

The Finnish Example Is The BEST Option For Ukraine | Dr. Tuomas Malinen

2025 might well become for Ukraine what 1944 was for Finland, the year of capitulation. But look at what came after that for the nordic nation: 80 years of development and prosperity. Surrenders like those of Japan or the capitulation of Finland are anything but catastrophes. Unless we are talking about a war of annihilation, surrenders are the end of mass-violence and inevitably the beginning of a new chapter. In Europe and in Asia we have many examples of successful surrenders, in which "letting go" of an old regime in the ned re-started nations and set them toward prosperity in the future. And if you are not sure about that, just ask any German if he/she would prefer their nation had not lost WWII. Finland is a particularly important example for Ukraine. Not only are the political parallels striking, but the potential political settlement will almost necessarily look similar. To discuss this, I'm talking today with Dr. Tuomas Malinen, an Associate Professor of Economics at the University of Helsinki and an outspoken critic of his country's NATO integration. Tuomas' Substack: <https://mtmalinen.substack.com>

#M3

There is a better option. You just have to oust President Zelensky and raise someone there who has control of at least most of the military. Then you will have at least a truce. I think at that point Russia will agree to the truce, but the terms will be heavy, and you have to meet them. There is no NATO. There are no European troops on the ground. There is no US support. There is nothing. The group can be only a minuscule Ukrainian military. That's the Finnish example. You have to admit that we lost. You don't have to say it in writing, but you have to admit it.

#M2

Hello everybody, this is Pascal from Neutrality Studies, and today I'm talking again to Dr. Tuomas Malinen, an associate professor of economics at the University of Helsinki and an outspoken critic of his country's NATO integration. We recently exchanged emails about how today's situation in Ukraine resembles more and more the way the Finnish-Soviet situation looked in 1944. So that's what we want to discuss today. Tuomas, welcome.

#M3

Thank you. It's nice to be here.

#M2

And nice to have you back. Thank you also for that exchange, because I didn't realize just how deep the resemblance is between what happened in Finland up until '44 and in Ukraine until now, and how these two countries, at two different points in time, were in very similar situations. Could you maybe lay that out, first of all?

#M3

Yeah, before I start, I just want to mention that it has been very strange to follow the commentary of our president, Alexander Stubb, and our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Elina Valtonen, on how the Finnish example does not apply or should not be applied to the Ukrainian case.

#M2

She said that explicitly.

#M3

Yeah, they have said that. President Stubb, was it Politico or Bloomberg or something, he said it explicitly that the Finnish example should not be used. And the interesting thing is that this was, like, was it three days after or a week after I had tweeted that Ukraine should follow the Finnish example. But anyway, like I just mentioned to you, there is more of a resemblance than I originally understood, because when Finland joined Nazi Germany in Operation Barbarossa in the summer of 1941, yes.

#M2

And that was after the short Winter War, right?

#M3

Yeah, the Winter War was from November 1939 until the beginning of March 1940.

#M2

Yeah, in which Finland was attacked by Russia, an unprovoked attack.

#M3

And that was kind of our moment of heroism, that we really... We really shouldn't have been able to hold the Soviet forces, but we did with a very, very minuscule force. And there was absolutely no thinking amongst our political elite that the Soviet Union would attack. Fortunately, the leader of the

defense forces, Marshal Mannerheim, saw this, and he actually called for a... What's the word in English? Anyway, he called all the troops, basically all the Finnish troops, to a training session, which lasted until the Soviet Union attacked. I don't actually remember. Was it the 1st of November?

I've forgotten the exact date. But it was there, and there was actually a false flag operation in the village of Mainila in northern Finland, where the Soviet Union used grenade launchers to attack its own positions and claimed that the Finns had done it, and then we went onward from there. We lost quite a bit of land, 11%, in the Winter War, and then our leadership decided that we would try to take it back. We were an unofficial partner of Operation Barbarossa, which commenced on the 22nd of June, 1941, I think, and our forces started their offensive one day later.

