

The
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Garry Kasparov
Chair, Renew Democracy Initiative

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In-Person/Hybrid Event

Moderator: Anna Nikolayevsky
Founder and Chief Investment Officer
Axel Capital

Introduction

President Barbara Van Allen

Good afternoon everyone and welcome. We'll go ahead and get started so we can try to stay on time today. This is the 759th meeting of The Economic Club of New York. I'm Barbara Van Allen, President and CEO of the Club. Recognized as the premier nonpartisan forum for discussions on economic, social, and political issues, the Club has now been around for more than a century. And we're fortunate enough to have hosted over 1,000 prominent guests, which, that tradition of excellence continues up through and including today.

I want to provide a warm welcome to students joining us virtually from Fordham University, NYU Stern School of Business, and Yeshiva University's Sy Syms School of Business as well as members of our largest-ever Class of 2024 Fellows – a select group of diverse, rising, next-gen business thought leaders.

It's my honor today to welcome back our guest, Garry Kasparov. Born in Baku, Azerbaijan, Garry became the Under-18 Chess Champion of the USSR at the age of 12, the World Under-20 Champion at 17. He came to international fame as the youngest World Chess Champion in history in 1985 at the age of 22. He defended his title five times, including a legendary series of matches against arch rival, Anatoly Karpov. Garry

broke Bobby Fischer's rating record in 1990 and his own peak rating record remained unbroken until 2013. His famous matches against the IBM super-computer Deep Blue in 1996 and 1997 were key to bringing artificial intelligence and chess in to the mainstream.

Garry's been a contributing writer to the *Wall Street Journal*, editor, sorry, since 1991, a frequent commentator on politics and human rights. He speaks frequently to business audiences around the world on innovation, strategy, and peak mental performance. In 2013, he was named a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Oxford-Martin School. His book, *How Life Imitates Chess* on decision-making is available in over 20 languages around the world. He's the author of two acclaimed series of chess books, *My Great Predecessors* and *Modern Chess*.

The format today will begin with opening remarks from Garry followed by a conversation with Club Member, Anna Nikolayevsky, also a chess player. Anna is the Founder and Chief Investment Officer of Axel Capital, and we're honored to have her as our moderator. We're going to take audience questions from those in the room, so please be thinking about your questions. And we will end promptly at 1:00. As a reminder, this conversation is on the record, and in addition to having a large member audience online, we have media online as well. So without further ado, please join me in welcoming Garry to the stage.

Opening Remarks by Garry Kasparov

Good afternoon. Thank you for having me here today. I thought about my opening remarks, and just probably it would be appropriate since you talked about chess to start with my life after chess. So in 2005, I stopped playing professional chess, ended my professional chess career, and joined what some people mistakenly call Russian politics.

I was very skeptical about calling it politics because if you compare the Russian political events with the game of chess, so I always said that in chess we had fixed rules and unpredictable results and in Russia it was exactly the opposite. And as you can see now, the rules kept changing but the same person is still staying there. And it's very clear that he will be removed from the office not by the ballot. I wouldn't say by the bullet, but obviously Putin's dictatorship has reached a point where any non-violent resistance is useless inside the country because they are in full control.

But in 2005, things didn't look that bad. So I thought that we had enough common sense and also some positive experience of the 90s when Russia was a feeble democracy under Boris Yeltsin. And I thought that Russian public at large will not have an appetite to go back to the dark ages. So it ended up, and it's kind of a long story short, so it ended up that after eight years of doing my best, I had to emigrate. I had to

leave Russia facing an imminent arrest.

Because dictatorships very rarely is a result of tanks on the street. It's not an all-night coup. It's a steady process. And it's far more dangerous because tanks in the streets, you know, people could get really angry. But if it's step-by-step, even if you look at the, say, Nazi Germany, so it was not, from Hitler acquiring power and Kristallnacht, it took five years. Actually nearly six, five and a half years.

And the same happened with Putin's Russia. It's just, you know, step-by-step, step-by-step. The space of freedom has been shrinking with one law, with one regulation, with one, you know, you have to read it this way and that way. So this is, comma here, full stop there. And suddenly you end up with regulations. It's all under the law, but the law is very different from one that was 20 years ago, and the same person is still in power.

I was kindly invited by Russian Investigative Committee to testify on a major political case, and I decided I would not try my luck. So when I started my activity of fighting for democracy and human rights in Russia, so my goal was, okay, I hope my kids would grow up in a free country. They are now, in the United States. They were born, I have a daughter who was born in 2006 in New York, a son in 2015. But what I couldn't imagine is that there would be a day where I will have to apply my knowledge and experience fighting for democracy to this great country.

