but certainly Russia's performance in the war has been the biggest surprise.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:43:43

I think of the whole thing, and it's it's still continues.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:43:49

There's something new every day. Another ammunition dump blew up in Russia.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:43:57

Smoking is really dangerous, as the Ukrainians like to say.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:44:01

All those they did put out a video in which they showed the drone overhead.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:44:08

So I think they've given up a little bit on the smoking line.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:44:13

But Russia's inability to air defend against something like that the whole concept of the invasion. In 3 days they would have a triumphal march in Kiev. It's it's it's still mind boggling to me

[Robert Farley] 14:44:39

So the defenstration of Russia is a great power

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:44:44

That's an appropriate term

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:44:48

I, but the thing is, they do remain a great power. They have enormous natural resources, they have enormous land area, they have an enormous Arctic coast, which is becoming more accessible with global warming, and they have nuclear weapons.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:45:08

So they remain a sort of great power. But if they can't put that into a war against a much smaller nation, and take over in 3 days, what are they doing with it?

[Robert Farley] 14:45:24

What are your thoughts, Dan? What would? What would? What would? January 2023.

[Robert Farley] 14:45:29

Dan say to January 22, Dan, about the Russia Ukraine war

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:45:32
Alright! Essentially what, Cheryl, said I. You know I think, as I've said on this podcast.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:45:37
Before I bought the hype that the Russians successfully restructured their military after the Georgia war, and clearly they had not

[Robert Farley] 14:45:50
No.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:45:51
Yeah, I would just add, though, that that it is important they do remain a great power by any definition we might use.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:45:59
They continue to have out of area politically and militarily important role, right?

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:46:07
They continue to have influence in the Middle East and in Africa and elsewhere.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:46:13
They continue to have some degree of power, production, capacity, and if they weren't a great power, frankly, they would not be able to stay in this conflict.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:46:20
We have to be sort of think about. Okay, there's the question of operationally being really bad at this.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:46:27
But the ability to keep being really bad. I think that my students for, or one of their final assignments in this class, I did on kind of classics of Ir.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:46:40
I had them read, I can various latest, you know, the Us.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:46:43
In the liberal order is going strong piece in foreign affairs, and one thing that the students were really interested in was John's claim.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:46:52
His argument, that you have an understanding of how powerful and influential the Us.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:46:57
Is, and remains the fact that it can suffer some fairly massive defeats.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:47:02
And catastrophically bad foreign policy choices, and still continue to exercise something that looks like, if not global hegemony, then

functional dominance in some areas and enormous amount of regional Germany and say, Western Europe.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:47:18

And I think that I don't wanna say that Russia can kind of take a licking and keep on ticking in the way that the Us.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:47:25

Can, but they do have plenty of resources. They can continue to slow, burn, pour into the conflict and keep it going and I don't think the country that wasn't a great power would be able to sustain this in a way that Russia at least has the capacity to whether they have the

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:47:39

political circumstances that will enable that over the long term.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:47:44

Who knows?

[Robert Farley] 14:47:46

I mean, it's just sort of analogous right that if if Augustus says Roman Empire can lose 10% of its army in Germany and barely blink, and I.

[Robert Farley] 14:47:55

This is surely a defeat, but it also indicated the sort of basic foundational strength of the system that that the Empire persevered, you know, and I would say that there are 2 surprising bits for me.

[Robert Farley] 14:48:07

The first has been, and and you know, don't laugh when I say this, but it's it's been the degree of of international solidarity behind Ukraine.

[Robert Farley] 14:48:20

Right and I think we particularly think about that in terms of the Europeans, where it really feels like Russia's decision to launch this war.

[Robert Farley] 14:48:30

And I I would go so far farther, and I would say Russia's decision to launch the war in the way that they did with very clear operational decisions that they made in terms of the attack on Kiev in the first days of the war have really changed the way that Europe does foreign policy in ways they're

[Robert Farley] 14:48:47

going to go on for a while. You know, my Sweden and Finland are probably eventually gonna get in, you know, even.

[Robert Farley] 14:48:55

But even even the countries that sort of have have been reluctant to join the anti-russia coalition, you know, have mostly been content to sit on the sidelines. Right? I mean.

[Robert Farley] 14:49:06

Yes, India has been, has been, has been, has a has avoided joining many, much of the sanctions regime.

[Robert Farley] 14:49:15

But I can tell you right now that the India, the entire Indian National Security policy edifice, is rethinking its complete, its entire relationship with Russia because they have to right.

