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A Collection of Interesting, Important, and Controversial Perspectives Largely Excluded from the American Mainstream Media

Donald Trump, Kamala Harris, and the Tottering American Empire • 34m

RON UNZ • JULY 29, 2024 • 4,500 WORDS • [LEAVE A COMMENT](#) [Q&A](#)



Collapsing empires may often flail about in strange fashion before they go into the darkness. Recent developments in American political life brought those thoughts to my mind.

With an American presidential election just three months away, we have seen a series of remarkable, sometimes unprecedented developments impacting who will spend the next four years sitting in the Oval Office and controlling our government policy.



Epub Format 

Four years ago President Joseph Biden replaced Donald Trump in the White House, and a month ago they held the first public debate of their rematch for the presidency. Many believed it demonstrated the total mental enfeeblement of our current chief executive, leading to widespread calls by leading Democratic Party financial donors and media pundits that Biden abandon the race at this very late stage.

[VIDEO LINK](#)

In fairness I finally watched the full ninety-minute debate a couple of days ago and it entirely confirmed those claims of his serious mental impairment. Although Trump hardly seemed a brilliant policy expert, being just as blustery, boastful, and sometimes mistaken as always, he was as fully alert as he had been in 2020 or even 2016. But Biden came across as elderly and mentally befuddled, more like a nursing home patient than the plausible chief executive of the world's global superpower. Many of his remarks recalled his repeated claims^[1] to have seen explicit photographic evidence of the 40 Israeli babies beheaded by Hamas militants, although that alleged incident was merely a ridiculous

propaganda-hoax. Biden's severe impairment also helps to explain why he had carefully avoided any direct conversations with Russian President Vladimir Putin or Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Despite the obvious evidence of Biden's incapacity to govern, his aides and close political allies strongly resisted the growing demand that he exit the race, noting that he had already won a long series of primaries and captured nearly all the Democratic delegates. However, these widespread public demands from the media suggested that they and our political elites had been concealing these facts from the public for some time and also raised natural questions about who exactly had been running our government over the last several years.

During the presidential debates of 1984, the hostile liberal media had claimed that President Ronald Reagan showed similar signs of elderly befuddlement[2] and should therefore be rejected by the voters. But although there may have been a brief example or two of that, Reagan's mental status seemed absolutely nothing like Biden's, hardly surprising since the former was still in his early 70s while Biden is now 81.

Indeed, I think a much better analogy for Biden came with three of the last leaders of the decaying Soviet Empire of the 1980s, who nominally led that superpower even while senile or even comatose. In an article last summer I'd described that troubling analogy:

For Americans such as myself who came of age during the 1970s or early 1980s, the Soviet Union always carried the whiff of a decaying ideological empire, ruled by a decrepit political leadership class that had long since lost the trust of its own people.

Such was my opinion at the time, and nothing I have learned since then has changed it. Three Soviet leaders ruled during that era—Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov, and Konstantin Chernenko—all elderly and infirm, with the reigns of the last two being so brief that our own President Ronald Reagan once quipped that they died too rapidly for him to schedule a summit. Given that the top leaders of the USSR were so obviously enfeebled, analysts recognized that they were hardly the real decision-makers of the declining Soviet colossus that they nominally controlled; instead, most power was presumably vested in the hands of shifting coalitions of their senior aides and advisors, persons often obscure to the outside world. Perhaps partly as a consequence of this severe weakness at the top, the USSR entered a period of steep social and economic decline, and within just a few more years it had disappeared from the world.

All this was certainly true, but it is quite sobering to consult Wikipedia and discover the exact ages of those elderly Soviet leaders, who had been so widely ridiculed in the Western media as decrepit or even senile. Brezhnev[3] was 75 when he died in 1982, while Andropov[4] came to power at age 68 and died fifteen months later, replaced by his successor Chernenko[5], age 72, who only survived a year. So in today's America, all those confused, befuddled Soviet leaders whom we regarded with such scorn would be youthful political figures compared to our own President Joe Biden, currently seeking reelection at the age of 80, or his leading rival, former President Donald Trump, age 77. Medical science has obviously advanced quite a bit in the last four decades, but I think the total Western domination of the global media is a more important factor in this large difference of

perceptions. Is Biden really so much sharper than Brezhnev and Chernenko, or is it simply that our media is better at hiding his inability from most of the general public?