So what worried me, and that's why in 2017 I formed a new organization called Renew Democracy Initiative with my friends here in New York, more like a social club, it had a few moderate-Democrats and a small group of my friends that I called refugees from the *Wall Street Journal*. Those like Bret Stephens or Max Boot, that couldn't stomach Trump's rise to power.

And the idea was to warn Americans about the danger of polarization, or I would say tribalization of politics, where the debates become just, you know, it's irrelevant because you aren't listening to personal _____. It's belonging to a tribe that becomes more important than any intellectual arguments that you can bring to the table.

So I believe that America was just entering a very dangerous zone of being besieged by the radicalism from both sides. You had one side challenging the liberal democracy as an institution, the other side challenging the market economy. Two fundamental pillars of America's success have been challenged for ideological reasons but from opposite sides. And that's also something that it's not probably well understood is that democracy doesn't die being attacked only from one side.

Going back to Nazi Germany, it's like a popular belief that Hitler won elections. He never won elections. He won plurality. So the highest result of Nazi Party in November 1932 was just over 37%. The problem is that in the same elections, Communist made

16%, which meant that more than half of the German electorate voted against democracy.

And I was greatly concerned about the future of American democracy simply because I saw that the world kept changing very rapidly. And the main reason that, I'm not sure whether you can apply the laws of physics to geopolitics, but my experience tells me that there's no vacuum. Geopolitical vacuum doesn't stay long. America walks away, somebody gets in. And you can start naming them – Hezbollah, Hamas, Iran, Putin, China, and so on. And I was afraid that these two trends could eventually merge.

And now it's probably not appropriate actually to spoil someone's appetite, at lunch, but I have a few pieces of bad news. Number one is we're at war. Like it or not, we're at war. Not because we want it. No, we hate the idea. But the war was declared on us. And no matter how many times you hear top brass in D.C. or in Brussels or in Berlin saying the opposite, it doesn't change the equation. We are at war because Vladimir Putin believes he's not fighting Ukraine, but he is fighting NATO led by the United States.

On top of that, he's fighting the liberal world order that he thinks is just, it should be reversed. Back to the days where might was right. Again, that's something he's saying, he has been saying that. It's Russian propaganda. He keeps repeating it 24/7.

And we have other guys that are just aligning behind him because he may be viewed as the spearhead of this attack on liberal world order, and they use every opportunity to spread the conflicts. We are dealing with a cancer, and you don't negotiate with cancer. You cut it off.

I just came back last night from a Sedona Conference. It's organized by the McCain Institute. I was one of the speakers there. And we had online as a guest, Ukraine Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba, who, as you can guess, complained about very inadequate support for Ukraine from the western countries. And he said that NATO and America were always one step behind Putin, because you say don't escalate, and Putin takes it as an invitation to escalate.

And then I said, you know, I just didn't want to argue with the foreign minister but we're not one step behind. We are two wars behind. Because the biggest concern here is what would happen if we do this, this, and that, and it could lead to World War III. I mean, sorry, you are just late. Putin is already fighting World War IV. World War III for Putin, again, that's not me, this is Russian propaganda, I'm simply just referring you to what they have been saying. World War III was the Cold War, and they lost it.

And they're fighting the World War IV, which they believe they can win, not because they're strong, and that's where all the parallels with the 1930s, with appeasement,

that's where all the parallels fail. Because in the 1930s, if you go back to 1938, this infamous Munich deal and the appeasement policies and the criticism that you can find in all the history books about Chamberlain, Daladier, and about American isolationism.

If you look at the political map of the late 1930s, you will just find out that the democracy was not a dominant force. You had Britain and France, yes, that's two democracies. There were a few others in Europe that were less relevant, an America that was not interested in getting engaged in another European war. So the isolationism there was far stronger than today. And on the other side, you had empires of evil that were just far stronger than Putin today or even China. You had Soviet Union on the other side, so still an ally of Nazi Germany. You have Nazi Germany. You have Fascist Italy, and Empire of Japan. Just think about a balance. Yes, eventually Soviet Union, after the beginning of the war with Germany shifted sides, but the late 1930s, the balance was not in our favor.

Today, we have overwhelming military, economic, and let's say political, cultural advantage. But the difference is back then we had Sir Winston Churchill and FDR. I don't want to mention who is running our affairs today. So we had political will that helped us to overcome the deficit of materials, and people were ready to make sacrifices and believe in values. Today, we have everything we need to win, but we have no political will. It's a shame to think that Ukrainian citizens are being bombarded

by Putin's missiles. People are being killed as we speak.