[Robert Farley] 14:49:26

It's not choice, right? They have to rethink their relationship with Russia, you know, and and simply the fact that that Russia has been forced to go to Belarus and to Iraq and to North Korea to search for you know basic Munitions and basic military equipment

[Robert Farley] 14:49:45

It's very clearly an indication that Beijing, for all, for all that, she and Pinn Putin are arm in arm Beijing won't give them these things right, Beijing won't sell them 155 artillery rounds in

[Robert Farley] 14:49:59

Beijing won't sell them. Won't sell them armored personnel carriers and won't sell them jet fighters right?

[Robert Farley] 14:50:06

And that's really interesting, right? That. So the solid area is one part and the other part.

[Robert Farley] 14:50:14

And this is more sort of I think it's it's changing a little bit.

[Robert Farley] 14:50:16

It's part of an ongoing conversation about how we think about hegemony and power and hierarchy is that you know

[Robert Farley] 14:50:25

The weaponizing interdependence, literature. That was a really interesting literature that was developing and really fascinating ways.

[Robert Farley] 14:50:35

And of course, Dan Dresner and I know, Dan, you've thought about it, Henry Farrell, you know it actually looks a little less strong now than it did at the beginning of the year, right in terms of Russia's ability to step up and say no right?

[Robert Farley] 14:50:51

That we are simply stepping out of this system, and we're not going to fall apart. Right?

[Robert Farley] 14:50:56

We're not going to collapse. We're going to be able to continue our war making effort.

[Robert Farley] 14:50:58

You can weaponize your interface all the time, all, all you want.

[Robert Farley] 14:51:02

But we have ways of answering that question. Right? Whether it's finance, technology, or whatever else now long term, that may not pan out right and part of our the implication of this may be that look webinars weaponizing your interdependence is a long-term rather than a short-term

[Robert Farley] 14:51:17

Strategy. But you know, as you say, I think both of you say right.

[Robert Farley] 14:51:22

Russia's ability to continue this conversation in the face of the the real resistance of a massive part of the infrastructure of international financial politics and international technology policy is really is really interesting and is is a little bit to me unexpected and kind of impressive

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:51:40

Another thing that has happened as a reconsideration of how we look at Russia is that Russia is now being quite explicitly seen as an ambulance, and that it has been obvious to some of us who have worked with parts of the former amplifier and i've

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:52:08

Certainly gotten an earful of that more than once, but the Soviet Union had this wonderful line about.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:52:17

They were this voluntary and happy union of many different people.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:52:24

You can find lots of illustrations on the Internet.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:52:30

Of all these happy people in their native dress, linked arm and arm under the benevolent Ussr in their own republics, and that kind of rhetoric.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:52:48

And further, the the the friendliness to trade unionism to the workers that characterize the talk, at least of the early Soviet Union.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:53:03

That was so influential through the 1,900 thirtys, all of that kind of came together to soften the way Western scholars looked at the Soviet Union, and I had many arguments when I would say well, the Soviet Union was an Empire.

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:53:28

Oh, no, no, no, no, no! And then we would go from there, and I think that it becomes easier now with a war of empire in progress, and quite explicitly, a war of empire according to Vladimir Putin, that maybe there was a lot more Empire to the Soviet

[Cheryl Rofer] 14:53:54

Union than people have thought

[Robert Farley] 14:54:00

Well, and you know one of the one of the outcomes of this war that has actually come fairly rapidly is that you know Russia's influence over its imperial space.

[Robert Farley] 14:54:13

Seems to be dropping right that that you see you have especially in Kazakhstan, right?

[Robert Farley] 14:54:20

You have a lot of question. Marks about. You know what the relationship between Cosik Stop and Russia should be going into the future.

[Robert Farley] 14:54:26

You have a general reluctance in everywhere. That's not Belarus to be sort of outwardly supportive of Ukraine, and you know none of this should be shocking. Right?

[Robert Farley] 14:54:35

I mean it actually, completely makes sense that you know, parts of the former.

[Robert Farley] 14:54:38

Soviet Empire are nervous about Russia, invading other parts of the former Soviet Empire, but it does seem in a lot of ways to be sort of undermining the position, and not perhaps necessarily because people are saying, Oh, Russia is showing its true colors, but rather because of

[Robert Farley] 14:54:56

What would point out of what you pointed out to the beginning, which is that you know Russia just doesn't have, doesn't necessarily have the the capabilities to bring causak down into line to bring Armenia into line in the ways that it once did and you know I mean this gets

[Robert Farley] 14:55:15

Into a whole bunch of really interesting conversations about empire in the nature of Nate I I certainly found it very frustrating.

[Robert Farley] 14:55:22

In the weeks after the war began, where you know some of the you know, some of the circles that I'm part of, and you know, post-colonial anti-colonial circles would be very much well.

