

[Transcript] The Realignment / 384 | Peter Turchin: Elites, Counter-Elites, and the Path to Political Disintegration

Marshall here. Welcome back to The Re-alignment.

Happy 4th of July, everyone. Today's episode is fitting for a day about natural independence, speaking with Professor Peter Turchin, author of End Times, Elites, Counter Elites, and The Path to Political Disintegration. Peter's work takes approaches and insights from other fields and applies them to the study of history. End Times covers his work on what causes communities

to go here or fall apart, with an obvious focus on the contemporary United States.

Peter famously predicted in 2010 in Nature magazine that the US would experience a breakdown in its

political order in the year 2020. This conversation and his book covers why. There's a lot to cover and we can't hit all of it in this conversation, but the key takeaway is political instability soars when the balance between elites and the majority tips too far towards the elites.

That plus the discussion of the elite overproduction phenomenon and what he terms the wealth pump, something that fuels inequality, are at the center of this story. Last thing before we dive in, I want to quickly shout out the Re-alignment sponsor, the Foundation for American Innovation,

which until recently was known as the Lincoln Network. FAI is approaching its 10-year anniversary, so we'll have plenty more news to cover in this space that you are definitely going to be interested in.

Hope you enjoy the conversation.

Peter Turchin, welcome to the Re-alignment. Thank you, glad to be here.

Yeah, I'm glad to be here too. I would like to start this episode off on a positive note, because we're releasing this the week of the 4th of July, so we're going to get into a bunch of pessimistic places. This could be a little dark, but in light of the holiday, I'd love to just hear from you. What is your best case scenario for the political prognosis of the United States over the next 10 years? Sure. Well, we'll talk maybe later about the drivers of instability that we have identified in our historical research, so the best case scenario is that we will be able to reverse the trends that have been driving, the structural trends that have been driving the rise of instability in the United States. It is eminently possible to do, although it's not going to happen automatically, it will require some collective action to achieve. I'd love to hear then what are the current trends then driving U.S. instability? Well, let me just step back and say that nearly everybody today lives in large scale complex societies organized as states, but these societies are quite recent, only about 5,000 years ago the first ones arrived. Now, what we know from historical analysis of literally hundreds of such societies is that for a while they can experience periods of internal peace and stability, maybe a century, sometimes longer, sometimes shorter, but at some point inevitably our societies enter into end times, periods of high social instability, political fragmentation, perhaps even collapse. All right, so the question is why? All right, and this is the first important structural trend that we have identified in our research and that is that the pre-crisis periods are nearly always characterized by elite overproduction. All right, so let me expand on that. First of all, who are the elites? Simply put, it's a small proportion of population, maybe one, two or three percent, who concentrate social power in their hands. So here in the States, the proverbial one percent is probably a good way to look at the elites, but also in other societies, you know, in imperial China,

it was the Mandarin class and, you know, you go back further in history, military inability in France and England, so that those are essentially the governing class, the ruling class. All right, the next question is- Quick pause to understand the distinction. Why focus on the one percent and maybe not the top 10 percent? The top 10 percent would include successful but not crazy successful lawyers. This would include graduate educated persons, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Why one percent versus 10 percent when you're understanding the elites? Yeah, this is a very good question, because in fact, in most societies, there is no sharp boundary between elites and non-elites. So in the United States, where we can use the wealth to rank the people in terms of power, because it's a very close correlate, right? We have the top 10 percent, we call them low rank elites, all right? So these are people who have a lot of power mainly over themselves, all right? They don't have to take a job, they don't want, they don't need to move to a region, they don't want to move to and so on and so forth. And then we have one percent, we have one percent of one percent. So as you go up to this top of the pyramid, people have more and more power. So the one percent and above, those, they have real power. If they're CEOs, they can order workers around. And then of course, if in the political pyramid, you know, if you go from the president down to a lowly bureaucrat, the higher up in that hierarchy, the more power an individual has. So in effect, we really want to look towards the very top of the pyramid when we are thinking about the who really governs. Also, I want to say that this one percent is not fixed thing. As you talk about elite reproduction, right? We will see that the problem arises when the one percent becomes two percent or three percent or more, all right? So that is really the cause, the main cause of instability as identified by our work, all right? So let's get, let me explain that part. Essentially, what we need to know is the dynamics. How do elites change? And this critically depends on how elites are reproduced and recruited.