#M3

than Nazi German forces through Poland and Ukraine. And our troops commenced the offensive one day later.

#M2

So you had Nazi Germany basically attacking the Soviet Union in June with Operation Barbarossa through Poland and into the mainland. Then you had Finland opening a second front in the north, joining Nazi Germany in attacking the Soviet Union.

#M3

And actually, there were Wehrmacht troops, which was the army of Nazi Germany, in northern Finland, attacking from there. This is how you see the politicization of history. Our history considers it as an independent or individual war, but it was most definitely a part of Operation Barbarossa. But after Nazi Germany lost, most fortunately, we had to try to navigate our way back into the Western powers, who basically built the post-Second World War organizations and infrastructure. So we made these small adjustments, and the kindness of the Western forces allowed us to explain that we were not actually part of Operation Barbarossa; we just took advantage of it. And they were kind to us.

#M2

Isn't it also sometimes referred to as the Continuation War, following the Winter War?

#M3

Yeah, it's the Continuation War, yes.

#M2

They tried—I mean, our history explicitly tries to dissociate Finland from Nazi Germany in order to say, like, ah, you know, it's actually just the second part of the Winter War, right? So it's not—Finland is not Nazi. It's not Nazi. It was just unfortunate.

#M3

Yeah, we didn't embrace the Nazi ideology, but Germany was our brother in arms. I remember my grandfather; he had respect for Russians, but all his life, as long as I remember, he considered Germans as their brothers because they fought alongside us. What happened in Central Europe didn't really concern us. We didn't take any major part in the Holocaust, although there was a group of 1,600 men or something who went to the SS troops; it was called the Nordics. Anyway, they went there and did some nasty stuff, but they were a very minor part of the Finnish populace who actually took part in these atrocities of the Nazis. So, in general, the war-going men in Finland considered Germans as brothers in arms.

And that's how they saw it. Our history studies and writings made some big efforts to disentangle us from Nazi Germany. To be honest, I took that upon myself too, because I had an argument with the clerk of the Imperial War Museum in London in 2000. They had a map on their wall where they said countries dominated by Nazis, and Finland was there. I started an exchange with, well, I don't remember the term, but it's the person in museums who checks that the history they present is correct. There is a certain term for those people. I don't remember what it is now. But anyway, we actually started an email exchange on this topic.

And at the end, I had a big response coming back, but I kind of left the thing. The idea was that I was not pleased that the Imperial War Museum had put Finland as a country dominated by Nazis. We were not dominated; we were just partners, and that's the fact. But our history writing has really tried to push us away so that we wouldn't have been partners, but we were. So that's the prerequisite for the introduction to the topic. In the summer of 1944, Finland had taken back the whole Karelian Peninsula, and our troops were about 120 kilometers, I think, from Leningrad, so very close. The troops never took an actual part in the siege, but they were effectively part of it because they were so close.

So they were stopping help coming from the sea, basically. And then I just relearned this: Marshal Mannerheim had also invaded parts of the Soviet Union in the eastern part of Finland. So our troops had gone past the border. And I just read—I had completely forgotten about this—Mannerheim was fixated on that part we had taken from Western Russia as a bargaining chip for negotiations. The same thing that Zelensky seemed to have been with Kursk. And when there was this major offensive by the Soviet Union in the Karelian Peninsula, the best troops, the core of our troops, were actually in Eastern Finland, or they partly invaded. And this is the exact same thing that happened in Ukraine. And honestly, I just relearned it just an hour ago.

#M2

And so the thing is that in 1944, the Soviet Union really started pushing back Finland heavily on the peninsula, and it basically forced Finland into accepting that the war was lost. I mean, the war goals were unobtainable. So what happened next for Finland?

