

Do We Really Need to Re-Start the Cold War?

By [Eric Zuesse](#)

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[Washington's Blog](#)

Region: [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#), [US NATO](#)

[War Agenda](#)

Preface by Washington's Blog: In the book [To Win a Nuclear War: The Pentagon's Secret War Plans](#), one of the world's leading physicists - Michio Kaku - reveals declassified plans for the U.S. to launch a first-strike nuclear war against Russia. The forward was written by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clarke.

In [Towards a World War III Scenario](#), Michel Chossudovsky documents that the U.S. is so enamored with nuclear weapons that it has authorized low-level field commanders to use them in the heat of battle in their sole discretion ... without any approval from civilian leaders.

So - as crazy as this topic may sound at first glance - it deserves our attention.

By [Eric Zuesse](#):

A [recent CNN Poll](#) found that 29% of Americans think that Russia is a "Very serious threat" to the United States, and that 40% consider it a "Moderately serious threat." That's 69% who consider it a "serious threat."

In 2012, only 11% considered it a "Very serious threat," and 33% considered it a "Moderately serious threat." 44% then considered Russia a "serious threat." The huge surge in fear of Russia — from 44% to 69% — seems to be due entirely to Ukraine. 81% of poll-respondents said that "Russia's actions in Ukraine are ... a violation of international law." Only 12% said that it's not. Asked whether "there was any justification for Russia's actions in Ukraine," 72% said "No," and only 17% said "Yes."

When asked "Do you think it is likely or not that there will be a new cold war," 48% said "Likely," and 49% said "Not likely."

And when asked "Do you worry about the possibility of nuclear war with Russia," 40% said "Yes," and 59% said "No."

The threat feared from Russia is mainly of their troops, who are manning bases for Russian Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), all of which are located inside Russia.

By contrast, the U.S. has troops [in many countries, which include the following nations where our soldiers are stationed](#) (and this includes ones with missile bases located near Russia): Norway, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan.

We also have some soldiers in other former parts of the U.S.S.R.: Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

We also have nearly 35,000 troops stationed in Japan, a nation near Russia and that claims ownership of four small Sakhalin Islands and two small Kuril Islands, from Russia.

The United States is, of course, not surrounded by any Russian soldiers at all — not in Mexico, nor in Canada, nor anywhere near this country, except Russia itself near Alaska.

[Steven Starr](#) has [written about](#) the decades-long view within the U.S. military-strategy establishment, that the Cold War is not, and actually never really was, about ideology, not about capitalism versus communism, but is instead simply about which nation will control the world: basically about national political and economic dominance of our planet. If what Starr says is true, then the end of communism in the U.S.S.R. didn't terminate the U.S. military's "Cold War" mission, which is instead actually about global dominance. Starr cites, among other sources, an article, ["The Rise of US Nuclear Primacy,"](#) from the highly influential journal of the organization of U.S. aristocrats and their agents, the Council on Foreign Relations, their authoritative *Foreign Affairs*, in March 2006. It discusses obliquely the Star Wars Missile-Defense program that was first proposed by President Ronald Reagan, and that has been developed during the decades since. The article says (and I shall italicize the admission since it otherwise rarely appears in print):

"For 50 years, the Pentagon's war planners have structured the U.S. nuclear arsenal according to the goal of deterring a nuclear attack on the United States and, if necessary, winning a nuclear war by launching a preemptive strike that would destroy an enemy's nuclear forces."

That article, which basically asserts that the publicly stated U.S. nuclear strategy, of maintaining on both sides the capacity for "Mutually Assured Destruction," or "MAD," is just a peaceful-sounding cover-story for the actual U.S. strategy of militarily dominating the entire world, then says: "The ability to destroy all of an adversary's nuclear forces [via Anti-Ballistic Missiles or 'ABMs'], eliminating the possibility of a retaliatory strike, is known as a first-strike capability, or nuclear primacy." It alleges that the actual objective of these supposedly defensive ABM weapons (which are still only in the development stage) is to knock out incoming retaliatory ICBMs from Russia, so that the U.S. will be able to launch a first strike that destroys almost all of Russia's missiles on the ground, even before they can be launched. The ABMs will then take care of any straggling Russian ICBMs, which might have been missed in our first strike and been fired from Russia, by using our ABMs (which, since they haven't yet been fully deployed, are still as yet only hypothetical) as a missile-shield to protect the U.S. from any retaliation by Russia for our having nuked Russia out of existence.