[Robert Farley] 14:55:32

Why should I care about Russia, Russia have participated in the Atlantic slave trade, or you know Russia never colonized.

[Robert Farley] 14:55:38

It's like, yes, yes, they did you know the country wasn't born stretching from?

[Robert Farley] 14:55:44

She the shining C right, that's what Empire looks like, and you can.

[Robert Farley] 14:55:49

You can still find the people that Russia has, you know, did not quite manage to successfully exterminate on its way to Siberia.

[Robert Farley] 14:55:57

Right? So it's absolutely like a classic imperial, you know, State.

[Robert Farley] 14:56:02

But you know people say a lot of ridiculous things when they're on Twitter. So

[Robert Farley] 14:56:10

Dan, do you have any thoughts to close that up

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:56:11

Yeah, I mean, this has been a I mean, this has been a longstanding issue.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:56:14

That I've had as somebody, you know, as somebody who in my first academic incarnation, was a scholar of empires.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:56:25

It's always seem fairly straightforward to me. That country like Russia and China, are organized in ways that are quite clearly imperial.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:56:35

Engage in various forms of colonial imperialism, and you know the idea that you know somehow imperialism was something that's done by Western Powers exclusively is a weird kind of mutation of post 45 attempts to salvage sort of hobbes in and Marxist London as Theories of

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:57:01

Imperialism in an era of you know, that should have had a lot more than it had, and so we you sort of reach a point where those and if third order attempts to salvage these very particular theories of the relationship between confidence and imperialism, become then a basis for making

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:57:19

Pronouncements about. You know, empires that just don't hold up to any scrutiny, whether applied to existing States and governance arrangements were applied historically, the fundamental problem here right is that empire is not a term that has any clear definition and so

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:57:40

It's very easy to knock around with in the semantics.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:57:46

But yes, I mean Russia has been organized as an empire for quite some time, you know.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:57:52

Cheryl, I think, did a really nice job of discussing this, you know.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:57:57

I would just add that you how does anyone look at the relationships between Russia?

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:58:03

Even 15 years ago, and a lot of its internal administrative units.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:58:08

Most notably Chessnia. Without saying, this is an imperial policy.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:58:13

It's like people. I I just don't understand how you could look.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:58:17

I mean, it's it's not quite. It is up there with the idea that China is not an empire in the face of decades, of clonal settler.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:58:28

Imperialism in Western China and in back, now

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:58:33

Whether or not empires are inherently worse than other kinds of coercive forms of politics.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:58:41

I don't know. Those are robust to be to be had.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:58:44

There are clearly several or colonialism when practice in modern ish, racial and ethnic terms is really really bad.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:58:53

But I think that the I mean, I think finally, this is a rant I could have.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:58:58

I I I think I've written things at Lgm and the talk about this in the past.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:59:03

I've written articles about this. Fundamentally, people need to get out of those semantic games that I mentioned, and think about Empire as a way of ordering political authority right as an organizational form.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:59:19

And once you do that, it's not only clear that there are strong imperial resound.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:59:23

You know there are strong imperial elements in Russia even before a war of either for more informal imperialism, depending on the exact moment

against Ukraine, but also there are remnant imperial structures in the United States and there are remnant imperial

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:59:41

Structures in a lot of places in the world, and there are also various forms of infirm on internal relationships that are developed in transnational capacities.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 14:59:50

But I think people have various kinds of ideological and political priors on these questions, and don't think about them in a I think a defensible conceptual

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:00:00

You're reminding me that I went to some of your writings.

[Robert Farley] 15:00:00

Okay, what's what's

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:00:07

Oh, I'll bet a decade ago or more in some of my arguments with people back then about whether Russia was an empire or not.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:00:17

Cool, glad I could be of assistance

[Robert Farley] 15:00:21

You know it's the the the Chechen example is really should make.

[Robert Farley] 15:00:26

Should end this conversation for everybody. This is literally Russia, brutally conquering or brutally subjugating a territory that that is part of itself, and then turning the people of that territory into shock troops for the invasion of the next country that Russia is choosing

[Robert Farley] 15:00:41

To subjugate right, and that I mean, that's literally what happened here.

[Robert Farley] 15:00:45

And that's been that's been part that that is part of the stories that we tell about Empire since the Persian invasion of Greece.

[Robert Farley] 15:00:52

Right, you know, and you you couldn't be more imperial than the story about Russia and Chechnya

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:00:56

It's not even just that. Right? I mean, yeah, I I firm that.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:01:00

But you also have. You know, Moscow appointed a vice, Roy. Run, Chechnya, and keep it quiescent, vice-roy. Governor Stadholder, I don't care what term you use a colonial you know a it's not really a colony, but a a imperial

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:01:16

Administration. And if you want to talk about relationships that looking from on Imperial, you know, you can find a lot more in the Russian.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:01:25

You're abroad right now than you could find in us relations with Southern States.