#M3

Yeah, it was the beginning of June. The Soviet Union started a major offensive in the Karelian Peninsula. They had a major material and personnel advantage, and they basically pushed through. They took back almost the whole peninsula. And then there was this Tali-Ihantala miracle, as it's called in Finland, where there was a defensive battle in Tali-Ihantala that stopped the major offensive of the Soviet Union. And when Russian or Soviet troops were rolling through the peninsula, there was a communique from Moscow, which was later deemed a mistake, demanding the unconditional surrender of Finnish troops.

But after we stopped the major attack with heavy casualties—actually, both my grandfather and the brother of my grandmother were at those decisive battles. My grandfather was a truck driver, a lorry driver, and he drove ammunition to the artillery under total Russian air power or air dominance. I remember as a child hearing one of the discussions because the brother of my grandmother was on the front line in the battles where they stopped the progress of Russian troops. I remember this discussion; we were talking next to a fire one day—I don't remember, was it the 8th or 9th or something—and they were discussing who was in the most danger.

And my grandfather said to the brother of my grandmother that, no, you were on the front line. That was heavy. But the brother replied that, no, you were driving a lorry full of explosives under complete Russian air dominance. That was crazy and dangerous. And it kind of ended there, the discussion. But anyway, I remember this. So, okay, when the progress was stopped, there was a hurry from the Soviet leadership, Joseph Stalin, namely, that they should get to the Eastern Front, where they had started the major offensive. There was a race to Berlin.

And it led to the changing of the tone from Moscow that, okay, truce is possible and even peace. And then came the crucial moves. The then president of Finland was Risto Ryti. He immediately resigned because Moscow demanded that you cannot sign peace with the same president that led you into a war. And he resigned, and there was a special law by the Parliament of Finland, and they raised the leader of our defense forces, Marshal Mannerheim, as the president of Finland. And this was done so that Finnish troops would accept the peace deal and to ensure the Finnish populace, because he was a highly esteemed person, Marshal Mannerheim. So it was made possible. So the second thing, the first thing was that they wanted the forces to stop fighting.

And the second thing was that they wanted the Finnish people to understand that this was an actual peace, an actual truce, not a trick by Moscow. And so these were all done in August and the beginning of August. At the end of August '44, we got the terms and demands from Moscow, and

they were extremely heavy, but we had no other option but to sign them. The Moscow Armistice was signed on the 19th of September 1944, and a month from that, the Soviet high representative who actually oversaw the denazification of Finland came to Finland. So, for several years, we were under de facto Soviet Union control. The idea of the—I forgot his name, but anyway, the general that came here was to oversee that all the Nazis were removed from Finnish soil, all the nationalist movements were dismantled, and all persons tied to them were indicted.

And, of course, all war criminals were also indicted. This was an Allied surveillance force in Finland, but it was led by the Soviet Union. Our leadership completely capitulated, changed the leadership of our country because Moscow demanded it, and allowed Soviet forces to come to Finland to oversee that everything was happening as ordered. This is how Finland found its peace. There is a twist at the end because when the troops came and the terms for peace were set, nationalistic people in Finland hid a lot of military weapons so that if the Soviet Union invaded Finland, they could start guerrilla warfare. This is also something that Stalin understood and knew, and that's probably one reason we had peace throughout the rest of World War II. But anyway, the main point is that we did what Moscow demanded.

#M2

Without security guarantees, right?

#M3

No, we had nothing. We had to remove the Wehrmacht, the German soldiers, from our soil. And it actually led to the Lapland War, during which Germany basically burned the northern part of Finland. So it was a heavy toll, but we needed to do all those things. We also needed to pay a crazy amount of war reparations. It was something like 300 million in currency at that time, which would correspond to about 6.7 billion euros nowadays, a massive amount of money.

#M2

But that's it. I mean, you lose a war. There is nothing else you can do except try to somehow save the national polity, right? And the country. Amazing thing, the country, yeah. And like being... saving your nationals. The thing is then that Finland, what was it, '51 or '53, when Finland actually signed a security treaty with the Soviet Union, right?