And everybody talks about, you know, small – I don't want to sound callus – what's happening in Gaza is also tragic, but there are many days and many nights in Ukraine where Putin drops more explosives on Ukraine than Israel has dropped on Gaza for six months. And those are ballistic missiles, the weapons being used there. If Israel could use Putin's tactics for one hour in Gaza, the war would be over. But this is the difference, Israel is a democracy. No matter what people shout in the streets, it's a democracy. If Israel was really apartheid and genocidal state, the war would be over. That's what Putin has been doing.

And by the way, this is quite amazing. That's why I say it's not a simple war, referring to bringing us back to the days of World War II or Cold War. It's amazing that we have the war here, because we just, all of a sudden, we're on slippery ground. At least, you know, back in the 1940s or 1950s, or 1960s, we had people believing certain values and recognizing that we're defending our world. And while we had a disagreement, we never expected a mass protest against our fundamental values that is reversing – again, using chess analogy – black and white.

And again I wish, you know, I had a better story to tell, but I think it's very important for us to recognize that this is a war – since I already used chess analogy – that has good

and evil, but unlike chess it doesn't have a draw. It cannot be a tie. Either we win or we lose. And any success on the other side means we lose. And for those who believe that you can make, you can save yourself by making a sacrifice – oh, let Ukraine give up some territories – it's one of the most cynical and it's a horrible statement that I ever heard because territories, it's not North Pole, it's not Antarctica. It's not even Sahara. Territory means people living in this territory. And by saying, oh, let Putin have 20% of Ukraine territory means you give up millions of people that don't want to be enslaved by Putin's regime. And, of course, it doesn't stop. So every concession we make, it's an invitation for future attacks.

So we have problems on the other side of the Atlantic, but we also have a problem in this country. So the way the Europeans see America, it's also quite depressing. Because I grew up in a world where America was a factor. It was like, okay, I wouldn't say shining city on a hill, but definitely it was a garden of democracy. Hate it or love it, it was there, and everybody took it into account. Today, nobody's sure.

So the country that embodied strength, integrity when I was a kid, now today offers on the menu weakness and corruption. And again, that emboldens the other guys. No matter what happens here in November, it seems that in America, it's a long road to recover America's credibility.

When you hear American politicians say, oh, we can solve the problem by offering, let's say Israel, our security guarantees. So, what is it, a clown show? America's security guarantees? Ask Afghans. Remember Kabul, it's still Saigon. It was not forced. Leaving 350,000 Afghans who worked with Americans in the hands of the Taliban. Oh, 30 years ago America forced Ukraine to give up nuclear weapons. By the way, Ukraine had more nukes in 1994 than Britain, France, and China combined. So what are these guarantees?

So, it's a dangerous world. And it's getting even more dangerous because if you lose, if America, if we lose credibility, that means at one point we have to use full force. Because dictators, they never ask why? It's why not? And it seems that now they can ask why not and move anywhere they want. Obviously, they'll cross a red line, the real red line, not Obama red line, not Trump red line, not Biden red line, the real red line. But the price we'll pay will probably be too high. And again, I remain an optimist because I believe democracy prevails. We always find strength to fight back and to win the battle, and even win the war. But the question is how much we all have to pay? And as of today, Ukraine is paying with their blood.

And again, the overall global map for democracies looks much worse than 20 years ago. So I hope that doesn't put you in a very depressing mood because I still believe we're stronger. And for those who say, oh, we're losing everything, yes, technologically

we're being surpassed, and look at China, my response is China gave us virus, America gave us vaccine. That's all we have to know about technological advance. On this optimistic note....

Conversation with Garry Kasparov

ANNA NIKOLAYEVSKY: Thanks for coming, Garry. It's really great to have you here. You're a polymath, which is very rare. And I always appreciate how you take the ideas of offense and defense that you learned in chess and apply it to politics and various other global strategies.

My first question is, we took for granted a very long period of peace that now seems to have ended. Do you think that the situation in Ukraine could have been prevented?

GARRY KASPAROV: Now, I'm almost very ____, so let's make sure I understand the time frame. You said a long period of peace. Are you talking about the period after World War II or after the collapse of the Soviet Union?

ANNA NIKOLAYEVSKY: After the collapse of the Soviet Union.

GARRY KASPAROV: Oh, fine, that's better, because we had the Cold War. The peace

was a result of the triumph of liberal democracy. It's the free world led by the United States. And I think the biggest mistake that one could make, and we did, was to believe that evil can die. So it can be buried under rubble of Berlin Wall for a while, but the moment we lose our vigilance, the moment we become complacent, it sprouts out.

