

Demetri Kofinas: 00:00:00 The Hidden Forces podcast features long form conversations broken into two parts, the second hour of which is made available to our premium subscribers, along with transcripts and notes to each conversation. For more information about how to access the episode overtimes, transcripts and rundowns, head over to [patreon.com/hiddenforces](https://patreon.com/hiddenforces). You can also sign up to our mailing list at [hiddenforces.io](https://hiddenforces.io), follow us on Twitter @hiddenforcespod and leave us a review on Apple Podcasts. And with that, please enjoy this week's episode.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:00:54 What's up everybody? Every now and then, I will release an overtime segment on the main feed because I either feel like it's so good that everyone needs to hear it or because I want people to get a sense of just how good the overtimes are, in order to convert more of you into premium subscribers. Both reasons are true in this case. As I mentioned in the intro to the first part of today's conversation published just a few weeks ago, this was one of the best conversations I've ever had on the podcast.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:01:29 First things first, I just wanted to prove to all of you that I wasn't lying. But more importantly, I felt that this conversation was just too important to leave behind the paywall. Not only because of how interesting the geopolitical analysis is, but especially because Radigan's comments around generational despair, the dark side of decentralization and how we might go about trying to heal the divide in our country, is something that you just don't hear enough about. There's a kind of tone deafness around some of these issues. They just don't get talked about. And that's a problem because my generation is going to be taking over in this decade. We're probably going to have a millennial president in the next 10 years, so our concerns are increasingly going to be driving the political and economic agenda that's going to have huge repercussions for public policy, private investment and business overall. If you're trying to stay ahead of what's coming, whether you're an investor, an entrepreneur, someone interested in public policy or even if you're just a concerned citizen, then you absolutely need to be thinking about these issues.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:02:41 Now, before you go and do that, before you start listening to this episode, I want to make an ask. I want you to pause this recording and take less than a minute of your time to rate the Hidden Forces podcast on Apple podcasts. Even if you don't use the app, if you have an iPhone, it's on there by default and there's a link that I put in the summary section down below that will automatically bring up your Apple podcast app so that you can rate the show right here, right now. It would mean a lot to me if you did it. And with that, please enjoy this second half of my four hour long conversation with writer and investor, Radigan Carter.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:03:23 Radigan, welcome back.

Radigan Carter: 00:03:29 Thank you. Good to be back.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:03:32 We just spent a couple hours going through your bio, I guess the last 20 years of your life really, with some really interesting anecdotes from growing up and the influence of your father. As I mentioned in the first half, your life experience and your experience overseas gives you a unique perspective and I think it also, it makes your views on geopolitics all the more valuable and I think insightful. And

I do want to get into that conversation. I want to discuss your sort of perspective on international relations, national security, because you've written some really interesting thought pieces on it. And of course, markets and cryptocurrencies. What's top of your mind today? What have you been thinking about? Are you working on any other pieces now as we speak? Where's your head at?

Radigan Carter: 00:04:32 I'm actually working on a new piece right now and the title I think is going to be, Risk and Rewards of a Decentralized Future, because kind of what I've been thinking about with the recent talk we've been having with Bitcoin and decentralization in general, cryptocurrencies, what's going on with the markets and just in general with how, especially after 2020, a lot of people had a really hard year with 2020 and I think there's a sense of that everything's just very unfair. People had a hard year, they saw the wrong people get help or companies got help and they didn't. And I think the whole push with decentralization technology and Bitcoin specifically, is people think, hey, this is going to be more fair.

Radigan Carter: 00:05:29 And something that I've kind of really been thinking about. And I'm trying to write this article to explain that, I've lived in decentralized communities for years and in those communities might makes right a lot of the times. You know, they're not, they're not safe places. It really is all about the relationship. There's no court to take a case to if someone cheats you. It depends on, hey, do they have more brothers and more AK-47s than you do? And if they do, then they get to do what they want. And I think what's kind of bothering me a little bit with this push on decentralized technology, I think it has a possibility to do a lot of good, but it's just technology and like any technology, it has the power to do a lot of good and it also has the power to make life very hard for a lot of people.

Radigan Carter: 00:06:25 And what I mean by that is, this decentralized technology, it's being built out on top of a very centralized, modern, hyper-efficient global supply chain and global economic model. Kind of, I would say probably from my firsthand experience in the Navy and then being overseas, people just assume that when a farmer takes a crop of soybeans to market in Brazil and takes it up the escarpment and they put it on a ship, that it just safely travels across the ocean to China and that's just the way things work. That no one's going to take that ship or nothing's going to happen to that ship. And I've actually done anti-piracy operations in the Strait of Malacca. We were there because pirates were just coming up to ships, taking them and taking them into Singapore, repainting the name, selling the cargo, stripping the ship and just going back for another one.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:07:26 Crazy.

Radigan Carter: 00:07:26 But if you're not out there and you're not seeing that firsthand or if you're not a geopolitical expert at the level of Peter Zeihan, then you're not really kind of aware of just kind of how fragile a modern civilized society really is. And on top of that, so what bothers me is I think there's a current trend right now towards decentralization, towards being local. And I think some of that's very good. Me personally, I want to be more involved at the local level. I'm ready to plant the flag, buy a house, fix it up and build a life and help my neighbors and help people around me and say, "Hey, this is where I am. This is what I want to do.

And I want to be a positive influence on my community." Well, and I think that's great. I think we should all do that. And I think that's the right path to take.

- Radigan Carter: 00:08:27 But when you look at the last 70 years, I really do think that the first global order with US hedge money, that we've kind of hit the pause button and stepped outside of the normal flow of time. And now geopolitics are dragging us back more towards almost an age of empires where people are going to be competing. Simply because the US doesn't need to be everywhere in the world anymore. We do have essential oil independence. We have so much natural gas going in the United States now that they're literally just venting it.
- Demetri Kofinas: 00:09:06 Yeah, it's wild. Let's go complete transformation.
- Radigan Carter: 00:09:09 There's rules on how much they can vent.
- Demetri Kofinas: 00:09:11 Of American energy needs.
- Radigan Carter: 00:09:12 Right. Right. And so, when you have that, I think the part that at the very heart of it, what bothers me is people are pushing for decentralized technology because they sense how unfair the current centralized system is. But I also realize that, you know what? The rest of the world did not like US foreign policy when it was transactional under the last president. They do not like a transactional United States.
- Demetri Kofinas: 00:09:43 Kind of interesting.
- Radigan Carter: 00:09:44 And what I'm thinking about is, when you go to Bitcoin or decentralized technology, that by its very nature is very transactional. You make a transaction, it clears, it's trustless. No one else has to interfere with it. And when you put that onto the current hyper-efficient centralized global economy, I don't think people are actually taken into account. Because people are kind of cheering the demise of the dollar a little bit too on this. They're like, "Hey, we got to get rid of this dollar standard. It hurts everybody. We want Bitcoin to grow and be eventually overtake the dollar." Well, when that happens, you're really not going to like the transactional foreign policy that goes along with Bitcoin and the demise of the dollar because they go hand in hand. What a lot of people don't realize is they think that the dollar is backed by US GDP. And that hasn't been my experience overseas. The US dollar is backed by the ability of the United States to level a nation.
- Demetri Kofinas: 00:10:45 Totally.
- Radigan Carter: 00:10:46 A nation state violence at people.
- Demetri Kofinas: 00:10:49 Totally, totally. The dollar reflects the power of American hegemony. And America hegemony creates economies of scale across the entire planet. As you pointed out, it weren't for the American Navy patrolling the Strait of Malacca, the Chinese would have a very difficult time getting the energy and ports they needed to fuel their economy.

Radigan Carter: 00:11:10 Correct. And people will say, "Well, there's other straits they can transit." But actually the Strait of Malacca is very strategic just because of the tidal currents and the depth on the other two straits that are possible detours around it.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:11:25 Yeah. And Peter Zeihan talks about this so I think just brilliantly. I can't think of any other mainstream writer on geopolitics who's able to pull together the geographic elements that are so foundational to how geopolitics works in practice, how national security operates in practice. And it isn't just theory. He has a kind of on the ground intelligence around it. But your larger point about decentralization is very interesting and it really resonates with my impression as well. First of all, we have to really decide what we mean when we talk about decentralization and like many hype driven industries, this one is one where that term has really become disconnected from any underlying technical definition. But even in the way that you're talking about it and how people apply it.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:12:26 I was on a podcast not long ago, had a great time with the hosts, really interesting conversation, but they had an opinion that was just dramatically different than mine. And I think also just not really congruent with reality, so to speak. And they felt that smart contracts and other automated agreements would be able to supplant not just the rule of law, but the nation state. And this is actually not even their view, there's someone who's going to be on my program, at least he ordered a microphone and he wants to come on and hopefully he's going to come on and we can talk about this. Hopefully my opinions, in other words, on Bitcoin and blockchain that I've recently aired and will continue to air, won't dissuade people from coming on this program, because that would be rather unfortunate so we'll see.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:13:17 But he has put forward this idea of the network state. And while I get some of the thinking behind how we might get there, in other words, that a multipolar world, an independent monetary authority in the form of a private cryptocurrency, could exercise some level of independent gravity. I could sort of creates some game theory scenarios around that. I think it's still super dubious, but if that were true, that's not a very great world, number one. Number two, larger to the point, this idea that we would have a network state and that local governments would lose their power or lose a significant amount of power to this sort of networked authority, I just don't see how that can happen because at the end of the day, what makes nation states powerful or rather what makes them so unique, is their capacity and ability to exert force, physical force.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:14:21 It doesn't matter if I can control my keys, when you can come to my house, put a gun to my head and tell me to give those keys to you and now you have my money. And the only reason that I'd feel any sense of remote confidence that I might be able to get that money back is because I could appeal to the court system and then eventually get the local police who have guns to go get it from him or her. Right?