During his entire political career, Biden had been notorious for merely reading the scripts and speeches written for him by others, and even in his 40s he sometimes seemed completely unaware[6] of the falsehoods and total absurdities he was spouting. Lately he has sometimes begun confusing our official positions[7] on crucial policy matters, requiring his aides to quickly “clarify” them. I’m sure that Brezhnev or Chernenko would have done the same if they’d been put into that position.

Although he ranked as the world’s leading Communist, Brezhnev personally indulged himself by accumulating a large collection of luxury automobiles[8], including Maseratis, Rolls Royces, and Jaguars, an embarrassing story widely promoted by the powerful Western media as proof of Soviet hypocrisy. But although the direct evidence of the Hunter Biden laptop revealed that Biden and his family had taken many, many millions of dollars in secret payoffs from foreigners, our mainstream media has hidden that reality[9], so much of the public probably still remains unaware of it.

- American Pravda: The Rise of the BRICS and the Fall of the USSA?[10]
Ron Unz • **The Unz Review** • September 4, 2023 • 3,300 Words

Even as Biden stood his ground and refused those growing demands to step aside, the American political landscape was suddenly transformed by a nearly successful assassination attempt against Donald Trump, his Republican opponent. In a bizarre and highly-suspicious incident, Trump’s Secret Service detail inexplicably allowed a 20-year-old to freely position himself on a nearby rooftop with a rifle and fire several shots, the first of which slightly wounded the candidate and according to media reports came within an inch or two of killing him.

Although enormously hated and feared by most of the American political establishment, Trump was ahead in the polls and widely regarded as the odds-on favorite to regain the White House when this extremely strange lapse in presidential security nearly led to his death. Just after the incident, I’d noted in an article some of the very troubling questions it raised.

For more than eight years, most American elites have expressed a seething hatred of Trump, doing everything they could to frustrate his presidency, ensure his defeat in 2020, and then prevent him from regaining the White House in 2024. Soon after a mob of outraged Trumpists stormed the DC Capitol on January 7, 2021, I published an article pointing to the overwhelming evidence that the American media and our Internet giants, assisted by numerous dishonest former intelligence officers, had combined to steal the 2020 election from Donald Trump:

- American Pravda: Our Disputed Election[11]
Ron Unz • **The Unz Review** • January 14, 2021 • 2,000 Words

...More recently as Trump's efforts to regain the presidency moved forward, his bitter Democratic enemies launched a series of outrageous political prosecutions hoping that felony convictions and possible imprisonment would destroy Trump's popularity with voters. But instead Trump's polling numbers continued to rise, and his Republican renomination became assured.

- [American Pravda: Donald Trump, Eugene Debs, and AMLO](#)[12]
The American Political System as Laughingstock or Trainwreck
Ron Unz • **The Unz Review** • August 7, 2023 • 4,900 Words

Having failed at every step to block Trump's rise, his political enemies were left with few available options. Their dilemma eventually led Tucker Carlson to publicly speculate that they would finally conclude that orchestrating Trump's assassination was their best chance of preventing his triumphant return to the White House[13].

According to the media accounts, a young 20-year-old gunman named Thomas Matthew Crooks was somehow able to enter the vicinity of the Trump rally armed with an AR-15 rifle. He set himself up on the rooftop of a nearby building and fired several shots, one of which wounded Trump in the ear while another killed a bystander in the crowd, after which he himself was shot dead by counter-sniper fire from security personnel.

Allowing an armed gunman such an opportunity to potentially kill a leading presidential candidate obviously involved extremely serious lapses in security by the Secret Service agents guarding Trump and this has naturally provoked widespread suspicions that some sort of plot had been responsible. There have also been claims circulating on social media that bystanders noticed the gunman and alerted authorities, but instead of ordering the sniper shot or at least securing the candidate and taking him to safety, the security personnel waited until the prospective assassin had fired his potentially fatal shots before taking any action.

- [The Attempted Assassination of Donald Trump](#)[14]
Ron Unz • **The Unz Review** • July 17, 2024 • 2,000 Words

Did Trump's bitter political enemies conspire to have him killed by an assassin's bullet, as had happened more than a half-century ago to President John F. Kennedy and then JFK's younger brother Robert few years later?

If so, I think an untrained 20-year-old nursing home employee like Crooks would hardly have been the logical choice as a presidential assassin, especially since he had no apparent motive. But that young man would have served as an absolutely ideal patsy or decoy, drawing the attention of the crowd and security personnel, while a highly professional sniper concealed elsewhere eliminated Trump. This was exactly the role played by Sirhan in RFK's 1968 killing[15], and indeed, claims have circulated that a

second gunman was spotted, while many others have argued that the acoustic record indicates that one or more additional snipers took part, thereby proving the existence of a conspiracy to kill Trump.