There is always more elite one ideas. The technical term is elite aspirants for a fairly fixed position number of positions on the top. So think about it. There are only 500 CEOs of 500 fortune companies.

There is only one president, 100 senators, and so on and so forth. So the problem arises when elite aspirants, the number of elite aspirants, for reasons we can explore later, suddenly explode and the competition for the fixed number of positions begins to be very intense. Some competition is good, it's necessary, but excessive competition is corrosive for social cooperation and social norms governing our society's function. So in my book, I use the metaphor of musical chairs, but except as an usual game where you start with 11 players and 10 musical chairs, one player is a loser, a set of removing chairs, we keep the chairs constant, but we keep the number of players and we increase the number of players. So as you get 20 players, 30 players, 40 players for the same 10 chairs, you can imagine how chaos very rapidly ensue because people, some players start breaking rules, this spreads, and this can escalate to even violence. And that is essentially what is happening in these pre-crisis periods that we see when there are too many elite aspirants that large swaths of them are frustrated in getting into positions of power, and those are the ones who are likely to turn against the ruling regime and they become revolutionary, radicals, civil warriors, and so on and so forth. And we'll get into counter elites, but this is where having read the book, I have a million different questions here, so your work is focusing on

different societies, so I want to understand how this fixed set of musical chairs operationalizes itself in the 21st century American meritocracy context, because I understand if we're talking, let's say 19th century Great Britain, like wealth is mostly based on land, there's this specific hereditary elite where there are fixed numbers of titles and positions, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, there's premature, so there's like, even within the family, there's like limits of that inheritance operating in that respect. So I understand why you would have that frustrated dynamic of there are more and more elites, but there's only 10 titles to go around why you'd have frustration. I don't understand how this operationalizes itself in the United States, because like having, you know, known a decent number of very, very wealthy people in those sort of successful positions, having interviewed more than a few here, I would say that the frustrated people I encounter are not Fortune 500 aspirants, it's not the tech VC who has a couple exit and is now a billionaire, it tends to usually be a top of the upper middle class. I was promised by taking on all my law school debt, I would make partner, I worked for 10 years, but I still didn't actually achieve that position. And now I'm just kind of stuck in this pointless ennui cycle, you kind of write about this character in a fictionalized version of the character in the book. So I guess I'm trying to understand then, this is why I was starting with my question of what's the difference between the top 10% and the top 1% because that frustrated lawyer I just described, that person's top 10%, maybe they're top 5%, but they're not 1%. So help me kind of unpack, this is a very long question, but help me unpack what I'm trying to struggle with here. Yeah, this is a long but very good question. And so maybe let me step back and approach it in a somewhat long answer, because first of all, I'll get our circle back to your questions in a minute, but let's first of all ask the question, why do we remember that complex societies go through fairly long stretches of good times? Then somehow the elite of the production develops and they enter end times. The question is, why does this happen? And the reason this happens is typically because something that I call the wealth pump gets turned on. This is the perverse wealth pump that pumps reaches from the poor and gives them to the rich. So in the United States, for example, what happened in the 1970s was that many people have seen this graph, the productivity of American workers has been going up at a fairly good clip. For a while before the 1970s, the compensation has been keeping pace. And then it just flattened and even declined. All right, so this is the gap between the compensation and productivity. That was the wealth that had to go somewhere. Where did it go? It went to the economic elites, and suddenly you have explosion of uber-wealthy, many more billionaires, and down the food chain, people with \$10 million worth of fortunes, their numbers over the past 40 years have exploded. They have increased 10-fold. This is a really remarkable statistic. The population grew 40%, but the numbers of the millionaires increased 10-fold. So this is, right now, some of those wealthy people wanted to translate their wealth into political power, so they entered the political arena. Some of them, like Donald Trump, Michael Bloomberg, they were candidates themselves, others ran candidates. And so now we have many more elite aspirants with wealth. All right, but this is only one aspect of this wealth pump. The second aspect is very important, is that obviously, since the wages have been stagnating or declining, this hit the well-being of the majority of the population. This leads to popular discontent, and this also means that there is a lot of this discontent could be channeled by organizers who