Radigan Carter: 00:14:49 Absolutely.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:14:50 It totally misses all of that.

- Radigan Carter: 00:14:52 And I think it ties in very well, because, but here's the other thing. And I don't hold it against people that believe that way or want to see the world that way. But a lot of it is they've never been the guy actually going into someone's house and pointing a gun in their face and zip tying their family and arresting that guy like I have. And here's the other thing, a nation state is never going to pay their people in anything but their currency because why would you? If you can just create it and then people with guns go and do what you want them to do, why would you go out of your way to buy someone else's currency to pay the men with guns? And I fully appreciate how unfair the current system is with the companies that are provided liquidity after making bad decisions and basically the debt based economy.
- Radigan Carter: 00:15:56 I don't like it, but at the same time, whatever comes next, because there is going to be something that comes next. And I don't know what that is, but the more I think about it, because it could be some type of an SDR system too. Where we all have currencies that go into a basket or it could be Bitcoin or something besides the dollar. But when that happens, I think it will make US foreign policy, very transactional, which is actually very old. That's the kind of foreign policy we had back after World War I. And if people haven't read it, I would really suggest they read the book, Lords of Finance. Because what that tells is basically the decisions the central bankers made after World War I where the US had most of the gold after World War I and how it just influenced our foreign policy and made us very transactional and the rest of the world hated it.
- Radigan Carter: 00:16:54 There was riots in Paris as far as how much gold the US had and that they wouldn't forgive French debt from the war. And I think people are underestimating that possibility. I'm not saying it will happen, but I think people are underestimating that possibility by not even considering it. That hey, if you really want to step outside the bounds of the dollar system and just buy Bitcoin, I totally understand what you're doing. I'm not telling you not to do that. I fully understand that you're just trying to store value and not be robbed by central banking decisions. Fully get it. I was shoulder to shoulder with you from 2016. But the more I think about this, I think maybe at a more strategic level, if you want to call it that, is okay, we're moving towards something new. Well, what happens when that decentralized technology actually makes it something that the rest of the world isn't going to find very pleasant, as far as our foreign policy goes.
- Radigan Carter: 00:17:53 And the reason that's important to me is after working in the different places I have, there's a lot of people that live a lot closer to the edge than we do in America and something else I think really ties into this, that I don't think people are really considering is the food scarcity that a lot of countries are going to have that normally wouldn't have had that say in 1932. But after World War II, that really did something that was very, very different than in any other time in history because for the first time, if you think about it, at the beginning of the 15th century, a sailor off the coast of Portugal did something very unique. He put a pin in a magnetic bar and for the first time sailors had a compass that they could use on a ship. And that's what launched the whole age of discovery. Ships started going all over the world. And for the first time you actually had decentralized trade, physical trade that happened in the world.

- Radigan Carter: 00:18:54 Before that, physical trade was very centralized. It flowed along the Silk Road between Europe and Asia, it was centralized. The comp is decentralized physical trade and in a way, I kind of think about decentralized technology today as really the payment system catching up to what happened to physical trade five centuries ago, except for the fact that after World War II, all of a sudden physical trade was again centralized because now the United States Navy had aircraft carriers they sailed all around the world. They centralized physical trade, which hadn't ever happened since it was decentralized to begin with in the early 1500s.
- Radigan Carter: 00:19:32 And I think what that did is with a lot of countries that before hadn't been able to trade globally, because they never had the geography to be an empire or never had control over their own waters, all of a sudden, hey, if you were a US ally, if you were in Brazil, you could actually ship soybeans to China and no one was going to mess with that ship. And so everyone came to the cities, everyone stopped being farmers, went to the cities and all these emerging markets that before had never been industrialized, all of a sudden industrialized. To where now, even China, this is a great example. Even China they depend on protein imports to be able to feed their nation right now. With the decentralized technology, as that comes about, well, what happens to people that are now living in an industrialized society that literally don't even know how to farm or don't have the ability to go back to that decentralized way of living?
- Demetri Kofinas: 00:20:37 Yeah. Great points. I think one overarching way to describe what you're talking about is that we've spent decades organizing the worlds, our systems of learning, behavior, our expectations, our technologies, around a very particular model with foundational assumptions. One of which has been the socialization of security on the back of the American military empire and naval empire. And without America's security guarantee, a lot of stuff changes. And we've already begun to see that. You see these different, and this is actually something I wanted to ask you, because we've already begun to see a lot of these border regions begin to either fracture, come apart or where you're beginning to see Turkey is a great example in the Aegean. Testing of boundaries, of long established, internationally recognized boundaries. Where do you think we're going to see the biggest changes most immediately in both nation state geography and in global security?
- Radigan Carter: 00:21:49 Man, I think we'll see some changes in the Middle East, specifically under the new administration. Something I was paying attention to with the new administration that's coming in and they're wanting to reinstate the Iran deal, the Iran nuclear deal. And you can say what you want about the last president, but the one thing he did do was make the Middle East much more peaceful than it had been in my recent memory since being an adult. And I think something, kind of going along with what you were saying about how we like to make the world almost kind of in our image. We like to overlay the American sensibilities over different regions of the world and say, "Well, everyone believes in a win win. Why wouldn't you want to get along together and we can all build and live a better life?" That isn't culturally and maybe it's because of how hard life has been, but that isn't culturally what happens in the Middle East. There's very much a win lose mentality.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:22:56 Zero sum.

Radigan Carter: 00:22:57 About business dealings there. It's zero sum, correct. And if you're strong, then you're respected. They even have a word for it, they call it wasta. What kind of clout or what kind of influence do you have? Someone who has a lot of clout, a lot of influence, they have a lot of wasta. And so how does this tie to specifically, I would say between Iran and Saudi Arabia and even Israel ties into this? Is with us having essentially oil independence, because now we can make other things with natural gas because natural gas is so cheap and our advancement in drilling here in the US, well and Peter Zeihan talks about this quite a bit, Israel needs to find basically a new benefactor and Israel and Saudi Arabia, I think are going to have a very mutual understanding about what they want to do in the Middle East. And with this new administration coming in, I think the undersecretary in the State Department, the one that's coming in, she was actually the original kind of the creator of the original Iran deal back in, was that 2015?

Demetri Kofinas: 00:24:11 Yeah, well I think it was past then in 2015.

Radigan Carter: 00:24:15 With her coming in and kind of saying, "Hey, okay, now we're going to put the Iran deal back on the table and see if we can make Iran an equal partner to Saudi Arabia." Kind of what you have now is you have Saudi Arabia that they literally cut a journalist up with a bone saw and then put them in a barbecue to get rid of the DNA evidence. And you have that country that's now going to be paired with Israel who Israel's been very clear about, hey, we see this as a zero sum game that we cannot let Iran have first strike capability.

Radigan Carter: 00:24:49 And now you have kind of Israel and Saudi Arabia who they kind of have the same foreign policy. Hey, do you care about building a more stable Middle East? Not really. We'll just burn anybody to the ground that we really need to because that's better for us than us being destroyed. And I kind of think that that's going to have, I think, with us shifting and if we shift and support Iran, I think that will have consequences in the Middle East. Then you have Turkey that's right there on the other side. Go ahead.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:25:25 Wait, before we go to Turkey. Yeah. I want to ask you a bit more about this geopositioning with the Saudi Arabian Israeli alliance. The Israelis obviously get a huge economic benefit, I guess, from this. And the primary benefit that the Saudis get is I guess military security. Maybe you'll correct me if I'm wrong there. What would that mean if the United States re-instituted the Iran nuclear deal and was throwing its support behind Iran, at least diplomatically? I can't imagine their support would only go so far. What would we expect to see in this case? Because I think we can imagine a security arms race and maybe preemptive strikes by the Israelis, absent a nuclear deal, but in the context of a nuclear deal, what changes?

Radigan Carter: 00:26:16 I think one thing that would change for Saudi Arabia is they would actually want to be put in that pipeline across to Israel to have access to European markets on the Mediterranean. They're going to want to have the ability to ship oil and move that to different markets outside of the Persian Gulf specifically. Because if Iran's right across there from the Persian Gulf and all of a sudden the US has taken a more friendly approach, then they're not going to want to have Iran

interfering with them there in the Gulf. That would be kind of my immediate thought about it is they would probably be looking to put a pipeline across.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:26:59 Yeah. Well, couple questions. One, how does that get impacted? How has that affected whether or not the US re-institutes the Iran nuclear deal? I feel like they would do that anyway. Number two, how vulnerable is that pipeline to attack by Iranian missiles? That's a long stretch of pipe.

Radigan Carter: 00:27:14 It is a long stretch of pipe. And actually, I don't even know if I'd be too worried about a missile attack. I'd probably be more worried about drone strikes on something like that.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:27:23 Terror.

Radigan Carter: 00:27:26 Yeah, that would be much harder for a nation state to really deal with.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:27:31 Yeah, it's a great point. That's how they attacked the Saudi, I think was our Aramco facilities a year or two ago with a drone attack, right?

Radigan Carter: 00:27:39 Correct. Yep, it was a drone attack and then also too, just from the lessons learned, Turkey has definitely applied some lessons learned to the fight between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which drones were used there rather extensively and pretty well against armor and other ground units. Drone warfare is pretty much here to stay.