And what happened in the 90s is that we, as I say, America and the free world lost a great opportunity to reform the global order. United Nations had to be reformed. We needed, you know, institutions that could promote democracy and not simply serve as the catwalk for dictators that show up here in this town every September to brag about their "accomplishments." And we gave time for bad actors to regroup.

And what made things worse is that while, during the Cold War, we still could be separated, physically by the Berlin Wall, and also by the walls that is, the Iron Curtain. Imagine the Iron Curtain that prevented people in the unfree world to learn about events happening in the free world. Today, these barriers don't exist anymore, which means that there's no way you can keep people in an unfree world, and it's probably 60+% of the population, uninformed about life elsewhere. So the only way for dictators and for eternal leaders to keep the situation under control is to justify their endless staying power by expanding the conflicts.

The answer to your question, yes, of course, it could be avoided. And I could start

pointing out moments where it could be avoided. For instance, you know, let's start with a particular election year. Start in 2000, John McCain wins the primaries and gets the nomination. Likely, we think elections. There will be no Putin, I can bet my bottom dollar. With John McCain in office in 2000, there will be no Putin. Even 2008, maybe it was not too late for John McCain...because he knew KGB was KGB.

And Putin was too, again he was not sure. If you follow what Putin said, you know, back in '99, 2000, and 2005, and 2007, it's always, it's as every dictator, he got emboldened by the weakness. In 2005, he was already confident enough saying the collapse of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century. That was 2005. In 2007, he said NATO must go back to 1999's borders. But again, his attack against the Republic of Georgia back in 2008 was limited. Though I really knew it would come, you know, to much larger aggression. But again, it took six more years before he eventually attacked Ukraine.

For me, it was, again, natural progression because every dictator always ended up with foreign aggression as the only instrument to justify his, let's say domestic shortcomings. You just have to read history books. And Putin had enough opportunities to boost his credentials by ___ pieces of lost Russian ___. And after Crimea in 2014 and no reaction from the free world, I mean, except a few words, but lip service, nobody cared, I had no doubt the war with Ukraine was inevitable. So I've been saying it for eight years that the

war would be inevitable, that Putin would go beyond the state territories that he acquired, that he stole actually in 2014.

But we still had probably a few moments. In 2013, red lines in Syria. I think that was the moment where Obama administration could send a signal by removing al-Assad from power. The lack of response, Putin read it as a sign of weakness. And even in ____, it's probably the last moment where Putin believed he could do whatever, as I already mentioned – Kabul Airport. I still can't believe we witnessed it. I was a kid, you know, the Soviet Union showed some documentary or some footage from Saigon, the helicopters, you know, they take them from the roof. But again, the war was already lost. Nobody wanted to fight the war, and it was inevitable.

What happened in Kabul was not inevitable. And it just showed that America lost any will to fight for allies. It was a betrayal beyond imagination of all the Soviet people left behind for no good reason. Five thousand American troops could be kept there indefinitely. The year before America's removal from Afghanistan, not a single casualty. It's costly, but are you telling me that having Taliban there is less costly? And also again, it's not just Taliban. It sends a signal, because it says, yes, everything is connected now. The world is interdependent. You can't expect that events happening in Venezuela or just in North Korea do not influence other hot spots on the map.

ANNA NIKOLAYEVSKY: So, Garry, what's the best deterrent? Is it the large military? Does it come down to the largest defense budget? Or does nuclear make it all irrelevant?

GARRY KASPAROV: Look, let's set aside, you know, nukes. Because the moment you say nukes, you know, probably the whole discussion should be over. And, by the way, that also tells you that every other country that is worried about its security must have nukes. That's great. That's what you hear from Ukraine is if we had nukes, we would be safe. By the way, who forced us? Bill Clinton back in 1994, that was the agreement, alongside the Brits, but obviously America played the crucial role forcing Ukraine to give up nukes.

So we're still in a world where conventional weapons play an important role. But before you decide on your military budget, on the size of your military, or on the scope of the operation and your engagement overseas, you have to decide on a strategy. What is your end game? That's, you know, again just plain speaking. And as of today, we have no strategy. So what is the strategy, here and there, it's all about let's negotiate.

American foreign policy for a long time has been reactive, not proactive. Going back to Obama years, then Trump, for very different reasons, and then now this administration.

So unless you decide what you want to accomplish in Ukraine, it doesn't make much

sense to debate the size of the military package. Because we still live in a world where this administration, alongside with many European allies, failed to say three simple words: Ukraine must win. That's how you fight a war. Ukraine must win. And winning includes liberation, as we say, liberation, reparation, and justice. We stand with Ukraine as long as it takes means absolutely nothing. It's an ambiguous statement that doesn't help you to win the war.