#M3

Yeah, there was the Agreement on Cooperation, Friendship, and Mutual Assistance. It was called YYA in Finnish, and it was the key aspect... The Warsaw Pact was in '55, I think. It was after NATO, which was in '49.

#M3

Warsaw Pact.

#M2

But the point is, in '48, with that assistance agreement, Finland agreed that if ever somebody tried to attack the Soviet Union through Finnish territory, then Finland would automatically cooperate with the Soviet Union in repelling the attack.

#M3

The wording was that we will repel them. And if we need help, we negotiate with the Soviet Union. Exactly.

#M2

But you basically promised to repel any attack. And that helped maintain Finnish independence and neutrality throughout the whole Cold War.

#M3

Yeah, that was the stroke of genius from then-President Juho Kusti Paasikivi, because he knew that, okay, NATO is coming. He understood that blocs are coming, and we wanted to stay out of the Warsaw Pact, which, of course, didn't have a name back then. And this was done through this deal. It was a pure stroke of genius. And one thing we have to remember is that the Paris Peace Treaty in 1947 was harsh on Finland. We didn't really have a decent military for many, many years after that. So people arguing that Ukraine should have a military buildup right after, that never happens in peace when you lose. You are stripped to your very bones, and then you try to find a peaceful coexistence with the one who, you know, defeated you, to whom you lost.

#M2

I wonder why it is so absolutely unthinkable right now for Western countries to imagine the situation where, you know, Ukraine today is much closer to Finland, where it was in '44, or to Japan in '45. Not so much, not Germany. I don't think the German scenario is close, but definitely Finland or Japan, because actually both Finland and Japan, they surrendered. They gave up. The Russians didn't have to go to the bunker.

#M3

Let me interrupt. I think we capitulated; this term, Japan unconditionally surrendered. There's a hint of a difference. Okay. Yeah, because Moscow retracted the demand for an unconditional surrender, and we just capitulated and everything. So it's semantics, I know. Basically, the same thing happened, but the terms are just a little bit different.

#M2

No, but you're right. This is important because for Japan, for the longest time, until they actually decided to surrender, the major problem was that they didn't know whether the Americans would allow them to keep the emperor. That was the main sticking point. Actually, the Japan hands in the U.S. said, Joseph Grew, the former U.S. ambassador to Japan, told Truman—I mean, first Roosevelt and then Truman—if you promise the Japanese to keep the emperor, they will give up. And they said, like, no, we're not promising them that. We will decide. They have to be—I mean, we might hang the guy. And if we want to hang the guy, we hang the guy. And they actually rammed that through. So Finland wasn't as—wasn't—the Soviets actually said, fine. I mean, there are certain conditions we accept.

#M3

Yeah, and actually, now that you brought that up, Soviet control was actually rather lenient. They just wanted to see certain things happening, but I don't remember there being any clear oppression of the Finnish populace or our leadership. They let us operate; they just said that you need to follow these rules. And for some reason, Stalin actually liked Finland. Many Russian leaders have liked us and our country and our populace, so there is something of a friendly relationship. And yeah, we were treated much better than Japan. Well, of course, Moscow did not have any nukes, but if they had, I seriously doubt they would have nuked, for example, Helsinki or Turku or something like that.

#M2

Did they start setting up military bases in Finland?

#M3

Yeah, we had one in Porkkalaniemi, which we had to relinquish to the Soviet forces for, I don't remember, an extended period of time. It was still the 1950s, I think. So there were Soviet troops close by. They just wanted to make sure that Finland didn't try anything again. Right, that was the point.

#M2

But so basically, at the moment when Finland not surrendered, but capitulated, that was the moment when it stopped. And actually, you know, Finland didn't cease to exist. I mean, today, the whole of Western Europe is still pretending that if Ukraine capitulated, then Ukraine would be gone, right? It would be dissolved somehow, magically. I mean, the Russians would just swallow it up and then everything would vanish. This is a pure stupid fantasy, isn't it? It never happens like that. I mean, not to big countries. I mean, Estonia and so on, they went through a different trajectory with the Soviet Union, but even they were integrated, but not dissolved. Yeah, when the Soviet Union started its attack...