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:28:04]

Radigan Carter: 00:28:03 So, I mean, you know, drone warfare is pretty much here to stay.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:28:05 Well, you want to talk about decentralization. I mean, this raises another thing, which is that the world has changed so much and the weapons of destruction have become much more 'decentralized' and scale much quicker on the backs of much smaller capital investment. And I think this also, I've been saying this now for years, it's a phrase I've been saying privately and publicly in the last year, which is that I'm actually bullish on governments in this decade, because I think that the security environment in which we're operating will demand a more, not necessarily more powerful government, but a government that can provide security, and which can manage. I mean, this is why ideologies and black and white interpretations of the world are so dangerous because on the one hand, we in the United States have been so focused in our bubble on ensuring that we have understandably, correctly, that we have freedom, freedom of the press, civil rights, the right to communicate privately, transact privately, to not have our thoughts and feelings stored.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:29:16 But at the same time, there is a security issue here. And as bio weapons become more accessible, the recipes for cooking up a bio weapon become more accessible as cyber weapons become more available and exploits proliferate, and the type of destructive actions that can be mounted off the back of a piece of malware become greater. The need for some kind of compromise, I think becomes impossible to ignore. So anyway, I just wanted to kind of throw that

out there. That would be an interesting thing for us to discuss, but it comes up in the context of Azerbaijan and Armenia.

- Radigan Carter: 00:29:57 Well, I don't think you can, you can't overestimate people's ability to want to be physically safe. So people will give up an immense amount just to be safe, you know, freedom, whatever the case is, if they're safe, if they have food, if they're able to keep warm, if it's cold, you know, just for that physical ability and physical safety, you know, they want to be protected. And, you know, so I tend to agree. If the governments that are going to be able to do that, that's going to be bullish for them.
- Demetri Kofinas: 00:30:31 So you mentioned Turkey, and of course, like we can't, I mean, we're kind of going all these different sections, but I'd love for you to kind of connect the pieces wherever you feel like there's an opportunity to do so. But you were on the verge of talking about Turkey before I asked you to flesh out the scenario you were describing with Iran, Saudi Arabia and Israel. What do you see happening with Turkey right now? Because they've got so many different borders, so many risks and so many opportunities.
- Radigan Carter: 00:31:01 They do. And, you know, the thing that I find interesting about Turkey is they used to be a very old empire. You know, they used to be the Ottoman empire, and really up until the invention of deep water navigation, all global trade had to flow through them. You know, they used to be at the very center of global trade, ideas, war, everything had to flow pretty much through Istanbul if it was going trans-continental trade. So, you know, I worked with a lot of trucks overseas and phenomenal people, and I think that they're going to use, as America takes a step back from the globe, you know, if I was them, I would use that space to expand the Turkish influence again. And I think that's going to line up very well with what they have going on internally in their economy. You know, they're a relatively young country, they have a lot of guys that, you know, or people, we're all the same. So, you know, a young Turkish guy, he wants to be able to make a good living, get married, have a car, buy a house, right. And, you know, with what's been happening with the Lira in Turkey, in the economy, especially after 2020, I think with the US has a unique ability that we're, "Hey, we're the only one in the world with a printing press that can print US dollars. If anyone else wants foreign reserves, they kind of have to buy them."
- Radigan Carter: 00:32:34 And so, Turkey hasn't been able to provide the liquidity to businesses that we have here. And so internally on that economy, you have a lot of guys that, that message of, "Hey, we're going to build back a stronger Turkish identity and a stronger country." That's really going to resonate with guys that, "Thank you." You know, "Yeah, I want to get a job, I want to go to work, I want to have a good economy. You're telling me we can do that? Let's do it."
- Radigan Carter: 00:33:09 You know, you're telling me that, "Hey, there's gas fields out there in the Mediterranean that we can go take to where we can put drilling rigs on and bring that gas back to Turkey? Let's go do that. I'm on board with it." And, you know, I think you're going to see that. And I really kind of think all this is, is a lot of this too, is really just the, you could call it the natural conclusion to a global debt based economy. You know, when everyone's in debt, everyone needs resources.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:33:39 That's right. And also the fracturing of the unipolar order, which opens up those opportunities to take those resources.

Radigan Carter: 00:33:48 I mean, absolutely. You know, if this was 20 years ago, would Turkey even be trying to take resources in the Mediterranean? I don't know, but I kind of doubt it.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:33:58 No, no, no.

Radigan Carter: 00:33:59 But, you know, we're kind of just asleep at the switch.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:34:02 So what does this mean for NATO, a resurgent Turkey or Ottoman Turkey, Neo-Ottoman Turkey? What does this mean for NATO, the NATO Alliance? What does it mean for the EU? Because, I think in some ways it represents both a threat and an opportunity for the Europeans. And how do I mean that? I think one of the problems that Europe has had in recent years is that they've made a lot of progress on the monetary front and on the economic front in terms of unifying, so to speak, progress, that's how I mean it, but the political impetus for the union has faded since the end of a Cold War. And I wonder if an external security threat can help to light the fire to be a catalyst for further integration, or at least for the strengthening of existing ties within the union. But at the same time, the Europeans are fat and happy.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:35:06 I mean, in relative terms, certain countries in Europe, like Greece, have really turned the corner in terms of becoming a more resilient society after undergoing a decade long period of financial decline and hardship, but that's relative to other countries in Europe and it doesn't remotely capture what other countries outside of the continent have been able to do. So fat and happy, and also again, the Europeans don't have a military. The strongest military in Europe is France because, you know, this is not like it's just hypothetical, France has sent battleships into the Mediterranean to the East med med during the height of this crisis with Greece. How do you see the Europeans participating in and jockeying for power in the Eastern Mediterranean?

Radigan Carter: 00:35:53 You know, that's an interesting question. And I kind of tend to think that, you know, normalcy bias is going to be very, very hard to overcome. And what I mean by that is for the last, what 50, 70 years, ever since the US took the lead on security with NATO, and the deal was, "Hey, you stand with us against the Soviets and we'll protect global trade." You know, NATO has kind of just done whatever the US has said, "Hey, this is what we're going to do." And NATO said, "Okay, well, let's go do that."

Radigan Carter: 00:36:27 And in a way, as far as like the European continent goes of Europe, they really haven't had to worry about their own. And I don't want to upset people in Europe, but they haven't really had to worry about external threats really for a long time, for the majority of people, for the baby boomers that have been alive. You know, they haven't really had to worry about Russian tanks rolling through the folded gap, because, you know, the US was there during the Cold War, and after the Cold War, everything was fine, we were building McDonald's in Russia. So, you know, let's take the 30 days of vacation on the Mediterranean every year and life is good. And, you know, we got a good European economy.

Radigan Carter: 00:37:10 And, you know, as far as the Eastern Mediterranean, what I find interesting is the dynamic there between, you know, so I think a lot of that is what you're seeing unfold is, you know, credit to Peters Zeihan for talking about this is that conflict of basically between ... What's the word, the geopolitical tectonic plates, right, kind of starting to rub together between France and Turkey. And you can see that playing off a little bit with who they're supporting in Africa. So they're even starting to support different factions and be on opposing sides, and they've been kind of avoiding direct conflict.

Radigan Carter: 00:37:52 I think there's been a couple like ship to ships miscommunications out there in the Mediterranean, but for the most part, like I even find that interesting how they're playing different games in Africa facing off against each other too. And, you know, very similar to, let's go back to world war one, right. And the Triple Entente. And what do you see again playing out? You see France and Russia kind of teaming up on either side of Turkey to kind of thwart what Turkey is trying to do in Africa. And I think that's very interesting. I even think that there's part of what Turkey's doing in Syria, trying to suck Russia in there to commit to that so Turkey can expand influence on other border regions.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:38:34 Yeah. I mean, that's the thing, again, like the opportunities are plentiful for Turkey, but the threats are bountiful. Obviously Russia is a historical nemesis, they've got issues to their Western boundary. While they're opening up issues with Greece, they have historical issues. They also have issues with France, and of course, Syria is to the South, which is in the midst of a civil war, ongoing. It's not clear when that country is going to piece together again. And then Iran is to the right.

Radigan Carter: 00:39:02 Well, and you know, may probably, unfortunately, but with what's been going on with Brexit dragging on for over four years now, and what's been happening in the EU, I personally think that they've lost a lot of credibility between being able to agree on anything and actually being able to take any action. And I think a lot of players are actually watching that and seeing-

Demetri Kofinas: 00:39:24 Europeans you mean?

Radigan Carter: 00:39:25 Correct?

Demetri Kofinas: 00:39:25 Yeah. So let's talk about America now, right? Because there are certain forces that are moving the world towards less of a unipolar world that we had after the end of the Cold War up until probably, I mean, in my view, the decision to invade Iraq, and I've felt this way for a very long time. I think we'll sort of be seen as the pinnacle of American hegemony, but I don't think the moment really came home for people until the Trump administration. I mean, the world was moving towards a more multipolar world, as you pointed out, foreign policy under Obama had become more transactional, but it wasn't until Trump where you saw some of these completely unconventional moves, like in the situation that occurred with Turkey. I'm struggling to think of some other ones right off the top of my head, but there were instances like this where people really felt like, wow, maybe, I mean, obviously the way he talked about NATO, and it wasn't as much policy as it was, it was also about rhetoric.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:40:39 And I wonder if now that, let's say European allies and also Asian partners saw this the last four years, if it sort of has come home to them, that they really are in a new world and there's really no going back, it doesn't matter what the Biden administration wants to accomplish. And so I guess, it's a long-winded way of asking two questions, one, a specific one on Europe, and what role, if any, can the United States play in order to try and keep the peace there? How long would they be able to do it? Or is there really,

Demetri Kofinas: 00:41:18 are we past that point? Curious what your thoughts are?

Radigan Carter: 00:41:22 So, you know, I think, one of my favorite examples of how kind of the unilateral action that the world really started to see in from the United States under the last president, was when we killed Soleimani on, you know, basically Route Irish right outside the Baghdad airport. You know, because we could have easily had just, you know, plane could have gone down, we could have let the Iranians save face and said, "Hey, unfortunately we lost a beloved general to mechanical difficulty. You know, and that would have been fine. We could have let him save face and only their government, our government, would have known what had happened.