ANNA NIKOLAYEVSKY: Are you more optimistic on NATO after Sweden and Finland joined, or it's irrelevant?

GARRY KASPAROV: No, it's not irrelevant. NATO is so much stronger than Russia. But the question is, yes, they joined, fantastic, but how does it affect the ongoing war? NATO has been celebrating its accomplishment. It's the 75th anniversary. We've never been united, you know, as united as now. Yes, but this unity has been cemented by Ukrainian blood, 200,000 Ukrainian men died, not counting civilians and half of the country being destroyed – for you to celebrate.

NATO has weapons that have been designed for one purpose only, to save Europe from Russian aggression. Why are these weapons collecting dust now? Do you want us to start counting? You still have Patriot missiles standing in countries like Spain and Greece. What are they doing there? Oh, they are what? Expecting attacks? Is Greece

going to be attacked by Turkey? Another NATO country. Or Spain, by what? By Algeria? And this country, there's a big debate about supplemental bill. And, of course, the behavior of MAGA Republicans and Trump is despicable. But the President of the United States had so many other ways of helping Ukraine. They had 12,000 tanks standing in reserves, 3,000 active duty, 4,000 tanks. America gave Ukrainians 31 tanks, 31.

So, as for the shells, yes, they had problems of course. Nobody was preparing for the war that resembled World War I and World War II. But America's got millions of cluster munitions. I bet you that most of them are in Germany because they had to be very close to the front line. And you cannot use it by law, so that's why all need presidential waiver. You don't need Congress authorization. Just put a presidential waiver and send them to Ukraine. There are at least 42 million of them now held in Germany. But again, it's about deciding whether you want to win the war or not, whether you want Ukraine to negotiate with Putin or you want Ukraine to win.

America and Germany have enough missiles to destroy the bridge. The bridge is still there. Two and a half years from the beginning of full-scale invasion, the bridge, which is the main logistic supply line to Russia and Russia Crimea is still there because Ukraine doesn't have missiles to attack. It seems now, after Ukraine being totally devastated, they lifted the restrictions because there was clearly a promise made by this

administration not to attack the bridge and some of the sensitive Russian targets.

But again it's about deciding whether you want to win or not. And people in that part of the world, in Poland or in Baltic nations, they understand that if Ukraine, God forbid Ukraine falls, then they're next. And again, it's quite ironic but when you ask military experts, the combined military power of NATO, the northeastern flank of NATO, which includes Finland, Sweden, Poland, Baltic nations, and add Ukraine, will crush Russia probably in a few weeks. Again, set aside nukes. We can visit them separately, but conventional forces of these countries is more than enough. They look small, but when you start adding them up and look at the training and the quality of the weapons, they'd rather be in St. Petersburg than...Everybody says, oh, Russians will be Tallinn in three days. Ah, I'm not so sure. I think it's more likely that Estonians will be in St. Petersburg.

So again it's pure military analysis. Yes, we have everything. We have missiles. We have shells. We have artillery. We have military jets. But we have no strategy. And NATO, as I already said, was designed for one purpose – to save Europe from Russian aggression. Back in 1949, the battleground was River Rhine. Today it's River Dnieper. But the principle hasn't changed. So why we are so timid in helping Ukraine to win the war, which doesn't require a single American life to be put at risk? All you need are the weapons that have been designed, I repeat, to fight Russians. And it's more expensive to destroy these weapons in storage than to send them to Ukraine.

ANNA NIKOLAYEVSKY: Garry, Macron has been extremely vocal lately, and he recently said that it's unsustainable for Russia to maintain a 30% military budget to GDP indefinitely. Do you agree with that?

GARRY KASPAROV: Look, we don't know whether it's 30%, 20%, 40%. Russia is definitely, is probably reaching a peak of military production. And again, I would question the word indefinitely. Yes, probably Putin can carry the same pace of war for another couple of years, maybe years. But whether he will run out of money and resources before he runs out of men...So his calculation is that he can go on.

Yes, you can already see some signs of kind of the breaks in Putin's war machine. So far he was very cautious in recruiting people, soldiers from the big cities. When you look at Moscow and St. Petersburg, the amount of the casualties, it's insignificant compared to the other depressed regions or national republics. I think in Moscow, it's something like 5 for 100,000 casualties. And in places like Tuva Buryatia, it's nearly 200.

So eventually he will have to start digging from the big centers and that might create more problems. But again, he still has time, and he has manpower, so he can bring them in, and the sanctions are not working. Again, it's made things more expensive. But his revenue from oil and gas is higher than ever because, again, this idea of the price, the ceiling price for oil, it looked good on paper, but it had no effect on Russian, Russian oil export. And the war will continue.