[Robert Farley] 15:01:31

So before we really like things get out of hand. I think that one of the things we really

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:01:34

Oh, well, I will say that you can find a lot less now than you could 5 years ago, or even 3 years ago, and that is goes back.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:01:42

This really important story about the breakup, at least temporarily, a Russian influence in places like Kazakhstan, and in places like you know, it's not broken up, but it's very different in the caucuses.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:01:55

And you know, that is really, I think you know, I I wanna just underscore what Charles said, like the the consequences of the Ukraine invasion has been a breakdown of Russian regional hegemony, and it's near abroad but it's hard

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:02:07

To imagine anything sort of worse from a great power status or Russian strategic objectives. Perspective

[Robert Farley] 15:02:16

So before we let things get out of hand, let's I I think we definitely wanted to talk about how the phone call is conversation in the United States has developed and that has it.

[Robert Farley] 15:02:26

An electoral aspect to it, especially with sort of how the midterm elections came out, you know, but also, as we've alluded to already in this conversation, in the growth and solidification of a number of far-right narratives about you Us.

[Robert Farley] 15:02:45

Foreign policy that have especially developed with respect to Ukraine.

[Robert Farley] 15:02:51

So you know, I I will say, for my part, that you know often the the most frustrating elements of the Us.

[Robert Farley] 15:03:00

Foreign policy, conversation have not necessarily been, you know, with sort of this far right side, because I I on some level, I find them to be intelligible.

[Robert Farley] 15:03:10

Right. I understand why they don't want the United States to bother Russia over much.

[Robert Farley] 15:03:15

It's because they like Russia, and they like Russian authoritarianism and so it doesn't bother them.

[Robert Farley] 15:03:21

When Russia conquers, it's it's neighbors, you know, but I also think that sort of this.

[Robert Farley] 15:03:27

This, you know, sort of developing far-right approach on foreign policy is one that's going to be, you know.

[Robert Farley] 15:03:35

I think that is already influential over the conversation that's happening at this very moment.

[Robert Farley] 15:03:39

With respect to the Speaker of the House vote, and so I guess I'll throw it to you guys.

[Robert Farley] 15:03:44

What do you go? What are your thoughts on? Sort of how the domestic conversation on foreign policy in the United States is changing

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:03:55

I mean. Sure. Huh! No, Cheryl, you go ahead

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:03:56

Bye. Okay, go ahead. No, do you?

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:04:01

Oh, I mean all I was going to add to that was to say that

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:04:08

What has surprised me is not the far right position on Russia?

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:04:14

Because that's something that I've known and written about for the last few years.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:04:19

It's the degree that the it's the degree that the

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:04:25

Far right, and by that we mean the freedom caucus right of the Republican party has a gone all in on pro Russian narratives.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:04:36

The way that Tucker Carlson's hour of white power has become a kind of non stop stream for Russian propaganda on Ukraine, but also the degree that, frankly, the composition of the House of the House is changing on this issue and that it seems like each

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:04:54

Alright each time we have an election, or we have, you know, a a period of time in between vote votes.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:05:01

There is a a growing NATO Ukraine skeptic.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:05:07

Contingent in the Russian part, I mean in the Republican party.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:05:13

And and and one that has not. In fact, you know the the sort of the the story people tell when they say we shouldn't be so concerned about the European far right?

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:05:25

This is the story that Sherry Berman tells really well in this corner therapy, this Foreign Affairs piece that came out.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:05:33

I I don't know. A month or 2 ago is that by and large, far right parties in Europe, in order to get into government, have shifted their positions on Russia, and we saw that with the brothers of Italy we saw that the sweeten Democrats who had shifted their position.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:05:50

Before the brothers, always did, and when I say the brothers of Italy, I mean the Premier, the the Prime Minister, less so than the party overall, which you know is remains kind of a crypto fascist hot bed, but and not certainly liga or but but the

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:06:11

But and that just hasn't happened, states, in the sense that that as that faction has grown in political power within the Republican party, it is not moderated.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:06:24

Its position, it has become more extreme. Not to me is extremely worrisome.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:06:28

So McConnell, when they just when they won that big vote some months ago, I think McConnell was quoted as saying, like we defeated the isolation list, and you know, very because talking about and I think I may have set this in progress before talking about in particular Ron Paul and

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:06:46

I think. Oh, probably Ron Johnson, I don't know who all that kind of causes in the but you know.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:06:52

So the become but that Mcconnelling of the party which remains down Saturday, is really losing losing in the house.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:07:00

And I think, you know, while you've got these very large majority is often voting on, or the quote of quote unquote right way on Ukraine, there's just increasing number of Republican defectors and part of the bone that Karthy is trying to throw to these people

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:07:16

Who are refusing to vote for him was, you know, that they would have have the ability to conduct oversight.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:07:22

Their way on the American contributions were effort. And can you imagine, yeah, Julie, you know, can you?