However, all this evidence has been heavily disputed and I don't think I possess the technical expertise to properly evaluate it. Also, if a second, expert marksman had been firing I doubt that Trump would have been lucky enough to escape with nothing more serious than a minor flesh wound to his ear. Even if Trump had moved his head so that the first bullet narrowly missed him, I'd expect that a professional sniper would have fired several more shots, ensuring that he was hit.

Thus, although I find the circumstances of the attack on Trump highly suspicious, until more solid evidence comes out I still lean against any conspiracy to kill him, with Trump's almost unscathed survival being the strongest grounds for my skepticism. However, if Trump had been killed or gravely wounded, I would probably lean in the opposite direction.

Despite my own position, I certainly understand why others would assume a conspiracy. Suppose, for example, that the shoe were on the other foot and President Putin had very narrowly escaped death from an assassin's bullet while attending a public event in Russia. Surely our media and political pundits would almost uniformly declare that Putin's internal enemies had been responsible and that this attack indicated that the Russian political system was spiraling towards severe domestic violent unrest and collapse. So can we insouciantly ignore the parallel case in our own country?

If Trump had died, many of his fervent followers would surely have reacted in dramatic fashion, being absolutely convinced that Deep State operatives had murdered him. Trump may be hated and feared by roughly half the country, including the overwhelming majority of its elites, but most of the other half regards him as their heroic champion, and his political martyrdom might easily have provoked a wave of domestic unrest and perhaps even retaliatory violence. According to most media accounts, an unexpected movement of Trump's head saved him from likely death, and by accidentally dodging that bullet, the controversial presidential candidate may have allowed our entire society to dodge a metaphorical one.

Whether or not Trump had been targeted for death by his American enemies, the shooting certainly represented the most serious domestic assassination attempt in the decades since John Hinckley had shot and critically wounded President Reagan in 1980 almost 45 years ago. That latter incident marked the endpoint of seventeen years of such attempts on the life of presidents or presidential candidates, beginning with JFK's 1963 assassination and the 1968 assassination of his younger brother Robert just minutes after his victory in the winner-take-all California primary. Gov. George Wallace was crippled by an assassin's bullet in 1972 and two different women took shots at President Gerald Ford in 1975. Those same years had also seen a series of other high-profile assassinations, including those of Malcolm X in 1965, George Lincoln Rockwell in 1967, Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968, and John Lennon in 1980.

Given today's sharply divided American society, even if Crooks were the deranged lone gunman that the media declares him to be, there's a very real risk that his attack may spark the beginning of a new cycle of such violent incidents.

Trump is a lifelong showman and only moments after cheating death, he raised his fist in defiance as the Secret Service agents hustled him off the stage. This produced the iconic photograph of the incident, one that recalled the famous Marine flag-raising at Iwo Jima[16], and within hours, Chinese business entrepreneurs were already offering apparel for sale displaying that heroic image[17].



Trump's near-miraculous survival and the burst of sympathetic media coverage he attracted led many observers to assume that his victory in November was assured, and various billionaires quickly clambered on board his political bandwagon. This notably included industrialist Elon Musk, the world's wealthiest man, who pledged an astonishing \$45 million *per month* to a pro-Trump political committee.

Almost immediately afterward, Trump named Sen. JD Vance as his vice presidential choice[18] for his ticket. The 39-year-old Vance[19] would be one of the very youngest vice presidents in American history[20], only exceeded by 36-year-old John Breckinridge[21] in the mid-19th century and Richard Nixon[22], who was 39 years old when elected. But both those latter men had already served years in elective office prior to their elevation, while Vance had less than two years in any public position, having only begun his first term as a U.S. senator in 2023.

Unlike most of the other figures whom Trump had been considering, Vance was a strong public opponent of the Ukraine War[23] and held many other political positions that the bipartisan American political establishment greatly disliked. This choice was probably a shrewd one, reducing the likelihood of any future attempts to eliminate Trump since he would merely be replaced him with someone who also held many unacceptable views.