Radigan Carter: 00:41:59 That's not what we chose to do. You know, we chose to kill him on Route Irish where, you know, a lot of his Quds Force had helped Iraqis build IEDs against our forces during the war. And the thing about it is people were worried about the stability in the Middle East and what did the Iranians do? They did everything, but basically call the president and ask him not to retaliate. You know, they shot a couple of missiles at bases they had already warned and just prayed that the guidance systems were on track and weren't going to hurt anybody, because they didn't want to escalate.

Radigan Carter: 00:42:35 And so I think when the rest of the world saw that, I specifically think Europe thought, "Man, the United States is now just kind of doing what they want to and they don't even care about stability in the Middle East." And if that doesn't-

Demetri Kofinas: 00:42:49 Because the Europeans are much more dependent on Middle Eastern oil in the United States.

Radigan Carter: 00:42:53 Absolutely. Well, and Russian oil too. You know, I mean, they're just much more dependent on stability being on their borders like that. You know, especially after the migrants started coming out of Syria and coming to Europe and to Germany. And you know, that might've helped Germany for the economic boost because of how old their population is, but it still comes with a lot of social strife that they're going to have to deal with. And so I almost think that Europe is actually hoping that the future, the trend that we were on for the last four years, I think they're actually hoping that it's going to reverse. Because if you'll notice on, you know, as soon as President Biden was elected, you know, what was the message that Europe was sending? Welcome back America!

Radigan Carter: 00:43:42 Like we'd gone somewhere for four years? You know, and I took that to mean that they were very celebratory on the fact that, "Hey, congratulations, we get to rewind the tape to 2015 and you're coming back to help us. You're coming back to protect us again." You know, things are just going to go back to normal

where we can keep doing what we normally do and you're just going to keep sailing the seven seas and make sure everything's okay. We're very happy that you're back, thank you. And I don't think that that's the way that it's really going to go. And part of that is, you know, going back to the Iran deal, if they go with that and try to strengthen Iran to counter Saudi Arabia, I just can't see the Saudis and the Israelis standing still for that. But, could I be wrong? Absolutely.

- Demetri Kofinas: 00:44:35 Do you think the Israelis and the Saudis, and this is something I think Xi'an talks about, that the Israelis and the Saudis are going to just begin to preemptively take out any, not just Iranian nuclear capability that they see developing or progressing, but also any kind of weaponry that can reach either state. They're not going to invade them.
- Radigan Carter: 00:44:57 No, I mean, they don't even have to. You know, that's not how the Saudis do business. They're not just going to hurt infrastructure, you know, because the people that grew up in Saudi Arabia that they don't want as, you know, destructive elements within their own society, they're going to give those guys training and then just start sending them out into that region.
- Demetri Kofinas: 00:45:20 It's just going to be political terrorism.
- Radigan Carter: 00:45:22 Absolutely. You know, they have no desire to keep that region stable, they don't need to. You know, they're rich. Because I think that's something that people don't understand is that there's a --
- Demetri Kofinas: 00:45:33 They do need to protect their oil infrastructure though, don't they? So how does that work?
- Radigan Carter: 00:45:38 Well, right now they have the United States and you know what, if we take a step back, then they're going to have the Israelis to help them protect that. You know, I mean, Saudi Arabia has never been strong militarily, they're always going to find someone else to help them protect their infrastructure.
- Demetri Kofinas: 00:45:50 Yeah. So you were about to say that, and that actually brings up something else I want to ask you, which is how and where does China get involved and where does Russia get involved here as well? But, you were going to say something which was what people don't understand.
- Radigan Carter: 00:46:05 Oh, so, you know, from my experience working in the Middle East, what people don't understand about, I would say the Middle East specifically and Gulf Arabs, is that they definitely see themselves as a higher level on the socioeconomic ladder than other Arabs from the region, or from Syria. So, you know, when I say that Saudi Arabia is just going to start exporting terrorism because they have no desire to see a stable Middle East, you know, I'm saying that because you know, not only do they really not value the lives of their own citizens, is they absolutely don't value the lives of anyone else in that region.
- Radigan Carter: 00:46:46 You know, to them, it really is a zero-sum game. You know, if you're going to make Iran stronger and we feel threatened, then we're just going to burn all of this stuff to the ground if we can't have it. And you will have the Israelis or the United States come in and help us protect our oil fields.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:47:03 So where is the understanding in American circles about that, let's say eventuality, as you describe it? Is there an understanding, and where does that understanding reside?

Radigan Carter: 00:47:16 I honestly don't know. I mean, for guys that were, I would say over on the ground level, that were like be on the ground level and we're dealing with this on a day in day out basis, that it's very well understood, but I also don't think that it's, you know what I'm saying isn't, it's probably not socially acceptable to say at higher levels where you're dealing in meetings at like, you know, the Council on Foreign Relations. And I honestly don't even know how many people actually have on the ground experience that are making policy level decisions like that.

Radigan Carter: 00:47:56 Because even the people that they're dealing with as far as foreign nationals that they're talking to at a policy level or at a very high level, they're dealing with the absolute best of the best of that country that probably, or educated at Yale or at Harvard or in Europe somewhere, and have probably lived most of their adult life outside of their home country than actually in the Middle East, if that makes sense?

Demetri Kofinas: 00:48:21 Yeah, of course. Yeah, they're foreign educated, speak English fantastically well, are wealthy and not really highly representative, as you said. I mean, who was the guy that the Bush administration had staked their entire post Iraq invasion plan on to bring the peace? Who was supposed to lead the transitional government? Now, I can't remember, he was the guy that fed them some of this information about chemical weapons.

Radigan Carter: 00:48:47 Oh, I don't even remember that guy's name.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:48:48 Yeah, but that was a perfect example of that.

Radigan Carter: 00:48:51 I would also add this too, like that puts us at a distinct disadvantage when we're dealing with other countries, because we don't have as much of a deep understanding of their culture and historical norms that they do of us. Because if they've been educated in the West, they've lived for years in the West, like they know how we think, they know how we like to make agreements and they just know us culturally much more than we know about them.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:49:17 Yeah, and they understand one thing about Americans that nothing motivates us like money. It has been the one weak point, and this kind of brings us full circle too. And I don't necessarily want to get to this right now, but, or yet perhaps, but it's one of my huge concerns with what's been going on in our financial markets, the way in which our capital markets are plunged for capital by foreign adversaries and just how corrupt our system has become.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:49:46 How disorganized do you feel that our leadership is and our sort of standing deep state bureaucracy? Or do you feel like there are enough competent people in the bureaucracy, in government, that there's good reason to hold that hope that we'll be able to navigate this transition?

Radigan Carter: 00:50:09 I don't want to be down about it because I know I was there and, you know, I always did the best I could where I was with what I had. And I think there's a lot of guys like that. You know, there's a lot of dudes like me that are out there just doing the job and they're not vocal about it and they're doing good work for the country. But whether they're in the right place as far as policy level or higher up, that's a good question. Because the guys that I respected most that were very, very sharp at the ground level, a lot of them just like being on the ground level and didn't want to take that step up to policy level decision-making. You know, they didn't want to go back to headquarters where they could bring that very valuable real-world experience to making decisions that would have a much wider impact.

Radigan Carter: 00:51:01 So, you know, while I definitely think that there's a lot of good people out there doing really good work within the government, I don't know if, you know, I was never in DC at those levels, so I can't speak to who's there and how the policy level. Does that make sense?

Demetri Kofinas: 00:51:21 Yeah, sure, of course. I don't know how comfortable you are talking politics, but if you are, I'm curious who in our government among elected officials, do you hold out hope for and/or think is a competent person who really gets the issues, understands the problem and is in touch with people that are actually able to solve it?

Radigan Carter: 00:51:47 I honestly have no idea. Like I make it a point of trying not to follow politics.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:51:53 Interesting.

Radigan Carter: 00:51:53 Because I just, you know, for me, like it doesn't really matter because, and I think part of this is I was overseas under different administrations, you know, both Democrat and Republican. And I honestly couldn't see much of a difference between who was in charge as far as like when it came to being on the ground level.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:52:14 What about under Trump, since Trump was so out of consensus with the Beltway consensus?

Radigan Carter: 00:52:21 At a ground level, it didn't really make much of a difference. I mean, I think that's something that a lot of people that probably aren't inside the system have a hard time grasping, is just how massive the machinery is for what the government does. You know, just for how massive the machine is that keeps the global order running. Right. So that when you elect representatives to Congress or to the presidency, you know, as far as like the day-to-day missions and the day-to-day operations, that doesn't really change because it's just the machine running like it normally does. So when it comes to politicians, as far as like who I think can make a difference or who, you know, I don't even really pay much attention to it because I don't think they really have that much influence on what is actually happening in at the ground level.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:53:24 So let me kind of pivot to a question that I teased earlier, which had to do with China and Iran. For the Germans, the Chinese market is super important and they have particularly close relationships with the Chinese among European

countries. Obviously Russia is like right there at the border of Europe, it's been a player in European politics for centuries. How do these two countries take advantage of this opportunity, given also the fact that they do, I mean, well particularly China, depend on the stability of the international order?

Demetri Kofinas: 00:54:02 I mean, I guess one question is how do they interject themselves? How do they get involved? And then what I really am looking for, Radigan, and not necessarily from you, it's sort of what I hold out hope for. I hold out hope that there's just some kind of natural structure in global politics and the national security environment and global commerce, some mixture of those three that creates a natural, stable, temporarily stable equilibrium.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:54:34 Because the thing is, I don't think it's really possible to avoid moving down the slope, but I think there are degrees of the leveraging, so to speak. You could have catastrophic quick de-leveraging, which leads to war, or you can have the equivalent of, you know, the Japanese lost decades, a very steady deflation of the international order, which could, let's say, reduce the likelihood of some catastrophic breakout of war. That's kind of what I'm hoping for. I'd love for you to kind of address your thoughts on that, but we can start with where and how do you feel that these other two major geo-strategic powers, Russia and China, will involve themselves in this new emerging order?