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:07:30

You know Jewish space lasers, lady right doing something that would be anything other than a propagandist attack job on what I'm sure actually needs desk desperately needs oversight. I'm sure there's a lot of waste and fraud going on in American spending on

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:07:48

Ukraine, anyway. That's so. I gotta say this is something where I, as I've mentioned before, Alex Cooley, my freaking co-author, and I have this sort of longstanding, informal bed about whether they're how long and if ever the before the Republican

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:08:02

Party becomes officially anti-NATO, and he thinks that is imminent within the next 2 to 6 years.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:08:10

I am, have been traditionally more skeptical at this position, but it just seems like every once in a while there's a bit of information that's just.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:08:19

He's right.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:08:26

Yeah, a couple of maybe disconnected thoughts here

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:08:33

Zoom. Republicans do tend to repeat Russian talking points rather uncritically, which is kind of surprising, and also one wonders what the connections may be.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:08:52

There! I don't want to imply that I think there are connections, but Tucker Carlson, of course, is the prime example of this, and sometimes you just hear the Russian talking points the repeated word for word.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:09:13

We have Elon musk, and the venture capitalist Republic, Russian leaning, set in Silicon Valley, who are repeating Russian talking points, must most famously.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:09:34

Just before people at Twitter. Hmm, right? Putting forth a piece plan, quote unquote for Ukraine, in which Ukraine gives up everything and Russia guess what they want.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:09:50

This is so, that is disturbing, and I think something that I'd like to see.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:10:01

Maybe the news media delve into a little bit more, just to understand whether this is just a commonality of interest in autocracy, or whether there are connections, you know.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:10:18

Certainly this one Congressional aid was just convicted of, or maybe it was a campaign aid was just convicted of taking a Russian broad.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:10:29

So there's one direct connection, anyway. I'd like to know.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:10:35

That's a crucially important point. And I don't think you should leave it so implicit right?

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:10:36

Understand that a little bit better, and the other

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:10:41

I mean one of the issues with George Santos, for example, is a backing from promotion sources.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:10:49

I don't know if you know my sense of I don't know anything about Musk except for he's a lot dumber than I thought he was.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:10:56

But yeah, I I think I think, actually like, you know, LED Norton gave him a flattering betrayal.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:11:02

And no, it looks like, but he clearly has fallen.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:11:06

You know his, his, one of his long term business partners, and backwards.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:11:10

David Sachs has been very all in on the pro Russian propaganda for quite some time, and I think what's happened to Musk is what happens to people when they slip into those communities.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:11:21

Further, which is, you know, they they get this kind of you wind up with the what was it is?

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:11:29

Who was it at? Lawyers kind of money many years ago that said, you know that ever since 9 11 I've been outraged by Chop aquitic right sort of phenomena of you know.

[Robert Farley] 15:11:34

Right, right.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:11:38

Once you kind of go in, you fall into that particular kind of rhetorical chamber.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:11:42

It's you just get worse and worse and worse, and you know your friends shift, and the influences go to wrong way, and I think that that is we're watching that in real time with Musk, and I think that's David Sax not David Saxon. Connections. And some of those Vcs.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:11:59

I Don't know what those are, but we do know right?

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:12:02

I think that there it's very clear that the Russians were.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:12:05

You know, in a fairly standard operating procedure, attempt to penetrate the Republican party that had been ongoing for quite some time, but to some degree, as I've already before was set back by the Trump Russia Gate stuff because it through scrutiny to what they were up to but

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:12:22

There's no reason to think that's ended. In fact, we continue to see, you know, have evidence.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:12:26

Post that of junkets to Russia, and other sorts of things, there continues to be this an active connection, active set of connections to the the far right and all right movements, particularly in terms of funding streams, and mutual support scenes on our reactionary cultural conservative issues, the Russians know

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:12:48

This, they exploit it, they view it as a soft power resource.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:12:51
Sometimes it's hand handed like in Putin's mentions of Jk.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:12:56
Rowling at wokenness speeches, but oftentimes it's more substantial then.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:13:01
So I think there really are these, we we need to not.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:13:05
We need to remember that we already had very extensive evidence.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:13:08
Financial linkage ties in this this form of subversion that the Russians engage in where they entice people with business ventures, they bring the, you know, in trips, and they bring them into their orbit and then they find ways to fund them for kremlin affiliated oligarchs and

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:13:26
to underwrite them. And this process was quite, as I said, quite advanced in some areas with the Us.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:13:32
Conservative movement before 12,017, 2,016, and while it clearly has been, was interdicted to some degree by that, it's, clearly, I think, still ongoing.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:13:43
We should not, you know we we should be subjecting this to a lot more strictly than we are, and we should not be waiting off the occasional news items.