would perhaps be called political entrepreneurs. All right, now the third and most subtle effect is because the majority of the population feels they're losing ground, the more energetic and the more ambitious from them want to escape this precarity, it's called. All right, and that drives, gives a huge push towards people, how do you escape precarity? Well, you get credentials, you go to college, but college now, college degrees now really not giving you that much advantage, so you have to get advanced degrees, you mentioned lawyers. So yes, to get a lawyer, a law degree, that's certainly if you want to go into the political arena, or if you want to become what's the word, to join the law firm and get all the benefits from that. All right, so what happened was that as a result of this, we have three times as many graduates from law schools as there are positions from them. And as a result of that, we have now two groups that's quite remarkable again, that there is a bimodal distribution of the salaries of recent graduates. So about one quarter of them get very nice salaries, approaching \$200,000 per year, so those are people well on their way to join the elites. And then at more than half actually only get between \$40,000 and \$70,000, which is not even enough to pay all the debt. So they are losing ground and they are going to, they're suffering, but at the same time, they are smart, educated, ambitious, well connected. So this is a recipe for disaster. This is what we've seen happen in previous end times. So if you think about the most dangerous type of this counter elite, those frustrated elite aspirants who turn against the ruling regime are the lawyers. So Lenin was a lawyer, Castro was a lawyer, Robespierre in the French Revolution was a lawyer, and also Mahatma Gandhi was a lawyer, he was not a revolutionary, but he was a leader. So this is a very dangerous combination. All right, so back to your question. Because the elites are not just one group clearly separated, you have different levels of them. We have to look at those who want to escape precarity and get into the 10% because that's really what you need to do. If you want to have decent life, unlike what it was 50 years ago, during the 30 post war years, the middling Americans saw their life getting better, every generation saw that their life was getting better until 1980s when it stopped. All right, so that provides a huge push to try to get into the 10%. And that results in the huge production because now over 60% of high school graduates go to college. So some of them are going to get into the 10% and even 1% and so on and so forth, but the majority of them are frustrated. And the character in my book, Jane, is one of those people. And keep also in mind that even upper middle class people, they are incredibly insecure right now because the parents perceive that their children, in order to get to where their parents are, I have to work much harder and the chances are much lower, which drives all kinds of unpleasantness with exclusive schools, getting into exclusive universities and things like that. So all those are signs of inter-elite competition really getting out of hand. So the thing that's interesting here is I'd like a definition from you then, this is in the book's title, of what the counter elite is. Because if we're looking at some of the disruptive political figures you're describing in your book, you have a section on Tucker Carlson, you're talking about Donald Trump, those maybe socially, they may feel disrespected from the elites, but they definitely would not be described as failures or if not of a key of the economic prosperity that their parents had. So how should we understand what this counter elite category is then? Yes, essentially because we have a very high degree of popular discontent and a lot of low rank elite aspirants who are getting frustrated, this creates masses of disaffected people

that can be channeled by political entrepreneurs. And many of these political entrepreneurs are also, they are losers in one sense. So for example, Donald Trump, he obviously had a lot of wealth, but he was quite frustrated for many years in getting the status and political power.

And I just want to say that I'm putting this in sort of stark materialistic terms, but these are driving forces. There is also a lot of ideological turmoil going on. Essentially, because as the numbers of elite, frustrated elite aspirants increasing becomes very massive, the feeling that the social system is unjust spreads amongst them. And that really provides much more immediate

motivation for trying to overthrow this unjust regime rather than an explicit calculation I want to get into a power position. Although that also, somebody said that if successful revolution is 10,000 new vacancies, right? So that idea might be in the back of the minds of many people, but it's a combination of fighting against injustice and trying to not be one of those who are sliding back in their well-being, essentially. So if the issue, one of the big trends then pressuring American society is this elite overproduction issue, I'd love to hear a historical example or two that listeners will probably be familiar with to help understand how the elite overproduction operationalizes itself into crisis or collapse. Sure. Well, let's take the situation in the 17th century England that eventually led to the English Civil War. So what happened was from the 16th century until mid 17th century, the population of England grew rapidly, by threefold. And suddenly there were too many workers to work their fields, to work for artisanal things and so on and so forth. And if you increase the supply of something compared to the demand for it, what happens is you drive down the price of it. So the price of labor was driven down. And that created the wealth pump because the economic elites, and generally speaking elites, landowners, for example, they could now ask from renters much higher rent, and for workers the wages declined. So this put, this created a huge new class of newly wealthy who wanted to become the square art, to get into the square art essentially. You buy a manner and you become, you know, you maybe go to parliament and things like that. And so that's what, that was

the major factor driving the instability which ended up in the English Civil War. There were just too many of these elites, there are not enough positions for them. And so eventually there were two parties

and the parliamentaries won the war and they essentially not partly exterminated and partly drove into exile the Cavaliers, the royal party. And so that abated the elite of our production in a pretty brutal way. And that seems to be the rule that in most of these cases, the elite of our production ends in a pretty brutal way because they are exterminated or just their position is taken away from them. And I guess the question for 2020 is America is can you handle this elite overproduction issue without descending into conflict or disillusion? I'm curious what you think that agenda would be because something that's interesting for me as someone who spent a decent amount of time studying the higher education system, there are a variety of policy decisions that were made during this 60, 70s, 80s period you're describing.