Radigan Carter: 00:55:22 So, I'll give my thoughts on Russia first and then we'll move to China. So, I kind of think that's one thing where, you know, Russia within trying to tie their energy into Europe specifically, and I think they're trying to make Europe more dependent on them for when the US steps back then they really can't tell Russia no, in very many ways, right. And I think that's a pretty smart decision on Russia's part, trying to make Europe dependent on their energy.

Radigan Carter: 00:55:54 Now, as far as like Russia and China specifically, I kind of think of it as, you know, they don't like each other, but they don't like the US-

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Radigan Carter: 00:56:03 As they don't like each other, but they don't like the US more. And while they both depend on the global order, and I would say specifically China... I mean, China gets... I think it's over 80% of their oil... I mean, hey have the longest logistics run for energy from the Middle East to China. And they certainly can't provide security for their own energy. They depend on us to do that. So in a way I don't really quite understand... Well, I do understand why they're doing it. I think it really goes back to... They still believe, as a country, they still have a chip on their shoulder against the West going back to the Opium Wars. And I know that sounds kind of... I know that sounds strange because I don't think most people, even in the United States even know what the Opium Wars were, but when I was in China, those people have a very long memory and they're very proud of their country.

Radigan Carter: 00:57:04 So when I get in a cab in Beijing and the cab driver's trying to tell me how proud he is of his city, and that Beijing is like the cultural center of China for the last 800 years, when you're in a, when you're in a country like that, with such a long history, that they all have a communal memory of, to them, the Opium Wars

was just the last week. And they know that the West came there, waged a war against them basically so they didn't have to do free trade, because that was the entire basis of the Opium Wars. China said, "Hey, we'll trade with the West. Britain, you want to come in here and you want to have teas and silk and porcelain, that's fine. Just give us gold. Then we'll give you all the Chinese goods you want."

Radigan Carter: 00:57:52 That's not what the West wanted to do. They wanted to have a product that they could trade for the products they wanted. Well, since China didn't want anything from the West, they couldn't really wear wool from England over there, it's too hot in Asia. So what did the British East India company come up with? "Hey, we'll addict an entire civilization to opium, so that way we can trade them opium for these goods we want from them since we don't want to give them gold." Well, China still remembers that. They remember that the West basically destroyed their civilization just so they didn't have to do free and fair trade. So when I see what China is trying to do with the West and trying to do an end run around the dollar and their new digital currency they're trying to come out with, to where if you trade in China, you have to use this dollar. Even going back to trying to get Taiwan to rejoin the motherland there. To me it all makes sense, and it really goes back to them trying to regain their former glory from before the Opium Wars.

Demetri Kofinas: 00:58:56 You're so well-read, man, and it comes across in your writing too. I can't recommend your writing enough. I hope people read it. So, totally, and one of the things that I struggled with and I still do. It's not like I don't struggle with it. It's become less of a mystery to me, but one of the things I really struggled with early on was trying to understand why the CCP would be so committed to certain things. Even when the NBA came to China and the head of the Houston Rockets, he was the head coach of the Houston Rockets, made some passing comments of support for Hong Kong, I think it was in the form of a tweet, and the CCP was just up in arms about this. It was a huge deal. Similarly, why they're so hell bent on reunifying with Taiwan. There are obviously clear geo-strategic reasons why. But the best explanation I've been able to get is that because the Chinese Communist Party is not...

Demetri Kofinas: 01:00:05 We tend to think about countries and governments in our own terms because that's our frame of reference, but because the CCP doesn't derive its legitimacy naturally from the electorate. I mean, Chinese people, aren't really citizens in the way that we think of ourselves as citizens. They have certain, for lack of a better word, deals and agreements with their population, and their ability to, one, meet those agreements in the form of economic growth, for example, but also show their own legitimacy by their own successes. So if they fail at something, that impacts the legitimacy of the CCP in the way that it would impact America's government, but unlike in the United States where we have elections, those don't exist in China. So this is my interpretation. I want to hear what you have to say. My best interpretation is that China is inherently unstable by virtue of its government. So because of that, they're more prone to taking risks that Western countries like the United States wouldn't take, because the consequences of in some cases not taking those risks could mean internal revolution.

Radigan Carter: 01:01:17 I agree with that. And I think there's a... And you and I are talking about this, and this is an outsider's view looking in on their culture, but after living in Asia for several years, there's an element there that I would say is present in Asian cultures that is not present in the West, which is that there's a... Beyond a contract if I'm doing business with you, there's a moral obligation there that goes very deep as far as personal honor and family honor. To where if you and I are doing business together and I do you a favor, you are morally obligated to do me a favor return. And I think where that plays out at the government level for them with the CCP is they're trying to... Identity, that sense of identity and honor is very important to them, and it's always been their policy that there's a one China principle. There isn't China and Taiwan and Hong Kong. No, no, we're all China. One China.

Radigan Carter: 01:02:22 And with the CCP and the government, they see themselves as the embodiment of that one China. That is their specific role that they must unite China. They must unite the homeland to be like it was before the West wrecked it. And that's pretty deep. But I think when people were saying, "Hey, this is terrible what the CCP's doing with Hong Kong." I always say, "No, no, no, you don't understand. They see this as them being able to take back what was taken because the British made them sign away Hong Kong as part of the deal from the Second Opium War." So to China, to president Xi, this is him keeping a promise that, "Hey, we're getting the entire family back together. It's a family. We're going to bring the family that was taken from us by the West over a hundred years ago, we're bringing them back into and being united with as one China."

Radigan Carter: 01:03:21 So that's why I think Taiwan is very important to them, because... And it's a few levels. So you have the social aspect of it, with how, "Hey, this is a one China principle." You have the strategic aspect, which you touched on. But I also think, too, because when you look at the semiconductors that are being manufactured in Taiwan that we're dependent on totally. If China wants to do an end run around the dollar and do the new digital currency that they're trying to roll out and say, "Hey, if you do business in China, you now have to participate in DCEP," well what better way to get the United States on board with accepting DCEP as part of a global trade currency that they must use, than making them use it to buy critical semiconductor components that they need. That's just kind of my... I could be completely wrong. That's just kind of something I was thinking about.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:04:19 Is that a thesis that you've developed on your own?

Radigan Carter: 01:04:22 Yeah, that's just something. I was kind of thinking about the semiconductors they were making there and how we can't really tell them no. I mean, I guess we could. We could find a different source for them. But to me that just kind of makes... By tying those three things together, it just makes sense why they're willing to take the risks they are. Because to them, they're playing a zero sum game. They're on the clock demographically. To me, when I look at... This goes back to... I keep wanting to give Peter Zeihan credit for this because there really isn't anyone that I've read on geopolitics whose thesis matches as closely what I saw overseas than what he's laid out. So when you look at China and see how they're kind of on this demographic clock, because of...

Radigan Carter: 01:05:12 Let me tie it this way. When you think about the Millennials and the frustration they have in America with the economic policies that the Baby Boomers have enacted. Imagine how frustrated a young Chinese guy feels that he'll never be able to outvote the Chinese Baby Boomers. And on top of that, there's two old Chinese Baby Boomers he has to support for the rest of his life. And since China did basically single-sex abortion because, "Hey, it's very important to have a boy and you can only have one kid." Now, if you're a 25 year old Chinese guy, you have a hard time even finding a date, because all the factory workers want women to work in it because they cause less problems than men. So when you're saying that Chinese society is kind of unstable, I tend to agree. And I'm sure people that have more experience in there than me might disagree, but I think that kind of explains the risks they're taking, especially when you pair it up with the potential to make the West get on board with DCEP in order to keep getting critical components they need.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:06:20 So those critical components would only come if they unified the island, right?

Radigan Carter: 01:06:25 Correct.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:06:26 So that brings us to a question, which is, do you think that in all likelihood the Chinese, the CCP is committed to retaking Taiwan?

Radigan Carter: 01:06:39 Yes, I do.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:06:40 Do you think that's something that's going to happen in this decade?

Radigan Carter: 01:06:43 I wouldn't be surprised. I wouldn't be surprised in the least.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:06:47 So how do we react to that? Let's say... There are all sorts of ways in which it can happen, and I've done one episode on this, and potentially it's something that we don't necessarily have to be caught off guard on. How does the United States respond to that, to such an invasion, given not just our standing relationship with the island, not just the strategic opportunities that having control of that island would afford China in terms of projecting power out into the Pacific, but also given the strategic importance of Taiwan's chip industry?

Radigan Carter: 01:07:24 So I guess first off, I find it very interesting that the CCP have been doing daily... Has been encroaching in Taiwanese airspace pretty much daily. And I think a couple of days ago, they actually used combat aircraft and it was several times in a day. So to me, when I see that, what I see is the CCP building up normalcy bias in Taiwanese defenders. So if that was me, and I had people that were testing my perimeter like that, my concern as the person in charge of the defense would be, "Hey, I can't let my guys get complacent because the more time this happens, the more complacent the Taiwanese who are going up to meet those sorties are going to be until eventually it will be real." Because what that does that allows you to do is that allows the CCP to basically be able to start their first minute faster than the defenders. So if you can build a normalcy bias and then you know when you're going to take initiative...

Radigan Carter: 01:08:35 Overcoming the initiative of an attack is very, very hard. It's difficult. You have to train with a specific mission of starting from the fact that you're behind the

curve. And then when you think about that, if they do try to take Taiwan by force and... Well, let me back up. I actually think the CCP sees no other option than to take Taiwan by force now. I think before Hong Kong, I think they probably held out hope for a peaceful reunification, but after they took Hong Kong and some Hong Kong dissidents went to Taiwan probably the polling in Taiwan all of a sudden shifted to say, "Hey, we don't like what's happening in Hong Kong. We don't want to really even talk about rejoining the mainland now." I think the CCP has kind of come to the realization that, "Hey, if we're going to have Taiwan, then it's going to be by force." And I think probably what the Chinese are really going to rely on is they have a much shorter logistical line than what we will if we decide to go help.