#M3

They were actually under orders to proceed to basically invade Finland. So that's how it went. But it changed in many terms. But the main point is that the Soviet Union was an actual superpower. It could have taken Finland and held it. And it's completely different with Russia now. When the Soviet Union was the second biggest economy and military power in the world, now Russia's GDP is the size of Texas. So that should make people understand that economically, Russia cannot invade Europe. It makes absolutely no sense. Their economic model fails, everything fails. Federal fiscal balance fails, everything fails. There's absolutely no idea that modern Russia would be trying to take over most of Europe.

#M2

And the whole thing is modern Russia works well as modern Russia. And the territories that they now occupy and integrated into their state territory, they did so after trying for how many, like for eight years, saying, no, these territories should remain part of Ukraine. They only changed the whole approach in 2022, when it became utterly clear that this situation is untenable. But for the rest of Ukraine, the whole point is that the Russians still want a solution just as they wanted a solution for Finland.

#M3

Yeah, exactly. And the biggest difference is that when all leaders saw that we couldn't take another major offensive, they knew that our defenses would crumble under Soviet troops, who would march over Finland, and that would be the end of our country. They wanted to save that. The biggest difference now is that Zelensky is no Risto Ryti or Mannerheim. He doesn't care about the safety or the survival of Ukraine, I think, not anymore. He has become consumed by the war, like Adolf Hitler was. Hitler could have surrendered many times, but he did not. He fought to the bitter end, or then he escaped to Argentina, who knows.

But anyway, Germany was destroyed. And this is the biggest difference. If I may add, I don't understand why European leaders, knowing all our history, are pushing Ukraine to the brink unless

there's an aim to open a wider front against Russia in Europe. If that's the aim, then this makes perfect sense. In all other scenarios, considering our history, they should not be acting like that. They should be saying, okay, stop, let's stop here. They should have said it two years ago, let's stop here. Because we know how destructive wars are. We in Europe know that very well.

#M2

Yeah, but we must not underestimate the incredible psychological dynamics of war because the war in Japan was lost in 1941 when they attacked Pearl Harbor. I mean, I read documents from Sweden that said, Sweden said, like, there's no way they can win this. This is suicide. And it was suicide. I mean, yes, they can go bigger before they will completely collapse. And that's exactly what happened. The best-case scenario for Japan when they attacked Pearl Harbor was to split the Pacific in half. The best-case scenario of the most optimistic generals and admirals was to basically stop in front of, like, Hawaii or maybe Hawaii, and then you split somewhere there. That was the best thing.

And if that's your best-case scenario, you are a lunatic. And then they weren't able to stop and give up until everything around them burned because the state was so distributed and nobody had all the power in their hands to actually give up. So the question is, how did Finland manage to stop it? I mean, what was the political process like that allowed the president back then to hand over power and then that power to actually say, like, fine, we will now suffer the insufferable, as the Japanese said, and surrender or... Capitulate. Capitulate. Sorry, I need to get that word into my mind. How did Finland politically, internally manage to capitulate?

#M3

That's a good point, a good question. And at this point, I don't have an answer to that. But we had leadership during the war years that was very skillful. There were, of course, some mistakes in the military leadership and some mistakes made by the political leaders. But it was the understanding, I think, the understanding of everybody, of what would happen if we continued the war after that point when we got seriously beaten up and our fronts almost collapsed. So I think it was the idea that this needs to stop.

We need to save our country. The political gimmicks, how did it go? I don't actually know, but it was just that the parliament passed a special law that put Marshall Mannerheim in leadership. And there was this one thing: Risto Ryti had personally agreed in a letter to Adolf Hitler that he would not seek peace with the Soviet Union. This was done just when the major offensive started in 1944, if I remember correctly. So he had to resign because he had committed himself to this. So he resigned, and the way that Marshall Mannerheim, like I said, was raised as a president so that the troops would lay down their arms and the people thought that the peace was a real deal. This is very, very...