This could be everything from student loans to the nature of credentialism, bar exam requirements, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. You could maybe turn the knobs around, shift a dial a different direction. And I'm speaking specifically about law school in that sense and you're obviously speaking about a broader level thing. But what solutions do you see there for policymakers

or anyone of position of responsibility because it's not just policymakers here obviously too? Well, first of all, you want to separate education from credentialism. Education in my view is undiluted good because we want people to be more knowledgeable and better at doing all kinds of things and so on. But I teach at a state university and I know that more than 80% of my students, they are there not to get educated, they want to get the degree with which they want to get a decent paying job. So what we need to understand that overproducing credential people, people who expect to get a better life and then they're frustrated. I mean, this is just a very common thing. You can read the newspapers all the time, people saying they promised to me that if I get college degree, then I'll have a decent job. Instead, I have tons of debt which is crushing me and essentially my life ambition is over. So what can be done with that? I'm not a politician, so I won't be saying that there are specific measures that we need to take. I just want to say that remember that I mentioned that in the majority of cases that we have studied, societies get into revolutions or civil war both and maybe even fragmentation, the state collapse and all kinds of things happen. But fortunately, it's not the only possible outcome. Unfortunately, the positive outcomes happen only in like 10-15% of cases. So what we should aim at is to repeat that feat. So what happens is that in all of those positive cases, they manage to shut down the wealth pump. And once you do that, you stop producing too many wealthy. You also reduce the number of people who want to get credentials because you don't need those advanced degrees to get a decent life. And so that it takes time, but eventually it percolates to reducing all these problems. And then there are many others. So this has been done during the New Deal. Actually, most of the New Deal reforms were introduced during the preceding period, which is known as the Progressive Era, the first two decades of the 20th century. But then they were set in stone in the New Deal. And that's what generated unprecedented, broadly based well-being for Americans. In fact, Western Europeans too, the French call it the 30 glorious years from the post-war, post-World War II. So it's possible to do. We don't have to do exactly the same thing that the New Deal did because the country is different. But it's possible to do. We need essentially to stop, to shut down this wealth pump. And then there are many things we can do in the process. So for example, many historical societies have abolished debts. They just forgive debts. In Mesopotamia, there was this Jubilee. It's called Jubilee when all the debts were just destroyed. And that is one way to help. Of course, this means that those who hold debts, they're going to take a hit. But that's the problem, that if you want to rebalance the society, not everybody cannot win. And certainly, the elites that have been doing very well so far, they will have to reduce their expectations too. And this is, I think, everything you just articulated got to the difficult political dynamic because I would say elites in the United States in the 1930s who might not have liked FDR's program, they won in the sense that the US didn't descend into fascism or didn't break apart and actually was positioned for their children to succeed economically, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. So partially what you need to do as a politician, putting together these grand bargains, is be able to articulate the case that there's some sort of compromise being offered here. I want to speak, then, a bit to the... We just addressed that. It is in the long-term interest of the elites to give up in the short term some of the things. And also, remember that after the New Deal and until 1960, the top tax rate, the tax rate on the top incomes was over 90%. It is just almost impossible to imagine right