- Demetri Kofinas: 01:09:46 Logistical... Hold on. In terms of the amount of time it would take to join the fight, so to speak, or to resupply the island in its fight to fend off the PLA?
- Radigan Carter: 01:09:56 Both. I mean, China is right there. They're going to be able to be able to send resources and they're going to be able to send forces much quicker than we will.
- Demetri Kofinas: 01:10:09 So here I have a question, then. It sounds like your view is that when it comes to commitment, the United States simply cannot match the Chinese, not just because this is their backyard, but because they do have a completely different sense of their narrative around Taiwan and their ownership of the island is very different from how we see it. So if the United States were to escalate, could we bluff our way to defending the island enough that it wouldn't lead to a spillover, or God forbid a nuclear exchange? I mean, how do you see... What the scenarios there for protecting Taiwan?
- Radigan Carter: 01:10:55 I don't think it will be... I don't think anything will ever go nuclear on that. Not over Taiwan. As far as for how dedicated they are to having that island back, I think a lot of people don't realize that Taiwan started as a country because it was a last province that didn't fall to the CCP during the civil war after World War II. So to flip this around for Americans to kind of understand the significance of Taiwan for the CCP and having to have that island back, imagine if there was a revolution in the United States and Hawaii was the last bastion of the former government, and then all of a sudden, the United States says, "Hey, you know what, Hawaii, we want you to rejoin." And Hawaii says, "Hey, no thanks. We like being Hawaii now. We don't recognize you as the real United States. We're the real United States." And then all of a sudden China was selling an aircraft carrier between us and saying, "Hey, don't make a move to go retake Hawaii." We wouldn't take kindly to that and we wouldn't put up with that. And I don't think China's going to either. They are much more emotionally and culturally and just nationally invested in having Taiwan back than we ever will be. So to me, as far as... And all my experience is on the ground level. I don't have policy experience. I don't have anything like that. So I'm sure people will listen to this and disagree, but for me on the ground level, what it really comes down to is who's willing to buy those beaches in blood more. Is it going to be the United States landing and hitting that beach with 240s being able to fight their way in and take it back from the CCP and doing a link up with Taiwanese resistance? Or do you think the CCP is going to hit that beach and be willing to pay for it more? And that's really what it comes down to. And not just the willingness to fight, because as an American that's what we do, but is the

American public going to be willing to buy those beaches in blood. And I would say the answer to that is no.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:13:09 Well, that comes back to the demographics. Not only is there an urgency around action, but there's also a population of young men who are more motivated because there's less for them on the mainland, so to speak. Not that they're going to go to Taiwan to find it, but that there's at least meaning and purpose in the military. And it's a way to channel that aggression that isn't channeled into love and romance and family.

Radigan Carter: 01:13:41 Absolutely. Let's go back one second. When you asked originally where do I see an area going to be tested first geopolitically? Probably more than even Saudi Arabia and Iran, it's really going to be Taiwan, because think about this. If China does do this and they do try to retake that island and they take it, that's going to have major global geopolitical consequences for our credibility. No one is going to trust us. We can sell all the aircraft carriers around the ocean we want, because guess what, when the CCP came calling, we just told Taipei, "Sorry, we can't buy that beach for you. We know we said we would, but we didn't."

Demetri Kofinas: 01:14:25 Wow. So many thoughts, man. So it's certainly possible, based on everything we've discussed so far, we can imagine that in this decade, before the decade is over, and maybe even before the first half of the decade is over, maybe before this year is over... Because also the virus really changes things. It really changes things because it dramatically alter society and an increases control, the control that governments have over people. And nowhere is that more true than that in China. We could actually see a dramatic alteration in the world, not just geographically, but simply in terms of our expectations around security, alliances. If the Chinese were to take Taiwan and were to have control of their chip industry... Dude, this is wild, man, because this brings it back to like...

Demetri Kofinas: 01:15:21 You and I have talked about this. I wrote a thread about this, a thread on Twitter, and I also published the monologue on my podcast where I talked about it. I genuinely believe that the emerging both geopolitical threats and domestic threats in the United States due to our political dysfunction and divisions are far too great for us to be, pardon my French, dicking around like we are and luxuriating with all sorts of personal selfish ideas of what we should and shouldn't be able to do. I think we need a grand unified national strategy around defense, around economic renewal, because I think the world is changing and we haven't gotten the fucking memo. The Americans are the last ones that have gotten the memo. Maybe the Europeans too. But the Chinese are well ahead of us in this regard. So far we've been playing catch up and I'm afraid that we're going to continue to play catch up.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:16:27 And not to draw any kind of strong analogy with Nazi Germany, because again, it is a bit different, but there is some level of... You referred to it before, I guess this is an area where we talk about in terms of normalcy bias. There is a similarity in terms of how we become conditioned to peace, and we look at danger, we look at threat, and we just want it to go away, so we close our eyes to it. And I think for many sober minded people like Churchill, the expansion of Germany, first by retaking the Rhineland, and then by taking the Sudetenland and Czechoslovakia, I mean, the signs were there. And Austria. The signs were

there that they weren't just going to stop. Absent an external force, this body was going to continue to move in motion. And I feel like that's what we're seeing right now.

- Demetri Kofinas: 01:17:26 It's obviously a little bit different. Both geographically it's different. This is not one continent. And this is not a continental power moving West. But the technological landscape of the world is very different today. So you talk about the digital national currency and all these complicated ways in which the Chinese wage financial warfare and economic warfare. You've talked about it so brilliantly in your analogy with chess and go. So I feel like we need to get ahead of this as much as possible, and we need a unified strategy. I set a bunch of things. I would love for you to respond to them and also about whether you think we need one and how do we get there?
- Radigan Carter: 01:18:06 So when you asked me about politics, and I said, "Hey, I don't really follow it because I can't tell much of a difference on the ground level." The issue with that is when you say, "Hey, we need to stop messing around with this and actually pay attention to what's going on in the world." That's absolutely right. But unfortunately, I think most politicians are just asleep at the switch. I almost think that it's almost a generational issue. Because right now the Baby Boomers are in charge politically, and they're kind of stuck in this eternal youth phase that they got going on. Because when you think about it, the great... Excuse me, the Berlin Wall came down when they were all in their 30s and 40s, so for a lot of them, they're just kind of stuck in the good years of the early 90s, and they don't want to confront the threats that have been building for the last 30 years that we now find ourselves surrounded by.
- Radigan Carter: 01:18:59 And not only do they like to live in the early 90s, but then what do they do in 2008? Then they bail themselves out. They all went out and bought... Or they didn't all, but they went out and bought Harley-Davidson Road Glides in 2006 with a home equity line of credit and then lost their job in 2008, were under water in their house, and all of a sudden they didn't want to take the loss from the risky behavior. So they bailed themselves out, and now they're upset that the Millennials don't want to step up to the plate and take one for the team and participate and do what's needed to build a grand unified strategy.
- Radigan Carter: 01:19:37 And I don't blame the millennials. The first thing... Mike Green and I were talking about this on Twitter, and he asked the question, what would it be to get Millennials to buy in and to join up and try to fix the system? And I told him, I said, "Mike, there's a lot of... The first thing that would have to happen is the politicians and the Fed would have to stop providing liquidity to these poorly run companies and let them go bankrupt, because without making the system fair, you're not going to get... And doing the right thing. You're not going to get a generation to step up and help out the previous generation that have done nothing but the wrong thing for them." And unfortunately, without Millennials stepping up and wanting to participate, and I think this kind of even goes into Bitcoin and decentralization technology and the sovereign individual and not wanting to build something physical and protect what we have. Well, without them, none of this works. And the rest of the world is going to realize that and know it.

Radigan Carter: 01:20:48 And then they're really going to get nervous because then they're going to realize, "Wait a second, our food imports depend on all this working because we industrialized back in the 50s," and then it's going to be a scramble for resources. And then the world is really going to look different than what we were used to. And the good news... This is a story of hope for Americans. The good news is we have the best geography on the planet. We literally couldn't mess this up if we wanted to. So we're going to be okay. We've got the best geography, greatest farmers in the world doing all kinds of productivity. Our farmers are so good we actually pay them not to plant anything. And then we've got 10 aircraft carriers. We're fine. But the rest of the world isn't going to be.

Radigan Carter: 01:21:34 And I don't know how you get the millennials to buy in and do a grand strategy without doing something meaningful for them to see it's worth saving, because unfortunately... I was fine in 2008, but a lot of my buddies weren't. They took it on the chin for the great financial crisis. They finally got to work, they're in their 30s and 40s, and what happens? You shut the economy down on them. They lose their jobs through a pandemic. And then what did you do? Then you bailed out companies and you sent them \$1,200 and thought that was okay, and now you want a bicker in Washington between yourselves while people are hurting out there. I think there's a real sense of people being angry at the system, and you and I are sitting here talking about, "Hey, there's this legitimate threat out there that doesn't care about our differences and doesn't care that it's not fair and that we're mad at the previous generation."