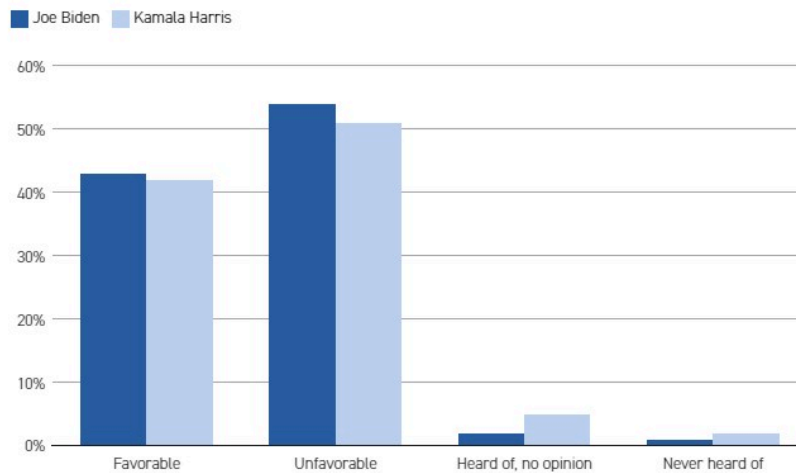
No sooner had the media firestorm over Trump's brush with death subsided than major Democratic party donors and operatives redoubled their efforts to force Biden to quit the race, and they finally succeeded in doing so, a development unique in American political history

Back in March 1968, the surprising strength of Democratic challenger Sen. Eugene McCarthy in the New Hampshire primary led President Lyndon Johnson to abandon his reelection effort[24], shocking the entire country by announcing that decision in a nationwide broadcast. But Biden's withdrawal decision was far stranger, coming only after he had won every Democratic primary and received some 99% of all the Democratic delegates[25], already having become the *de facto* nominee of his party. Moreover, instead of announcing and explaining his decision in a public broadcast, his staff merely released a letter on Twitter[26], with some observers noting that the signature used didn't even seem to match Biden's usual one, leading cynics to wonder whether our mentally-challenged chief executive had actually been involved in the decision to abandon his reelection effort.

Biden's departure quickly elevated Vice President Kamala Harris[27] as the likely name to replace him on the ballot and within a few days she attracted enough pledged delegates to confirm her nomination. But although the main reason for Biden's removal had been his perceived political weakness against Trump, polls during most of 2024 had shown that Harris was just as unpopular as Biden[28].

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris remain unpopular

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris?

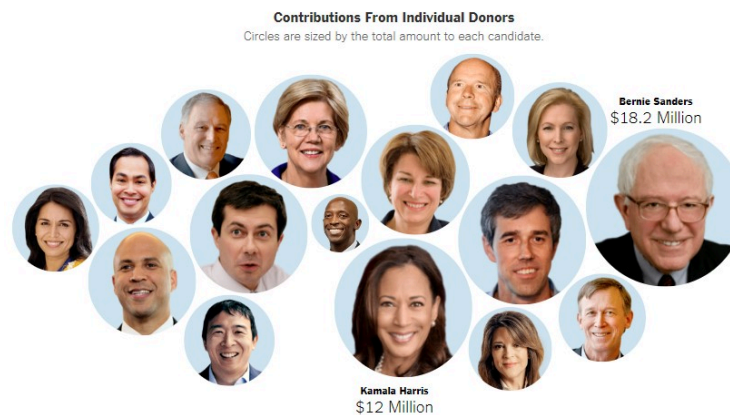


Note: The survey was conducted among 3,996 registered voters from May 28-29. Margin of error: +/- 2 percentage points.
Source: POLITICO/Morning Consult
Catherine Kim/POLITICO

As a moderate establishmentarian woman of mixed South Asian and black Caribbean ancestry with a Jewish husband, Harris seemed to check every diversity-box on the Democratic Party scorecard and after she easily won a 2016 U.S. Senate race in California, she was soon heralded as a top Democratic presidential prospect for 2020. Entering the presidential primaries in January 2019, she quickly raised more money[29] than any candidate other than maverick socialist Sen. Bernie Sanders. With Sanders considered totally unacceptable by the party leadership, Harris therefore seemed ideally positioned for the nomination.

Bernie Sanders and Kamala Harris Lead the Democratic Money Race

By SARAH ALMUKHTAR, THOMAS KAPLAN, BLACKI MIGLIOZZI and RACHEL SHOREY APRIL 16, 2019



But although Harris was enormously popular among the wealthy elite who dominated the party machinery, she proved so remarkably unpopular among actual Democratic voters that she abandoned the race after just ten months[30].