And, look, you just mentioned President Macron, who in the last couple of months, he had been plagued with the idea of sending French troops to Ukraine. But again, is he concerned about Ukraine or he's concerned about Russia's control of government in Niger, to continue to supply uranium to French industries? Because France needs this uranium. And now, thanks to America's hate-less foreign policy and France also, indifference, so Russians and Chinese control almost the entire African belt from Somalia to Senegal. And Niger is one of the, probably the key country with uranium deposits that are crucial for French nuclear power stations.

ANNA NIKOLAYEVSKY: So on a slightly different topic, Elon Musk also recently said that the traditional media is dead. So how do we harness the power of social media and its ability to suppress or emphasize voices? How do we use it for peace?

GARRY KASPAROV: Look, I don't think we should use it for peace at a time of war. So now I'm concerned how we're going to win the war because, as you can see, the social media plays a very important role in putting this country ablaze. This country is already facing serious challenges, and clearly it's totally unprepared. Some say it reminds them of 1968. I think it's much worse. Again, in 1968 at least there was a war and half a million American soldiers were fighting there. Yes, you may argue whether it was a good reason or not, but at least you had, you know, just serious consequences for the country.

Today it's very different. And it's all based on fake news. It's total falsification of facts. And it seems that so many young people are just being brainwashed and misled. And again, my question is how to solve all these problems? You can talk about peace, but it's, again it's an outdated call. We can talk about peace when we win the war.

ANNA NIKOLAYEVSKY: Is America similar to a boiling frog where over time we've become extremely desensitized to attacks all over the world and internally?

GARRY KASPAROV: It's a good analogy. It's a good analogy. What's happening now in the colleges and basic paralysis of the government and most of these institutions. It's a demonstration that we are so far behind recognizing the gravity of the situation. We can argue whether it's a pure antisemitism. As we know, this virus doesn't disappear. It returns. There's always problems.

You know what's quite interesting, traditional antisemitism came from the right, from the monarchists and goes back go to the 19th century or so. And then from there, you know, you had the anti-Israeli feelings. Now it's exactly the opposite. It's anti-Israeli sentiments and then just, you know, antisemitism comes next. But more and more we see that it's not just Israel. It's not just antisemitism. It's America. Americans just being hurt all the time. It's attack on American values.

So it's, this country is totally defenseless against this kind of, it's subversive. Again, I wouldn't say, probably remembering J. Edgar Hoover would be appropriate, but still I'm sure he's turning in his grave. So this is not even Soviet propaganda because you had, again you had certain validations back in the 40s, 50s, and 60s. Today, I don't know, after October 7, I mean you can seriously discuss things. How can we debate things that are just, that do not make any sense for anyone who believes in element of _____. I'm losing the power of my argument because I'm...I never thought I would be in this kind of situation, debating...I can debate, you know, this is the facts.

I'm happy to debate with anybody, just you know the story of Palestine. This was happening in 1947 or in 1964. I'm a good scholar of history. But how can I debate this, from river to the sea? I cannot debate that. So again it's not that, they keep saying, you know, we want a two-state solution. They don't want it. It's not me. It's they say no to it. It's still, you know, the whole idea was from the very beginning is just to eliminate Jewish state as a fact, and they have not changed their mind.

And if Washington, you know, wants to live in this world of illusions. No. It's still there. They believe that Israel must cease to exist. It's still a driving force of Iran. Iranian foreign policy is based on that. So say whatever you want. They want Israel to be destroyed. Putin's foreign policy is based on destruction of Ukraine. Ukraine must cease to exist. So how can he negotiate?

ANNA NIKOLAYEVSKY: So how do you de-escalate that?

GARRY KASPAROV: You know, we fight back. We fight back. Oh, here is, how many of these students are on student visas? I missed something. Anyone was expelled from America? I never heard about it. So start doing something. You know, I'm sure they violated the rules. Okay, most of the rest of them are students, but still, start doing something. You know, just following the law. Protesting, fine, perfect, you know, go to Central Park and protest. But if you harass other students, if you just prevent normal process, you should pay the consequences.

They tried to make a connection to American civil rights movement. What a shame. When MLK and his supporters, and by the way students from northern states traveling to Tennessee or Alabama in the early 60s, they knew what they would face. Grave consequences. Imprisonment, sometimes even worse. And on the Selma bridge, they were not met by a welcome reception but by police with dogs. Today they just, you know, they want to protest, and they want to be treated well. Fantastic, oh, this is...no, you can't touch us. And, of course, you know, as you can see it's one escalation. Same as theirs.