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:13:51
Reports about. Oh, wait a minute. Where is this? Money is coming from?

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:13:55
The source right, as if this is all kind of stochastic, fine stochastic support for politicians

[Robert Farley] 15:14:04
Yeah. And I think sort of along these lines, right? It's, you know, to return to the question of musk.

[Robert Farley] 15:14:10
But it it is awfully interesting, and I was a little bit surprised by this, but I it was awfully interesting that, of course, Musk decides to turn over his Twitter files investigation to Matt Taibi, who I will grant is a complicated figure, right but but much of his origin story.

[Robert Farley] 15:14:27
That he likes to tell about himself is very Russia oriented right?

[Robert Farley] 15:14:33

And in particular, you're absolute resistance to the idea that Russia has ever made any effort to interfere in us.

[Robert Farley] 15:14:39

Politics at all, and that that, in fact, that allegation has broken American politics, which I think is pretty core to his argument about the Twitter files and other things.

[Robert Farley] 15:14:49

But you know it's interesting that Musk finds him rather than some, you know.

[Robert Farley] 15:14:53

Sort of actual, hardworking journalist to take through the twitter files

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:15:02

I'm sorry, I think, I interrupted Cheryl, because I just had to like this is something that really bothers me.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:15:06

Oh!

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:15:07

Is that you know we this did not go away with trump

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:15:13

No, that's okay. Damn that! You made a strong point.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:15:17

I was trying to sound not too paranoid, which one can easily do, and you were reminding me of a whole bunch of other stuff that I didn't have in my mind at the moment.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:15:33

So with the other side of what I was gonna say is that

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:15:40

For for somebody who grew up during the 1950 S. And so the extreme anti-soviet stands of the Republican party.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:15:52

This is quite a reversal, but when you think about it, the reversal is at least as much on Russia's side as it is on the Republican side, and Russia has gone from this.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:16:08

So Socialist, literally Socialist governance to a more imperial type of governments.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:16:19

They've always had the autocracy. But now the Putin is emphasizing the church and the Orthodox Church in one of the connections that Dan implied has certainly been reaching out to conservative Christians in the United States and there are explicit ties and

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:16:42

Exchanges there, and plus the general dislike of modernity, including our 72 gender, which they think they're making fun of by bumping the number up to 72.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:17:05

But you know it's it's clearly a preference for, and older gender model.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:17:17

And basically white men in charge above everything, and women subordinated people of color support needed.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:17:28

And if you don't fit the gender bottle, just stay in the closet

[Robert Farley] 15:17:38

So I think we're we're at close to an hour now, and so I would like to, you know, sort of pose a question just to wrap things up. You know.

[Robert Farley] 15:17:46

I hit, and as all we hate being on the record, but you know, here's here's here's my question it's 2 parts, right is the Russia Ukraine war going to end in 23.

[Robert Farley] 15:17:59

And if so, why right? And by? Why? The answer might be a Ukrainian collapse. Western collapse, Russian collapse or big peace deal with genius. And so I'm curious. I'll give you my thoughts after you guys give me your thoughts.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:18:15

I will come out with a fourth. Right? I have no idea it's really hard to tell what's going to happen here.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:18:26

I I think most of us, even when we admit that brush is doing very badly, militarily.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:18:36

Still think that because they have hung in there, maybe they can get some kind of victory out of a hat, or just by humbling Ukrainian cities and infrastructure sufficiently to ship the country down basically because it doesn't appear that the Ukrainians are

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:19:07

Going to just say no. We want our lights back on.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:19:12

Come in and do your worst. Russia Russia's done so many horrible things in the war that they they've hardened.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:19:22

Ukraine resolve, because there's no way the Ukrainians want to give in and have Russians take over with the horrible things that have been found in all the cities that the Russians occupied.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:19:41

So, and now it was just an article by one of the military, one of the Ukrainian military people in foreign affairs that gave a very good case for Ukraine, having to take Crimea back that there is no safety for you Ukraine or anyone in the

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:20:01

Black Sea area as long as Russia has Crimea, so Ukraine isn't about to give up anytime soon.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:20:10

Russia looks like they won't. It looks like the West is pretty well sticking together and supporting Ukraine. So I there, there's no obvious way that this ends in the next year

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:20:31

I got nothing to add to that. Okay, extremely. Yeah. Cheryl is right, as always.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:20:34

Okay.