For decades, the byword for failed presidential candidacies had been the humiliating 1980 Republican campaign of former Texas Gov. John Connolly[31], who raised and spent \$11 million—an unprecedented sum in that era—while only winning a single delegate[32]. But Harris broke that

longstanding record, with her dismal polling numbers leading her to drop out of the 2020 race before the first ballots were even cast in Iowa and thus gaining not a single delegate for the \$43 million[33] that she had raised and spent. So Harris ranked as perhaps the least successful presidential contender in all of American history.

But despite such monumental failure at the polls, those same Democratic elites who had hailed her as their ideal candidate soon resurrected her from the political graveyard by persuading the elderly Biden to put her on his ticket, leading to her election as vice president after the sharply disputed results of the 2020 race.

A similar group of Democratic Party billionaires and political operatives, presumably meeting in scrupulously smoke-free rooms, have now removed Biden from the ticket despite the 14 million votes he won in the presidential primaries, replacing him with Harris who won zero votes. Even the most corrupt party bosses of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries might never have dared attempt such a cynical political maneuver. This utterly anti-democratic process of selecting a nominee obviously belies the name of the Democratic Party.

Democratic insiders had surely been aware of Biden's incapacity for some time, yet they kept that information from the public and the voters, only choosing to replace Biden after he had already won all of the primaries and been assured of the nomination, a seemingly strange and embarrassingly undemocratic strategy. But as various individuals have suggested, this may have been their least bad option given the risks they might have faced in an open primary lacking President Biden on the ballot.

A large portion of the Democratic electorate has been outraged by Israel's ongoing massacre of so many tens of thousands of helpless Palestinian civilians and the unwavering support of the American government for such appalling slaughter. As the incumbent president running for reelection, Biden faced no serious challenger, but if he had dropped out earlier, Harris and numerous other Democrats would have entered the race for an open nomination, and one or more of them might have been tempted to play to the party's activists and actual voters by taking a contrary line on the Middle East, perhaps doing very well in numerous primaries as a result and thereby upsetting the party's wealthy donors. So Biden was instead kept in place until the Democratic electorate had lost any remaining say in the matter.

Harris herself now needs to fill out her ticket and one of the leading contenders is Gov. Josh Shapiro of Pennsylvania[34], a choice that might provoke considerable controversy. Conspiratorially-minded pro-Trump activists have noted that much of the local security that strangely failed to protect their hero from an assassin had consisted of Pennsylvania state police[35], and they might be outraged that Shapiro would quickly be rewarded after such extreme negligence by his subordinates. Meanwhile, Shapiro is also known as a zealous Jewish partisan of Israel, and late last year he played an important role in forcing the resignation of Penn president Liz Magill[36] and her Board chairman for their refusal to ban anti-Israel protests on the campus of their Ivy League school. This set in motion the purge or intimidation of numerous other administrators at elite colleges, resulting in harsh and unprecedented crackdowns on student free speech and academic freedom.

Although colleges are out for the summer and the waves of anti-Israel protests on elite campuses have vanished from the headlines, the horrific war-crimes committed by the Israeli government continue to

gain attention for those who are willing to notice them.

Just a couple of weeks ago, the *Lancet*, one of the world's oldest and most prestigious medical journals, published a short piece concluding that Israel's ongoing attacks on Gaza and its total destruction of the local infrastructure may be responsible for nearly 200,000 civilian deaths[37], a figure many times larger than any previous media estimate.

- Body Counts and Blood Libels in the Israel/Gaza Conflict[38]

Ron Unz • ***The Unz Review*** • July 15, 2024 • 5,700 Words

Politico is one of America's leading mainstream media outlets on politics and public affairs and ten days ago it published a very lengthy account[39] by two experienced American surgeons who had visited Gaza to provide medical assistance and were utterly horrified by what they encountered there. According to Dr. Mark Perlmutter, in just a couple of weeks he saw more carnage inflicted upon civilians than he had in the combined total of his previous thirty years of humanitarian visits to war-zones around the world. In particular, it was obvious that Israeli snipers were deliberately shooting young Palestinian children and toddlers, aiming precision shots at their hearts and at their heads.

- We Volunteered at a Gaza Hospital. What We Saw Was Unspeakable.[40]


American surgeons who witnessed the civilian carnage of the Israel-Hamas war


Mark Perlmutter and Feroze Sidhwa • ***Politico Magazine*** • July 19, 2024 • 4,900 Words

Given that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other top Israeli leaders have publicly identified that the Palestinians with the tribe of Amalek[41], whom the Hebrew God has commanded must be exterminated down the youngest newborn baby, such atrocities may be shocking but are hardly surprising.