Ukraine is willing to do the job, so give them weapons. Send the tanks, missiles. Let them do the job. The same with Israel. Let them do the job. Yes, it's terrible. What's

happening, any human, human, human, loss of human life is a tragedy, but you have to respond. And also don't pretend. What is the really big secret? The world is in grave, it's facing so many problems. According to the United Nations, which is, of course, you know, it's partial statistics, 854 million people are on the verge of starvation, 854 million people. Every day, according to the United Nations, and again probably the numbers are reduced, 25,000 people die from hunger. One hour we spend here, 1,000 people died.

But we talk about Gaza. Hello? Five million people died in Sudan now from hunger. Who talks about it? Nobody talks about it. It's not interesting. You talk about one piece of land that receives more food than many places in the world where the food is so much needed. I mean let's act with decency and also show strength.

In 1941, in June, when Hitler attacked Soviet Union, the United States – still being neutral for the next six months – sent to Soviet Union 360,000 tons, 360,000 tons of weapons, ammunition, and food. Europe was under Nazi control. The Far East too was yet to be developed. So mostly it went through an Arctic route. They had to face German submarines and Luftwaffe. They did it, because you had FDR in office. You had people that recognized they were leaders of the free world, they had to fight. Fight them back. America was, by the way, still neutral.

People say, oh, this is so difficult, Speaker Johnson was standing in the way. I mean, Speaker Johnson? Who is Speaker Johnson? He's the main obstacle to save Ukraine. FDR was on the verge of impeachment by helping Britain and then Russia. America was still neutral. Because he knew what was at stake. So we have to recognize, the world thinks ___ now, and pretending that we can negotiate our way through, it's a risk for disaster.

ANNA NIKOLAYEVSKY: Are there any questions?

QUESTION: Thank you so much, Garry. I have two questions. I'm trying to get some positive today, I guess. So, number one, with everything that's happening in the world geopolitically – Russia, China, India buying oil from Russia – as you mentioned that Russia is actually making more money right now than just before the war started. And then we have the South American region as well with a lot of social movement and development of, you know, non-democratic policies. So where is your hope for the democratic landscape in the U.S. coming from in terms where do you see that leadership in the United States?

And the other piece of the equation, let's just go a little bit further, and I'm not sure, actually I'm curious if you've seen Navalny's team documentary on Russia in the 90s, an analysis of the history now as we're 20+ years after that and how Putin actually

came to power. Where do you see hope in Russia in the future, that that scenario does not repeat itself? Thank you.

GARRY KASPAROV: Okay, the scenario that brought Putin into power is far more complicated than the one that was presented in this movie because it was all facts that had been properly presented. So they were still missing KGB. KGB was not in the movie, as if it was just an irrelevant player. Speaking with Russia, I think the real problem back in the 90s, and I can say now as someone who played a certain role in all these events, was that we never realized that it was not just Soviet Union and Communist ideology that stood in the way of Russia's return to the family of nations, but the imperial rule.

Russia was an empire and in some ways it's still an empire. And only by abolishing the loss of power on earth and starting from scratch, so we can hope for Russia, or what's left in this geographical space, to find its space again among democratic nations. But it's also part of this, my complaint, is that we have no strategy. Because objectively the main reason for America not supplying Ukraine, and Europe is being also very timid in offering this help, is a fear that Ukraine's victory would lead, as it happened before in Russian history, to the collapse of the regime and collapse of the country.

So you go back, and if history is any guide, so in mid-19th century, the loss of the first

Crimean War led to the abolishment of serfdom. The loss of the Russo-Japanese War led to the creation of constitutional monarchy. A stalemate of World War I led to the collapse of the Romanov dynasty. And the loss of the Cold War, to the collapse of the Soviet Union. So it's logical that a Ukrainian victory and Ukrainian flag at Sevastopol could lead to changes in Moscow, and I think Putin will not survive. Again, this, again, kind of Russian history. So if the war goes well, people can tolerate hardship. If the war is lost, things change. So massive political change is always the result of geopolitical catastrophe.

So then we have a chance. But you need someone here or in Europe to actually, to accept it as the inevitable outcome. Because as long as Putin stays in power, the war will not end. It's that simple. It's Putin's war because his political and economic foundation of his power is war. He needs war, both for economic reasons, but also just to justify his never-ending stay in power. The same, by the way, with the Middle East. As long as Iranian movements are in power, there will be no ending. So regime change should not be taboo as of today in Washington.