now that the tax rate could be over 90% on top incomes. So they took a... American elites did a very pro-social and also long-termish thing. They took, they sacrificed in the short term, but yes, they... In fact, this was Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his group. They articulated this. If you don't want to have a Bolshevik revolution here, you better... From below, you want to save the capitalist system by reforming it. And that's what they did. You're completely right. And hearing you articulate this and reading the book, the phrase that comes to mind is, if you want things to stay the same, they have to change. You need a political actor who's capable of articulating that to his or her often fellow elites. I guess the thing I wonder, though, in the appendix to the book, which you go a little deeper on the themes than just in the more popular opening sections, you really push back against just the outdated great man theory of history. And everything I just basically articulated is very adjacent to great man theory of history. It's saying, here is FDR, here is this great man, he did this compromise, this, this, this, this, this, and that. Missing the fact that throughout most of these historical periods in the countries that you've studied and you could talk about, there were other great men, there were other great women, there were difficult circumstances, but the same effect, aka compromise stability didn't actually work. So there has to be something deeper going on than just great man theorizing, you know, you should ask yourself, okay, why didn't the 2008 financial crisis present the same great class compromise, considering the opportunity was there narratively, compared to the 1930s, Barack Obama is also a talented politician, he also could come from those more elite groups that he wasn't able to do it. So Q talk about those structural factors that help us differentiate between, let's say the conditions of the 30s, and the post-civil war period, and then the 2008 period or after COVID, how should we understand the structural parts

there? Yeah, well, first of all, it's very useful to compare the 1920s period, which led to eventually to the New Deal to 1850s. Both of those periods were extremely violent periods in American history during the 1850s, we had things like bloody Kansas, you know, there was just huge urban riots, and even the religious, and there was a war of religion with Mormons. So and then the elites, the governing elites, which were the southern slave owners, they essentially did not understand what was happening, and they lost the civil war, and they were destroyed as class. All right, now in the 1920s, we had another peak of instability. In fact, many members of the American elites thought that a Bolshevik type revolution was imminent. This was the first red scare of 1921. And that was a big factor. Also, many of the people who lived during this period, they actually remembered the civil war. And so they realized that we don't want to get country into the same civil war. And that was a major factor that helped FDR and his team to convince the rest of the elites that reform is necessary. So in my view, I certainly don't, as you quite correctly say, I make fun of the great man's theory, but great individuals also play a role. It's just a combination of the impersonal trends, and some individuals that in the right place at the right time can nudge the trajectories of whole societies in either good directions or bad directions. So remind me of your question. You answered. It was basically just sort of how do we sort through the great man versus the fact that great men or great women are a factor in a broader system and history that's operationalizing itself. So okay, so taking us back to the present then, given your comparison of the 1920s to the 1850s and given your predictions about political instability

in the 2020s, going back to 2010, should we think of the 2020s as that 1850s period? Or is the 2020s the equivalent of the 1860s period? Not in the sense that we are fighting a civil war or killing each other in the streets, but in the sense that this is the period by which we are awkwardly, oftentimes horribly working through and forging that compromise, maybe at the end of the decade. How should we understand our present moment? Well, and that's a very good point. So from our analysis of past societies sliding into crisis and emerging from it, what we know is that the road to crisis is fairly channelized. It's like a valley with steep walls and the walls, the wall has only one place to roll. Then you get to the cusp of the crisis and a whole bunch of roads opens up in front of you. And essentially, I argue that we are today, we are in crisis already, and there is a number of ways that this could be resolved. One possibility is that it would be resolved like in a civil war situation, but it is not given that 100% probability of some kind of civil war. But because the other possibility is to resolve it in the New Deal type of way. All right. So essentially, to answer your question directly, this is where it takes collective action. And we are now in a situation where pro-social individuals and elites can actually affect a trajectory. That's what our science basically tells us. It's really up to us. Unfortunately, I don't see yet that, because I don't see yet that our political elites understand the nature of the problem. Instead, they blame each other. Left blame the right and right blame the left. So instead of putting together and shutting down the wealth pump, essentially, right now it's all in fighting. And that is not good news for us. You define pro-social. What do you mean by pro-social? Pro-social, essentially, our large-scale societies, they're operating on cooperation, social cooperation. And social cooperation means that people have to give up some of their selfish advantage for the sake of the common good. So pro-social people are those who understand this and who are willing to sacrifice in the short term to get large-scale benefits, which are broadly-based benefits for the whole society. And selfish people are those who behave in the opposite way. And something I'd like to understand is, what is your, because you said that you described elites as wanting to fight amongst themselves. I would just be curious, what would your understanding of how leading elites of the left and right, how do they conceive our current situation? Because I think it'd be pretty easy if you got someone off the record, left-right or center, to get them to say something apocalyptic about the moment. Something akin to if X, Y, or Z group, if it's opposed to me, comes into power, you will have X, Y, and Z or A, B, and C disastrous results. So I guess what I'd be curious of, how do you understand their understanding of the situation and how you then translate that into, given a historical example, maybe, how that feeling is translated into something pro-social? Well, first of all, this idea of the center, it's an interesting idea, because I analyze it in my book. And I essentially argue that what we call the political center is essentially the support for the ruling class idea that we should just go as before. And we cannot do that, because we have already allowed these trends undermining social stability to develop over multiple decades. And at some point, if we continue doing this, there will be more and more instability. So the center is really in this number here. It's interesting that both on their populists, left-wing populists, like Bernie Sanders and the right-wing populists, like JD Vance, and they often say things which are quite similar, of course, but they would never cooperate