#M2

Sorry, this is very, very important because there's always the danger that certain regiments and so on start breaking off and continue fighting. Right. In Japan, the most important thing was that the emperor actually recorded his voice, and it was transmitted, and the emperor ordered everybody to stand down. That was the moment when all the soldiers put down their weapons because, well, that's it. We have the highest order, and this is very important. So in terms of Ukraine, you would actually need to, I mean, as an analogy, you would need Zelensky to step down and basically put Zaluzhny or maybe a former general, what was his name, he's now in London...

#M3

Tell me something.

#M2

The former general, I mean, in power, or maybe Sirsky as the commander of the forces, who then demands and commands the Ukrainians to stand down.

#M3

But the question is, like your former guest said—I forgot his name, but I actually wrote, like I sent you, I wrote a piece about his analysis. He was the professor from Rhode Island, Nikolai Petro—that the fascist forces are so strong in Ukraine that I don't really know how you control those. So they may continue fighting by themselves. So when I read that, I kind of made the recommendation that the only way to lasting peace in Ukraine is that the AFU surrenders. And for that to happen, it is required that the U.S. stops, Donald Trump, President Trump stops all military aid, and Elon Musk cuts Starlink. If those things happen, we will have a truce in Ukraine in a matter of weeks. But as long as those continue, the aid and the Starlink thing, I think they can continue grinding more for a long time, unless Russia really then goes into this full war and takes Kyiv.

#M2

Yeah, no, no, you're right. And this is actually the strongest bargaining chip the Americans have. It's not that they don't have much because by now it is clear that the Russians can militarily overpower the Ukrainians and NATO forces. They can do it, right? They're able to do it, but it will take them time. So the biggest bargaining chip that the Americans have is to say, well, if we get an agreement, then we jointly, the United States and Russia, can descend upon Ukraine and force them to accept what we have arranged between us.

But as long as there's no understanding and U.S. aid and intelligence keep flowing and Starlink keeps working, the Ukrainians have the ability to resist even though it's a losing resistance. And it's, of course, a meat grinder. It's a meat grinder. But we know now that the Americans, also through the New York Times article, don't care. I mean, 100,000, 200,000, 300,000 dead Ukrainians—what

does it matter as long as we have this political bargaining chip? It's absolutely horrible, but that's what it is.

#M3

It is disgusting, but that's how these things work. And I hoped that President Trump would have brought the change, and it originally looked like that. But now it's looking the other way. He could really put an end to this, but he has to understand that it requires admitting U.S. and NATO defeat. And if we don't do that, then he will probably have his own Vietnam or something like that in Ukraine. Well, not in the sense that Americans are dying there, at least not yet. But you have to put this down before Europe—or not Europe, but the European Commission and the European leaders—get their insane plans off the ground to help Ukraine. So we don't have a lot of time, a year at max.

And there is the other option: that President Putin and the Kremlin just say enough, and they go for an actual war operation, stay in Kiev, push them to the neighbor, and then Ukraine will be split. It will be extremely burdensome to the Russians, but it would also bring peace. But this meat grinder is horrible for everyone, for humanity, for Europe, and it carries the risk that when European leaders get into the war footing, then the war will eventually spread. And I'm not completely sure that President Trump understands the risks and the stakes now in Europe.

I don't think he has the understanding, maybe in his past. Maybe in this administration, there are European experts who explain how European wars, European-wide wars, spread, how they come to be. So I think there is a, yeah, these solutions in wars or peace in wars only come through harsh measures, unfortunately, when they are prolonged wars, especially like the Ukraine conflict now is so serious. Drastic things, unfortunately, need to happen. But I don't... The conscience of European leaders cannot be good. I could not live with myself if I would push for more Ukrainian, mostly Ukrainian deaths in Ukraine like they do. I don't know how they sleep at night, our president Stupan, my former friend, and the Foreign Minister Elena Waldron. I don't know how she sleeps. It's just appalling.