And speaking about the future of Russia, so I've been trying, for the last two years, to sell an idea, which I call, have joked, like Russian-Taiwan. The reason I use the word Taiwan is just I don't want to imply that we're trying to create some sort of government exile, because I'm not over-optimistic. So people who share my views, Mikhail

Khodorkovsky and others, they probably represent a small minority of Russians, but they do exist. Even if it's 5%, probably the number is bigger, you're talking about millions of people.

The problem is today is if you are Russian, you are totally cut from the free world. So you can't find your way to the free world even if you want to denounce Putin. There are no mechanisms. And also, by the way, if you say that Ukraine is suffering from lack of manpower, you have some Russians that probably might be willing to change sides and to fight with Ukraine. But again, you have to start working. Again, going back to 1940, free France, the goal. With all due respect to General de Gaulle, actually he was probably Colonel in June 1940, he had very little power or political clout. We definitely have more on our side today. The problem is it's not Russia is missing de Gaulles, it's the west is missing Churchills, so someone ought to recognize it.

And I think it will be a very important step forward actually to start to create what I call the matrix of the future Russia. Just allow people who will say three things fundamentally. The war is criminal. Regime illegitimate, Crimea is Ukraine. Sign a declaration denouncing Putin. And receiving kind of a residence permit in free world. So start creating foundation of future Russia. If you cannot do it inside the country, do it outside of the country. But again, that requires a strategic view. You need someone to start thinking about it, and not pretending that no matter how many crimes committed by

Putin regime, that still is the best we can do is to negotiate.

ANNA NIKOLAYEVSKY: One more question.

QUESTION: Thank you. It's very insightful. But a slightly different question. Before you, the generation of people inspired by Bob Fischer of the U.S. and after you won the Deep Blue, IBM computer. Today AI, where much faster computing, do you think, will you beat the new AI machines? Or do you think that human minds are actually getting hold of the AI?

GARRY KASPAROV: The story was over a long, long time ago. So any computer can beat any human at any game. So that we know. Because they make fewer mistakes. They're not perfect but they definitely dominate any field where you have certain rules and patterns. So we are no longer competing, we are cooperating. And there's so much we can learn from machines. I see nothing dramatic. In fact, we have machines that are helping us to advance. Machines made us stronger in the past. They made us faster. Intelligent machines should make us smarter. So I believe it's the way to move forward.

Obviously, AI power could be a dangerous weapon, but nothing to do with machines. It's about humans. I always repeat, humans are a monopoly for evil. So that's why the problem is not AI-controlled robots or whatever, the Terminators that will pose a deadly

threat to humanity, but the bad actors that have access to this AI. But it has nothing to do with machines. And actually the fact that we're still way ahead, because we are still way ahead. To the best of my knowledge America is a world leader in the field. But we see the spying and also using the economic landscape where you can just make donations to universities and get access to the results of the research.

So it brings us back to strategy. So I think that the technology benefits free world, but we need just to recognize that it's not a one-way street. So we have to also be ready to be challenged.

ANNA NIKOLAYEVSKY: Thank you, Garry.

PRESIDENT BARBARA VAN ALLEN: Well, that was a great conversation. Thank you so much for giving us the honor of being here today.

I wanted to just go quickly through our agenda, the event calendar coming up. On May 21st, we have Dr. Ed Yardeni, the President of Yardeni Research. We'll have a roundtable discussion as part of our Rebuilding New York City series on the morning of May 30th. That will be with Camille Joseph Varlack. She's the Chief of Staff for Mayor Adams, and she's been quarterbacking the immigration crisis for him. Later that afternoon, we'll have our Club Chair, John Williams, head of the New York Fed, for a

luncheon. And we have also coming up, early June, June 4th, before the June FOMC, Glenn Hubbard and Larry Summers joining us again.

And then for those that are into gaming, a very popular area, Strauss Zelnick, the Chair and CEO of Take-Two Interactive, will join us on June 17th. And, by the way, John Williams is going to do that interview for us. And then on June 25th, we have Lisa Cook coming, who is a Governor down in Washington, on the Federal Reserve Board. And then the newest addition is June 13th. We're going to have a Signature Luncheon honoring Secretary Janet Yellen. And that will be an occasion, a special occasion for us as she'll receive our Peter G. Peterson Leadership Excellence Award. And we hope that you and your guests can join us. As the presidential election heats up, we will be inviting both of the two major party nominees after the conventions to speak. So stay on the lookout for those events. And as always, we do get our events listed on the website, so please do continue to check those dates.

In closing, I want to be sure to thank those of our 375 members of the Centennial Society joining us today as their contributions continue to be the financial backbone for our programming. So having said that, thank you for everyone that attended today. Thank you to those that are joining us virtually. And please enjoy your lunch if you're in the room. Thank you.