[Robert Farley] 15:20:36

So, so I mean, here's the story I would tell if that if there's going to be a piece, this is where I think it would, it would go, and I'll go out on several limbs here you know I think there's a very real possibility that you're going to have

[Robert Farley] 15:20:52

dueling Ukrainian Russian offenses, possibly through the spring.

[Robert Farley] 15:20:58

But then, in the early summer, the the way to piece for you know that the and and this is not to sort of give, say, that would be a great piece or a desirable piece.

[Robert Farley] 15:21:10

But you know the way to piece. Here is a a Russian offensive follow.

[Robert Farley] 15:21:15

A Russian failed offensive, followed by Ukrainian, failed offensive, which I don't know how much of the conversation it would change in Russia.

[Robert Farley] 15:21:24

I think it probably would change a little bit of the conversation in Ukraine.

[Robert Farley] 15:21:29

I think it would certainly change or alter the conversation among Ukraine supporters.

[Robert Farley] 15:21:33

But and and sort of you know that which then puts us into a sort of a situation which would resemble that that existed on the Korean Peninsula in 1,952, where you had you know 2 sides which were very deeply fortified where it was it was a

[Robert Farley] 15:21:54

Real struggle and incredibly expensive. In order to reacquire particular territory, and where, you know a lot of the most important territorial questions had already been answered.

[Robert Farley] 15:22:03

Right that North Korea was going to exist South Korea was going to exist the parts that they were fighting for were new, longer, sort of truly critical parts of controlling the Korean Peninsula, and so now you you import that model to Ukraine and sort of a lot of your basic

[Robert Farley] 15:22:22

territorial questions have been resolved. Ukraine retakes Carson. They retake Snake Island.

[Robert Farley] 15:22:28

They retake car Kev. You know the parts of Ukraine that Russia still controls are really important, but they're gonna be really hard to take back from by the Ukrainians.

[Robert Farley] 15:22:39

And so, you know, that's that's kind of if if there's a way to piece in 2023 you know, it's a piece that is not ideal for either side. But it's also a piece.

[Robert Farley] 15:22:51

I think, where the Russians can be forced to accept a Western security guarantee whether that security guarantee is NATO or not is a different question, but I think they can.

[Robert Farley] 15:23:01

They can be forced to accept a Russian secure or a Western security guarantee.

[Robert Farley] 15:23:05

For Ukraine, and you know something like piece can be found through that formula where, unfortunately, Russia continues to occupy parts of Ukraine, including parts that it didn't have in 2,014.

[Robert Farley] 15:23:19

But there is agreement on a bore broad enough swath of the Ukrainian political elite, and in the West that it's just going to be too hard to retake the rest of of Ukraine from Russia

[Robert Farley] 15:23:35

No, I don't know if that'll happen, but but I think that might be the way to A, to a very unsatisfying piece between between Ukraine and Russia in 2,023

[Robert Farley] 15:25:04

So I don't know. What do you think about my scenario?

[Robert Farley] 15:25:06

I don't think we have time to work through it, but I'm curious

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:25:10

Yeah, I, think I I think

[Robert Farley] 15:25:10

If you have any thoughts on that piece scenario

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:25:16

Before the war to end in the near future, which would be this coming year.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:25:25

The year that we are in now it. It would have to be something like mutual exhaustion on both sides

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:25:34

Because there's there's just no indication of any other kind of movement towards any kind of settlement.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:25:44

Whatsoever. Now this latest, the Ukrainian attack on Makiva Makariska.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:26:02

In which they seem to have killed more than a 100 Russians.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:26:09

The numbers are up for dispute. The Russians have up the number, their number to 89.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:26:18

The Ukrainians are claiming as many as 400.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:26:21

So th that was big. It seems to have been mostly mobics.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:26:29

The mobilized people in this latest suite that Putin did, and people are reacting badly to it.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:26:42

In Russia, whether that's a breakpoint or not.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:26:46

Only time will tell. There's no way to know on any particular thing, and it's probably not ever going to be one particular thing.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:27:00

It will be some piling up of of events, deaths, terrible things happening, more hits from Ukraine into Russia.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:27:17

And I'm realizing that the eminence dump that I was talking about early in the program was in Luhas, not Russia, but the Russian occupied part of us.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:27:29

So, but still it's a hit against Russia.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:27:34

So, yeah, I I think if the war is going to end this year, it will have to be something like what you described

[Robert Farley] 15:27:46

I think it's and I, you know. I wish we were talking more about this right

[Robert Farley] 15:27:53

The I mean Russia seems to have been hurt pretty badly.