Running nearly 5,000 words and profusely illustrated with photographs, the *Politico* story seems to have broken the cordon of silence maintained in network television and Perlmutter was interviewed for a substantial segment entitled "The Children of Gaza"[42] broadcast on *CBS News Sunday Morning*, during which he repeated his story:


Dr. KHAL
@Hal9000_T1 · [Follow](#)


 Dr. Perlmutter on CBS News, same physician in the Politico article below.


 war on children, many gunshot wounds in toddlers and many shot twice.

Watch on X




Dr. KHAL @Hal9000_T1
 Politico: "What we saw was unspeakable."

 Mark Perlmutter: orthopedic & hand surgeon who practices in Rocky Mount, North Carolina.

 Feroze Sidhwa: trauma & critical care surgeon who practices in California

 IDF is shooting pre-teens in the head.
politico.com/news/magazine/...

8:45 AM · Jul 22, 2024

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These are the sorts of examples that had led the esteemed jurists of the International Court of Justice to issue a series of near-unanimous rulings[43] that Israel appears to be undertaking a campaign of genocide against Gaza's Palestinians, while the International Criminal Court more recently applied for arrest warrants against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu[44] and others on similar grounds. Yet despite these momentous developments and Netanyahu's dismal poll ratings in his own country, the Israeli leader was recently invited to address a joint session of Congress for the fourth time, with his lengthy, bombastic speech interrupted by more than fifty standing ovations. No previous world leader had ever been accorded such great American honors.

[VIDEO LINK](#)

Faced with a severe potential conflict between the enormous influence of the billionaire donors of the Israel Lobby and the extremely strong and growing sentiments of ordinary Democratic voters, about half of the House and Senate Democrats chose to boycott the event[45], along with a single Republican, Rep. Thomas Massie of Kentucky. But only Palestinian-American Rep. Rashida Tlaib of Michigan was willing to protest his presence by holding up a sign denouncing the Israeli leader as a war criminal.

Even as ordinary Americans and our ruling elites focused their attention on our tottering political system, indicated by the attempted assassination of one of our presidential candidates and the sudden replacement of the other, they probably gave much less attention to developments elsewhere in the world that demonstrated our growing loss of influence.

For example, just a few days ago representatives of Hamas and 13 other Palestinian factions held a meeting under Chinese diplomatic auspices and signed the Beijing Declaration[46], announcing their full reconciliation and support for a common policy aimed at ending Israel's nearly six decades of occupation and promoting the creation of a viable Palestinian State. Diplomats from numerous other countries including Russia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, and South Africa attended this important meeting and endorsed the effort, but the potentially historic event received relatively little coverage in the American media.

Two days after the signing of that Middle Eastern agreement, the *New York Times* reported that a combined flight of two Russian and two Chinese strategic bombers[47] had closely approached American territory and been intercepted by American jets, the first time those two nations have jointly challenged our country with their airborne nuclear strike forces. This action was presumably meant to express their considerable shared displeasure with continuing American military provocations in Ukraine and in Taiwan, along with our threats of basing nuclear missiles near their own countries.

As the longtime chief of staff to Colin Powell, Col. Larry Wilkerson[48] spent many years working near the top of America's national security and foreign policy establishments, and I've generally found him to be a very sober-minded individual. But in an interview around the same time, he expressed his strong opinion on several of looming international crises. He believed that nearly half of Ukraine's pre-war population had already died or fled, with the country's collapse being merely a matter of time. The NATO military alliance was similarly doomed, even as its increasingly irrational leadership declared their intent of extending its mission to include a possible war with China on the other side of the world, an act of utter insanity. And Wilkerson believed that Israel's apparent plans to provoke a full military clash with Hezbollah would probably end in disaster, perhaps even in the sort of crushing defeat that might completely eliminate the Jewish State.

I'd highly recommend his very candid analysis.

[VIDEO LINK](#)

Related Reading:

- [The Attempted Assassination of Donald Trump](#)[14]
- [American Pravda: The Rise of the BRICS and the Fall of the USSA?](#)[10]
- [American Pravda: Our Disputed Election](#)[11]
- [American Pravda: Donald Trump, Eugene Debs, and AMLO](#)[12]

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