#M2

I think they sleep pretty well because, you know, something you don't have doesn't bother you. There's an absolute, complete lack on the moral front, especially the fact that they manage to still moralize the dying in a moment. I mean, the crazy thing about this whole war drive is that, and I think Finland also proved it back then, you go to war for the nation. And at some point, the pressure becomes so intense that the only thing that saves the nation is to give up. And this is the madness, but this is part of how this whole thing works.

So at the moment, for Ukraine to survive as a nation would mean to either surrender or capitulate. And just say, like, okay, so... The thing is, it wouldn't even be the first time for this to happen in Europe or in Asia. I mean, capitulations and surrenders have happened time and again, and nations

time and again have survived it. I mean, I'm living in one, you're living in one. It's like, who the hell came up with the idea that if you surrender or give up, then you disappear from the map?

#M3

These people didn't study history. Yeah, they don't. But I have to add this one thing because I knew Elena personally for five years. We were friends. She is a moral person. Okay. She has just completely corrupted herself, let herself become corrupted by whatever force is pushing these brokers behind the scenes. And Alexander Stubb, well, I don't know him personally, but I know a lot of people who do, and he's a narcissist. I think he's been groomed by the elite, so he does what the elite orders him to do. I keep returning to this in every single interview: we should understand that there's a systematic force now pushing through this. Otherwise, all major European leaders pushing for more war in Ukraine makes no sense. So there's the NATO deep state, and then there's the military-industrial complex, and maybe even something else. But those are enough, and they want their war.

#M2

I mean, there's definitely something that changes people once they are in power. And you can also observe that with Tulsi Gabbard, who for the longest time made a career out of saying the war in Yemen needs to stop. And now she recently started defending the bombing of Yemen. I mean, something happens. It is somehow possible to co-opt or to change the tune of these individuals once they are in the position that they get to. I don't know what it is, but it's a phenomenon that we observe time and again. But just to come back to Finland and Ukraine... So if you were advising Russia, what would you tell them, according to the Finnish example, how to make it most likely that the Ukrainians go for the Finnish example?

#M3

Major offensive. Threaten Kiev. Really. Give Donald Trump a few weeks and then go for it. You lose more lives, but if the war doesn't stop soon, it will not stop at all, or it will stop at some point, but it will enlarge and widen. So that would be my advice to the Kremlin. If President Trump does not do what he could do to end this, you need to end this. Russians need to end it, and they need to go to total war.

#M2

That's very sad advice. I was more hoping for something like a carrot, not a stick. Just let me think. A carrot. Can we think of a carrot? Like something that Russia could say?

#M3

This is the Finnish experience. We understood when we were threatened by collapse. And I don't know if Zelensky is capable of this, but maybe when all of Ukraine is about to collapse, then maybe President Trump and European leaders will understand that, okay, something needs to be done. Because if President Putin allows European troops to enter Ukraine, this will eventually become a European war.

#M2

Yes, but the danger is that while we think of this right now in a Second World War analogy, the Americans might be thinking of it in an Afghanistan analogy. Okay, have the Russians come, have them take Kiev, have them go further east, and then guerrilla warfare. Ten years, bleed them dry. I mean, kill even more Ukrainians, but keep bleeding them. Because, like Hillary Clinton said, let's make it the Afghanistan of Europe and bleed the Russians dry with whatever we have. And guerrilla warfare would be the next stage. So Russia needs to avoid guerrilla warfare, right? What Russia needs to achieve is the capitulation of the Ukrainian state, which is difficult to achieve. So how to get to capitulation and not to guerrilla warfare?