Radigan Carter: 01:22:41 We kind of need to get our act together before they just kind of start taking what they want in the world. And I don't know if that's something we can stop at this point. This trend towards decentralization, towards the end of the US global order. I don't know if that's something we can stop. And I guess that's why I really wanted to step up and I started writing and I started being a little bit more active on Twitter and really started saying, "Hey, this is the mission I have, which is I'm going to build wealth. I'm going to live well. And I'm going to try to help other people as best as I can," because I think by trying to help people be stronger individuals, that then turns into stronger communities, and that's the best thing I can do right now. Because I see all this stuff we're talking about and it's going to find us whether we want it to or not.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:23:44 Yeah. I couldn't agree more that I don't think there's any stopping this. It's a downhill. Entropically we're moving towards a more natural state of organization geopolitically. But I do think that there are things that the United States can do to make that transition-

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Demetri Kofinas: 01:24:02 There are things that the United States can do to make that transition less painful and less dangerous. But again, to your point, politically, ultimately it's really about political will. And we've seen that in the case of-

Radigan Carter: 01:24:13 Absolutely.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:24:14 Yeah, we've seen that in the case of every single previous war. When the United States enters a war, as well as how the war goes, how much leeway the

government has to fight. It all depend on public opinion. So, and I'll say one more thing, but I don't want to dwell on it too much because it's so depressing. I'm a dual citizen, I'm a citizen of both of the United States and Greece. And all my family is in Greece except for my parents and my sister. My sister is actually there. She'll probably end up moving back. So I'm deeply concerned about its vulnerability in a world of climate change of refugee crises of Turkey.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:24:52 It's a very vulnerable country and it's such a shame because they've made so much progress and I'm so proud of the progress that they've made. They have a much stronger, more competent government as well. They have this just blossoming entrepreneurial sub-section of the society. But yeah, I mean, so when you talk about this stuff, it's one of these things and my fiancé, she's Argentina. So Argentina is one of those countries that's really well positioned, right. And something that Zeihan talks about, they're used to operating in an environment of chaos. So if things go to shit, it's pretty much another day at the office for Argentina. But they have so many resources, they've got vast agricultural resources. And so they're in a really great position to ... they're self-sufficient basically because in this world, to your point, if there's a breakdown in the economies of scale that the United States global order has provided, countries that are self-sufficient benefit in relative terms.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:25:51 But I think implicit in what we've been discussing is that because of how American politics is structured and because of the cacophony and discord and because of the fat and happy zeitgeists that is embedded in the minds of not just baby boomers, but in particular successful baby boomers, politicians count in that category. And how many of them are compromised in some cases by the CCP, not in terms of emails or stuff like that, but simply contracts, moneymaking. I feel like the only real hope we have to get ahead of this is a very popular forward-looking politician. Of course, that's super dangerous. We had something like that in the terms of Trump. Trump managed to become elected by appealing to populist ideas and he got into office. But my view, while he got into office, a person that genuinely was outside of the establishment, I think he was an enormous disappointment and wasted that opportunity in a way that I'll never really understand.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:27:04 I'll never, I know everyone's got their own political opinion. So if anyone's listening and you're a Trump fan, that's fine. As you guys know, I don't hold myself in any sort of moral high ground when it comes to this stuff, but I'll never understand. I'll never understand the wasted opportunities. I feel like Trump really had some really great opportunities to do some meaningful stuff, but at no point did it ever feel to me like he ever cared, that he ever wanted to put his own particular gripes, personal pettiest gripes ahead of the country, and feel free to comment on that if you like, but the larger point I was trying to make.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:27:40 And I wonder what you think about it is that the only real way that we move forward is why we get a really popular strong man, so to speak, politician who is able to push through the inertia of government to get the United States to one, rectify some of the economic ills. And that's going to leave a lot of people unhappy. There's going to be a lot of collateral damage, no doubt about it. But at the end of the day, we need to have a society that isn't this sort of, I don't

want to use the term unequal, but you know what I mean. And also to meet these grand geopolitical challenges, what do you think about that?

- Radigan Carter: 01:28:15 I think you're hitting it right on the head. Because it goes back to how are you going to get millennials to buy into this and to say, "Hey, okay, this is something I want to build on. This is something I want to preserve and protect." And unless you can get them to buy in on, for lack of a better word, something that is fair and something that they think works for them, that's not going to happen. And I think that's extremely dangerous. And what I don't understand is that there's just this lack, it seems like there's this a lack of willingness to even learn on the part of most baby boomers, what the problem is. I don't think most of them politicians or successful ones even really see what the problem is.
- Radigan Carter: 01:29:05 They don't even understand what the gripe is or when millennials try to talk about it they then immediately try to say, well, you don't understand how hard it was to get a home loan at 12% interest in 1978. And I think more than anything, we have to stop this pain as a competition. And just listen to what the other person's saying, because if we don't do that, it's kind of going back to what you were saying, it's not going to be some kind of orderly retreat here from being the global power, it's going to be, hey, everyone just stops caring. And no one cares about Taiwan, that goes off, that happens.
- Radigan Carter: 01:29:53 And all of a sudden, the rest of the world says, "Hey, America is not up a fight anymore." And then there's a real issue. And unfortunately, most millennials aren't going to care because guess what? They're all holding Bitcoin now. And you didn't listen to them and you didn't take their concerns seriously. And then after a year, like 2020, where you laid them all off, now they're just sitting there shrugging and saying, "Hey, print as much money as you want. It's fine, we're outside the system." And that's very, very dangerous.
- Demetri Kofinas: 01:30:23 Yeah. Except you know that, that's a complete misunderstanding on ... Anyone who thinks that they're going to be okay in that situation because they hold Bitcoin. First of all, it disregards the underlying socio security dynamics that we've described that are essential, regardless of what you own on paper, you need security, you need access to resources, et cetera. But also the government is in a position to enact special taxes on anything and everything. So just because you might have a really phenomenal inflation hedge, I mean, the government confiscated gold in 1933, they use the alien and sedition act. FDR used the alien and sedition act in order to justify it. So, that's not going to save anybody. And what worries me then? So I actually, I mentioned a few things. There are people that own Bitcoin that are wealthy and who don't really see any kind of ... ultimately are not particularly loyal to the United States and I'm not faulting them for that.
- Demetri Kofinas: 01:31:23 I guess what I'm trying to say is that they've got a really good life and in their view, they're better off just leaving. Renouncing their citizenship and going somewhere else. Or maybe they already have an escape plan. Maybe they're able to leave. Maybe they're not able to leave, but for the vast majority of people, that's not an option. And so what worries me is because the millennials are the youngest, most vibrant demographic in society. And many of the people that own Bitcoin who even most of them that are technically capable and

intelligent that got into it early. Some of those are really, really wealthy and maybe they'll be able to leave, but most of them won't be able to. So now you've got this really powerful part of the country that basically represents the country. I mean, they're the most powerful voting bloc. And now you've really sowed the seeds for a political revolution if they don't feel like their views are getting represented.

- Radigan Carter: 01:32:18 Absolutely, and I agree with that. I think when they're saying, "Hey, we're just going to step outside the system and we own Bitcoin and print all the money you want." I think they're so angry at how unfair things have turned out for them that they don't even care when you start talking about physical safety. And that's a very, very dangerous situation to have.
- Demetri Kofinas: 01:32:40 How do you mean they don't care? Where do you see evidence that they don't care about physical safety?
- Radigan Carter: 01:32:44 They don't even want to hear the argument. On that last paper I wrote and I'm laying out the challenges here and was a lot of guys that are just responding from a very emotional place. And I understand, right. Because what I want to tell these guys is, "Hey man, I understand your pain, your pain is my pain." Like I was overseas it wasn't ... After what happened to me, like I understand the feeling that the system wasn't loyal to you, but they react from a very emotional place that, when I just try to say something as simple as ... Because they say, "Hey, why are you giving up on Bitcoin? Why don't you believe anymore? What do you mean you want to build something real?" That you want to plant the flag-
- Demetri Kofinas: 01:33:32 Believe, that's a huge part of it too. Belief.
- Radigan Carter: 01:33:33 Right? It's almost like a test of faith, that I betrayed the faith. I mean, that's how serious this is. And that's actually kind of what started to bother me quaintly about it. Because I don't care if someone owns Bitcoin, I still own Bitcoin. But what I do care about is when I sense that same kind of anger that I saw from guys that were getting radicalized overseas, and it comes from a sense of deep despair and loneliness at how unfair the world is.
- Radigan Carter: 01:34:05 So, "Hey, this isn't going to be safe for you. Like there's nowhere else to go. You have to have physical safety." You know, you can opt out into Bitcoin, but you're still going to want someone to show up at your house and make sure you're not being held at gunpoint. Hey, I don't care. I'm not giving up my Bitcoin and you're betraying the faith. When I see that, it's like, whoa, "Hey fellas, we got a serious problem that no one among our politicians is even realizing how bad this is."
- Demetri Kofinas: 01:34:33 Yeah. Wow. And I think when you said that the word that popped into my head initially was betrayal. A sense of betrayal and the next word was trust. And the trust is so shattered that like you said, they have more trust and more faith than a faceless database that guesses random numbers than in the whole, the totality of the United States government, its military, its police force and its history of constitutional government.