with each other. And that's what we really need to do. We need to have a different center, which will be not for the situation as it has been, but for the reform that will put us on a different course. And it seems like a good way of describing a different center would just be consensus. So the center is Thomas Friedman. The center is fiscally conservative, socially liberal. New York Times op-eds from the 2010s of the 2000s, consensus would be the ability to translate the diagnosis of a society, which most people could, because I would say that, especially reading the start of your book, I think most people who would be in that left-right or center would agree with your diagnosis of the trends, the declining, the death rates, drug usage, death of despair, this has been widely catalogued. The question is, how do you translate that diagnosis into something concrete from a political perspective? So here's what I'd like to close this conversation on. I would love to hear you recount a quick summary of the United Kingdom in the 19th century as a good long-term model for a country that seems to be at this very low point, yet over the course of decades, it would actually put something into practice that's very effective. Yeah, so in the United Kingdom, all great, the British Empire at the time in the 19th century. The names are complicated. Right, so it went through this period called the Chartist Era, this middle of the 19th century. The first thing that's important to note, this is one of our success stories. The first thing to note is that British Empire was the only large European state that escaped the mid-19th century revolutions, 1848 and so on. Right, and how did they do that? Because they had the same problems during the first half of the 19th century, the wages of English workers, even though the economy was already growing quite rapidly because of industrialization, but the wages were declining in real terms. So this was immiseration. It drove all kinds of outbreaks, such as something known as Peter Lou massacre in Manchester, and there was a lot of turmoil because of that. And there was also huge elite reproduction because the wealth bumpers kept producing new elites. All right, so how did they escape revolution? There are two sets of factors. First of all, they were able to flatten the curve, so to speak. Because Britain had an empire, first of all, they shipped millions of people to Australia, and there was also immigration to North America. That reduced the labor supply and helped to bring up the wages. So that was one thing. Secondly, they shipped a lot of their surplus elites to positions in the empire. But those were just factors that temporarily gave them time, essentially. It took two generations, really, to fully implement these reforms. So they increased suffrage, gave more power to people, they gave workers power to organize and bargain with employers. They turned off, what's known as the corn laws. The corn laws was just really a small wealth bump because the way it operated is that the landlords who produced grain artificially kept the price of grain high by not allowing the cheap grain from North America to come in. So that means that the poor were paying twice as much, essentially, for bread, and all that wealth flowed to the rich people. So the Corn Laws suddenly allowed the cheap grain from North America to come in, and that increased real wages because their basket of consumables became less expensive. So there was just examples of what they did, and that's how they managed to get out of their predicament without major violence. So it seems that the United Kingdom would be the, or Great Britain would be the ideal, and say, because the other example you give is Russia during the period, but obviously that story doesn't end well. That next century put it early on, so I think we'd want to avoid. Well, the delayed revolution by 50 years, and it's not riding a bicycle, you have to constantly

balance. You cannot just relax. But also, I want to mention that you don't have to do exactly the same what they did in the Chartist era, or the New Deal, or reform period in Russia, or whatever. No, the general principle says each society is different. Our society is different from even United States 100 years ago. So we need to have a different mixture of reforms. It's really what we need to do is strike at the deep roots of the problem. Very well said. Peter, Turchin, this has been really great. Could you just shout the book out, so folks who want to, and you've written a bunch of works. So any works you've written that folks who want to delve deeper

could pick up be very helpful. Well, first of all, End Times is sort of allowing me to of Ages of Discord, a book I published just two months before the elections of 2016 in the United States. So that book, Ages of Discord is much more academic. It has mathematics models and data in things like that. But if you want, you ask me about prosociality and if you talked about cooperation, if you would like to learn more about my ideas about how the large scale complex societies arose in the first place, then I suggest my book called Ultra Society, which was also published in 2016. And there I talk about why cooperation is important and how it created our large scale complex societies. Awesome. Thank you for joining me on the realignment. Enjoy this conversation.

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