[Robert Farley] 15:27:58

By the by, the climatic climatic conditions in Europe. Right and sort of everybody's talking about this in terms of a in terms of a massive heat wave. Right?

[Robert Farley] 15:28:09

It's not a heat wave. Right? Yeah. So when record high temperatures happen in July, that's a heat wave, right when they happen in January, right?

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:28:09

Right.

[Robert Farley] 15:28:20

We just refer to it as a really mild winter right now it's deeply concerning from a climate change point of view, that it was 25 degrees, in Frickin Poland, right in January.

[Robert Farley] 15:28:30

But it's really bad from the Russian perspective, right?

[Robert Farley] 15:28:33

Because from this idea that you know, you can, you can choke.

[Robert Farley] 15:28:36

You can choke the Europeans by making it cold for them, and you know I I have lots of friends in the Uk.

[Robert Farley] 15:28:44

And it really did seem, for in parts of December, like they were freaking out right in terms of the energy prices which were not entirely drowned by Russia, as we're driven by a whole bunch of other problems which we haven't even talked about we haven't even talked

[Robert Farley] 15:28:58

About. You know the another big thing about 2,022 being the absolute disaster of the British political system.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:29:04

That's true.

[Robert Farley] 15:29:05

Right, but you know, it really felt like people in in the United Kingdom were panicking over energy prices, and that that has eased a lot because the weather has eased a lot.

[Robert Farley] 15:29:20

And you know, I think that is also already reflected in prices.

[Robert Farley] 15:29:24

And it's reflected in the ability of of the Russian State to to finance the war, which may be in more question in 2,023 than it has been in 2,022.

[Robert Farley] 15:29:34

You know, as as as it as you know. As the economic fallout of the war develops, so

[Robert Farley] 15:29:43

Well, do you have any final thoughts before we span it out?

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:29:48

I would like for 2023 to be a little calmer than 22, if I could put in a request.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:30:00

Got it. I I'm not sure any of us can keep going with this.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:30:07

I suppose we will. But oh, lovely arrest would sure be nice after 6 years of various types of chaos

[Robert Farley] 15:30:19

Right right that these are. These are. These are for us interesting times.

[Robert Farley] 15:30:24

But you know sometimes I think about this, and I think about this.

[Robert Farley] 15:30:28

Looking back as as I'm preparing a syllabus for my my spring, of 23 class, right?

[Robert Farley] 15:30:34

Same class, of taught since defense state craft, same class I've taught since, you know, spring of 2,006.

[Robert Farley] 15:30:41

So it's really long time. And you know, I can remember teaching it last year and being so excited.

[Robert Farley] 15:30:49

Oh, my goodness, there's a real war, right? We can.

[Robert Farley] 15:30:52

We can talk about, look and talk about all this stuff like maneuver and artillery, and all this stuff, and you know, and then at some point, it occurred to me, it's like there was a real war for a long time of this of the last 17 years.

[Robert Farley] 15:31:06

Right. Oh, but it was a counterinsurgency conflict, right?

[Robert Farley] 15:31:10

Oh, it wasn't a real war. It's like no, I mean no, actually the it's been messed up for a little bit right.

[Robert Farley] 15:31:16

You know that that that we we have been living in interesting times for for a bit and Ukraine is Youkraine is interesting for different ways.

[Robert Farley] 15:31:26

But you know, it, and it is a return to, and you know, in magnitude, I remember people people were saying at the beginning of the war, well, if it kills as many people as Iraq, it'd be shocking.

[Robert Farley] 15:31:36

It's like it has, right it has. And so you know, you Crane is different in magnitude, but we were kind of fighting a lot of wars since 2,001.

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:31:45

Oh, yeah.

[Robert Farley] 15:31:46

Yeah, I mean. And and so you know, we we can overstate the extent to which Russia's invasion of Ukraine is the return to this is an abrogation as an abbreviation of of the the long piece in Europe.

[Robert Farley] 15:32:04

So, Dan, do you have any final thoughts?

[Daniel Nexon [he/they]] 15:32:09

I'm good. I think I've rented enough for for 3 podcasts in this one

[Robert Farley] 15:32:16

Alright. Well, then, I would like to thank all of the listeners of Laura's guns and money, and all the readers of lawyers get so many, and Dan and Charl, I would like to thank you both personally for joining us here on the the first podcast of 2,023

[Cheryl Rofer] 15:32:17
Okay.

[Robert Farley] 15:32:34
Which will see a few changes in a at lawyers, guns, and money, not a lot, but but some changes at Lgm.

[Robert Farley] 15:32:39
And I hope people are gonna like them, and that people will continue listening to us.