- Radigan Carter: 01:35:05 Right? And I mean, that's a serious problem. And to me, it's not even about like, I don't even care about Tether. I don't care really about ... This is such a higher level problem. It doesn't even matter where you fall in the argument of Tether, Bitcoin or whether you want to do traditional investments or whatever the case is. This is a fundamental problem to where, you know, stop telling the guy that you don't agree with him or you think he's in a bad investment. And instead we just need to talk about, "Hey, what made you get to this point to where you literally don't care about your own safety, as long as long as you have that ledger in your pocket." I mean, that's a place of deep, deep despair.
- Demetri Kofinas: 01:35:52 Totally. So a few thoughts. One, I think part of that is simply not really understanding what it means when you talk about security. It's easy for someone to say they don't care in the abstract. I think that's a huge part of it. But I also think, right on man, I think there's a psycho-spiritual break here. You know, the book that you and I broke for a few hours between the first part of this conversation and the second, this part that we're on now. And I went back to reading a book that I have to read for an interview that I'm doing with the author. The book is called The Lonely Century and it's about this loneliness epidemic. And I think that's a huge thing exacerbated by the pandemic. And I think just the whole pandemic thing, Mike and I, Mike Green and I were both on the same page, I think with a pandemic early on.
- Demetri Kofinas: 01:36:38 And I know he got a lot of heat for forward. I got less because I tried to be more tactful with how I made the points. But I think that we ... Man, now I'm opening up all sorts of categories, but you've written about or you've alluded to death. I mean, you've read Marcus Aurelius' meditations. Aurelius meditates on death. It's a subject that you've had to deal with head on in your life. I think that in this country and in the West we've become desensitized to it or rather we haven't really had to deal with it. We have all sorts of weird cults around trans humanism and living forever. And I think the pandemic shocked people because the specter of death was hoisted upon them in a way that they just weren't prepared for. And just like with 9/11, their reaction was take it, whatever you need, just take it, just protect me. Don't let me die. So I think that is another catastrophic failure of I think our society and how we dealt with that for the long-term, the long-term consequences of it. Speaking to this point about loneliness. And I also think a lot of people live meaningless lives. You've written so eloquently, Radigan, about the need for a mission. That resonates so much with me. My life changed forever once I found my path. And a lot of people struggled to find their path. And when obstacles get thrown in their way, macro obstacles like 2008 economic contraction that gets strung out for 10 years, because one part of the population doesn't want to accept the losses and the decline in asset prices, making the mountain more difficult to scale for this generation that we're describing or this pandemic.
- Radigan Carter: 01:38:24 Lemme jump in here real quick with something I want to mention on the pandemic. In a way I kind of think of, and I talked about this a little bit on Twitter. I did a thread around it a while back, but the way people are reacting is very normal for people that have gone through high stress. And I think people really need to be kinder to themselves. And I don't think they understand how stressful 2020 was for or most of them. Because we all kind of have it tendency

to just kind of want to power through and "Hey, this is normal. This is just everyday life."

- Radigan Carter: 01:39:01 But stress really affects people differently. And I saw this after deployments and coming back and I would say probably most veterans have a pretty close group that they kind of talk to about this, but something that my buddies and I talked about was how really it's like the entire world just got done with a deployment in 2020, and for 8 billion people on this planet for a lot of them, this was the first time they actually had to consider dying, that they were actually going to die and could die and they couldn't do anything about it.
- Radigan Carter: 01:39:39 And that's terrifying the first time you really think about it. And for a lot of us overseas, we had a lot of training put into us. A lot of hours, hundreds of thousands of dollars put into us, kind of training our mind on just what our mind was going to do when confronted by that reality. And I think right now I kind of call it the elation phase where we're in 2021 now everyone thinks, "Hey, great. We survived 2020. We hated that a year. Let's go back to normal." And I don't think people understand quite yet that they're never going back to normal. Like they're not going to go back to their previous lives. Like they can go back to doing what they did normally, but you know what comes after the elation phase is you just kind of start questioning things.
- Radigan Carter: 01:40:27 And I think that's going to be a unexpected thing that's going to happen in the world when you have 8 billion people that now start wondering, well, what do I want to do with my life? You know, I confronted death in 2020 or the possibility of dying. And all of a sudden I was stuck in my apartment or I got laid off or I was sitting on Zoom calls on mute for four hours and I don't want to live this way anymore. What do I want to do? And I think that's going to cause a lot of social upheaval that we're not even really touching on yet, just because all that is, is a natural reaction to stress that people have gone through and having to confront the fact that they're going to die and, "Hey, what kind of a life do I want to live until that happens?"
- Radigan Carter: 01:41:11 And after that questioning phase there's going to be some resentment. There's going to be maybe even some depression and hopefully people just push through that. And there's going to be a lot of things that they're going to try and it might not work or, "Hey, this wasn't the direction I wanted to go." Because for me a lot of what it felt like after my TBI and the medevac and all that was, it almost just felt like I was kind of fumbling my way around in a dark room, looking for the right door. And I couldn't find the right door until I kind of really found, "Hey, long-term wealth building. That's exactly what I want to do. I want another mission that doesn't ever end." And I think people are underestimating the fact that they're probably going to go through that this year.
- Radigan Carter: 01:42:03 And I don't know. I really hope people are kinder to themselves because it made me a better person going through it already. And I think a lot of veterans would agree with that too. And it kind of makes you a more empathetic person to other people because you go through that and you go through the questioning phase, you find your real mission and all of a sudden you realize, "Hey, you know what? I was really hard on myself and if I can't get it right, no one else can

either. And I should probably just try to be a better person and be kinder to people, because they're just trying to find their own path too."

Demetri Kofinas: 01:42:41 You know, Radigan, you have such a, again, I said it before, you're very wise man. I don't know how you see yourself, but you're so wise and I think you have an unusual balance. You're able to hold both the sort of, for lack of a better word, the masculine and the feminine. Do you know what I mean? Like you're able to recognize and discuss these really frightening issues that we've talked about today, but you also show a remarkable sense of compassion and empathy. And I couldn't agree with you more that this is needed. But like I think, may I ask you this? I guess I'll ask it this way. We talked a number of times about this victim culture that we have today and that it's disempowering.

Demetri Kofinas: 01:43:27 How do we find a way and do we need to find a way to be able to hold that space so to speak, to be able to talk to one another, to be empathetic, but at the same time to recognize that we need to grow up for lack of a better word, we need to recognize that we're extremely lucky and fortunate here, and that times are going to be tough? And by the way, nowhere is this message more important for people that have done well, like those of us that have done well, we need to get rid of this narrative we have in our head that, "Oh, I worked hard. I earned every penny of it. So no one has a right to take it away." And just recognize that life's not fair and sometimes we have to make sacrifices. I'm curious what you think this sort of need for social cohesion and what we have to do to get there.

Radigan Carter: 01:44:21 Kind of the way I think about it, because when I run across people that have that victim mentality and because occasionally I can tell that they're asking me a question, but I can tell that they really don't want to hear what I say. They're just waiting until they can say the next thing to prove themselves right. And it doesn't even bother me. Like I get it, they're just in pain, they're coming from a place of pain in their own that life isn't fair. And unfortunately they just somehow got stuck in that La Brea Tar Pits of resentment and just despair. And they're just lashing out. They're stuck in that tar pit, just like a saber tooth tiger just desperately lashing out at anyone that comes by to try to help them.

Radigan Carter: 01:45:08 But unfortunately, the way I kind of think about being a victim and thinking the world owes you anything or being mad that life is so unfair. It's like that movie V For Vendetta. Because there's a right mix of empathy and tough love that I think is needed to really legitimately help people. And I know myself and I'm including myself in this. And it's like that movie V For Vendetta where the girl's in the prison and she's getting a note slipped under the door. And until one day she just walks out and she says, "That wasn't even real." And he says, "It was real to you and the door was always unlocked." And I think that's really important as far as whenever you want to leave that, because cause all victim mentality really is and thinking that you need the government to help you.

Radigan Carter: 01:46:05 Like, you need to elect the right person so your life can change. To me, all that really is, is you're in a prison of your own making. You can decide at any point just to start working on something that you don't like. I mean, Mark Manson talks about this in his book, Subtle Art Of Not Giving a Fuck. [crosstalk 01:46:27]. I think is actually, it's a very well way to put it, which is all life is, is problems and

trying to solve those problems to get better problems. That's all it is for anybody. It doesn't matter what level you're at. Do some people have better problems than me? Absolutely. But you know what? I got a lot better problems than a whole lot of people. And so I think where that tough love comes in for that victim mentality is it's almost kind of like the way I think about it is when people kind of want to lash out at me, I just think, "Hey, I know where you're coming from and the best thing I can do is not engage."

- Radigan Carter: 01:47:07 And instead like when we we're a kids and you wanted to kind of like run around and pick on other kids and try to take some happiness out of their bucket to put it in yours, to make yourself feel better. But you know what, if you're the kid that just starts building a tree house and all these other kids are running around and you're having fun, just building a tree house, pretty soon, all the other kids are going to want to come and have fun and build a tree house with you. And I kind of think about how do you help people to feel like they're victims? I mean, just be empathetic them, but also realize you only people that can really change their life for themselves. And they'll do that when they're ready. So the best thing you can do is just keep working on yourself and solving your problems. And when they're ready, then they'll come and join you and have a good life too.
- Demetri Kofinas: 01:48:00 Radigan, we have been talking now for two hours and there are so many other things that I put in this rundown that I wanted to talk to you about that we're not going to get a chance to talk about today. I have a feeling we're going to speak again. I also have a feeling that you're on the cusp of a really exciting journey and new chapter in your life that I think is going to, how do I put it, not overshadow that somehow it's a negative phrasing, imagine a positive phrasing of the word, overshadow the first half of your life.
- Demetri Kofinas: 01:48:41 Because I think you have something really unique to offer. I speak to lots of people and lots of really brilliant, interesting, talented, successful human beings in various fields. And I just I think you have something really unique to offer and I look forward to reading your stuff in the future. I recommend everyone check it out. I'm going to give your website out to my listeners at the top of the show on in the introduction and for those who got this far, I'm sure that you're going to have a lot of loyal readers going forward.
- Radigan Carter: 01:49:14 Thank you. I really appreciate it, Demetri. This was a treat, something completely unexpected and I just really, really appreciate it. Thank you.
- Demetri Kofinas: 01:49:22 You got it, man. Today's episode of Hidden Forces was recorded in New York city. For more information about this week's episode, or if you want easy access to related programming, visit our website at [hiddenforces.io](http://hiddenforces.io) and subscribe to our free email list. If you want access to overtime segments, episode transcripts, and show rundowns full of links and detailed information related to each and every episode, check out our premium subscription available through the Hidden Forces website or through our Patreon page at [patreon.com/hiddenforces](http://patreon.com/hiddenforces). Today's episode was produced by me and edited by Stylianos Nicolaou. For more episodes, you can check out our website at [hiddenforces.io](http://hiddenforces.io). Join the conversation at Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram at Hidden Forces pod or send me an email. As always, thanks for listening. We'll see you next week.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:50:29]