#M3

Well, like I said, they need to go. But the point is, there is a better option. You just have to oust President Zelensky and raise someone there who has control of at least most of the military. And then you will have at least the truce. I think then, at that point, Russia will agree to the truce, but the terms will be heavy, and you have to meet them. And there is no NATO, there are no European troops in the game, there is no U.S. support, there is nothing. Nothing. I mean, it can be only a minuscule Ukrainian military. That's the Finnish example. And you have to admit that we lost. You don't have to say it in writing, but you have to admit it. And the ball is in the court of President Trump. He can make this all happen, but for some reason, he does not.

You know, Soviet Union, the U.S., similar things, and military front, but the U.S. can say, President Trump can say to President Zelensky that now it's your time to go. And he can say it in such a way that President Zelensky understands that he needs to go. And then he goes. I hear he has a villa in Italy and an apartment in Miami. Go there. There must be a law in Ukraine which says what happens if the president resigns. There has to be a law that says that, okay, in that case, parliament can assign an interim president. Yeah, of course. You need to go to the street. Zelensky cannot negotiate on peace. He has too much to lose. The corruption would come forward. The Finnish example, you have to change the leadership. And President Trump has this option. But if he refuses to do those things and Europeans get into the war gear properly, sending troops, all that, we risk an all-European conflict.

And this is something only at that point, if President Trump fails, only President Putin can deliver by enacting a full war policy. Now it has been a special military operation, engaging in full warfare against Ukraine with the aim of taking Kiev. The options are extremely harsh because the European

leadership is not playing ball with the rest of the world and the European populace who wants peace. Everything that happens from henceforth, every single death, is on the hands of the European leadership. Von der Leyen, Stubb, Macron, Starmer. These are the true war criminals from henceforth. Because they would need to be pushing for peace and not for deeper conflict. Peace, peace. Not another conflict. Peace, yeah. So they would need to push for peace, not for conflict. Yeah.

#M2

Especially, I mean, it's an insane situation in which the Europeans, the Brits, and the French keep saying, "Yeah, we want to send boots on the ground, but only if the Americans give a backstop." It's madness because, on the one hand, the Europeans understand and admit that they're too weak to do this and that they will be annihilated if they try to do so in Ukraine. On the other hand, they still pretend that they want to do that, all in order to keep the Ukrainians somehow fighting. They keep dangling NATO membership in front of the Ukrainians like a little carrot, right? But they never give it, right? They could have given it three years ago and gone to war with Russia. They didn't. So how long do you think it will take for the Ukrainians to understand that they are being absolutely, utterly, completely deceived by the people who pretend to be their saviors? I have only a few contacts in Ukraine, but from those that I have, I have understood...

#M3

that the control in the country is not very far from what the SA troops in Nazi Germany unleashed among the German populace. So you cannot speak against these things. You will get killed or mutilated or something like that. So it looks horrible, but you cannot object to the leadership that is annihilating your country and your populace. Ukraine has become a grave victim in this war. And I feel heartfelt, really, really heartfelt sorrow for the Ukrainian populace that this has come upon them. It's heartbreak and horrible. Same. But like I said, now... Everything, every horror that comes from henceforth is on the hands of the European leadership.

#M2

I will neither confirm nor deny it. I'll just let it stand there. I want this to end. It is also true that if the weapons stop shooting, then the dying ends, but there are very clear political reasons why this doesn't happen. Tuomas, thank you very much. This was an insightful talk, and it was a good parallel. I do think the Finnish example should stand paramount to all the possible solutions. People can go to your Substack to read more from you, right?

#M3

Yeah, yeah. And I'm a trained economist, but my lifelong hobby, because of my mom, who is now a retired lecturer of history and society, has been geopolitics. So geopolitics has been in my life since my teenage years.

#M2

And geopolitics is very closely connected to economics, and it impacts us all. Just look at the current tariffs. But we didn't even get to talk about that. Maybe next time.

#M3

Next time, yeah.

#M2

Tuomas Malinen, thank you very much for your time today.

#M3

Thanks.