This article in *Foreign Affairs* says, pointedly:

"Even as the United States' nuclear forces have grown stronger since the end of the Cold War, Russia's strategic nuclear arsenal has sharply deteriorated. Russia has 39 percent fewer long-range bombers, 58 percent fewer ICBMs, and 80 percent fewer SSBNs than the Soviet Union fielded during its last days. The true extent of the Russian arsenal's decay, however, is much greater than these cuts suggest. What nuclear forces Russia retains are hardly ready for use. Russia's strategic bombers, now located at only two bases and thus vulnerable to a surprise attack, rarely conduct training exercises, and their warheads are stored off-base. Over 80 percent of Russia's silo-based ICBMs have exceeded their original service lives, and plans to replace them

with new missiles have been stymied by failed tests and low rates of production.”

Moreover, “Compounding these problems, Russia’s early warning system is a mess.”
Furthermore,

“Outside experts predict that the actual cuts [in Russia’s missiles] will slice 50 to 75 percent off the current force, possibly leaving Russia with as few as 150 ICBMs by the end of the decade, down from its 1990 level of almost 1,300 missiles. The more Russia’s nuclear arsenal shrinks, the easier it will become for the United States to carry out a first strike.”

The authors report:

“According to our model, such a simplified surprise attack would have a good chance of destroying every Russian bomber base, submarine, and ICBM. [See Footnote #1] This finding is not based on best-case assumptions or an unrealistic scenario in which U.S. missiles perform perfectly and the warheads hit their targets without fail.”

According to the authors, the assumption by U.S. military planners is that, though there might be a nuclear bomb or two that might hit the U.S. from Russia, the U.S. would emerge stronger after the nuclear conflict than before, and that the only issue left to be resolved is when would be the appropriate time to do this (presumably some time when the ABMs have been installed in as many countries neighboring Russia as possible, countries such as Ukraine). (After all: being located so near, the Russians would have only a few minutes to fire off their missiles in response — they’d be done for.)

The authors then discuss:

“Is the United States intentionally pursuing nuclear primacy? Or is primacy an unintended byproduct of intra-Pentagon competition for budget share or of programs designed to counter new threats from terrorists and so-called rogue states [assuming that Al Qaeda would have nuclear-armed missiles]? Motivations are always hard to pin down, but the weight of the evidence suggests that Washington is, in fact, deliberately seeking nuclear primacy. For one thing, U.S. leaders have always aspired to this goal [i.e.: the goal of winning a nuclear war]. And the nature of the changes to the current arsenal and official rhetoric and policies support this conclusion.”

They assert:

“Washington’s pursuit of nuclear primacy helps explain its missile-defense strategy, for example,” because ABMs “would be valuable primarily in an offensive context, not a defensive one — as an adjunct to a U.S. first-strike capability.” The authors approve of George W. Bush’s continuation of Bill Clinton’s continuation of G.H.W. Bush’s continuation of Ronald Reagan’s program to develop ABMs, by their saying: “The most logical conclusions to make are that a nuclear-war-fighting capability remains a key component of the United States’ military doctrine and that nuclear primacy [winning a nuclear war] remains a goal of the United States.”

They support this strategic goal, by concluding that domination of the world by the U.S. can be attained but only if it's boldly and not merely halfheartedly pursued:

“Ultimately, the wisdom of pursuing nuclear primacy must be evaluated in the context of the United States’ foreign policy goals. The United States is now seeking to maintain its global preeminence, which the Bush administration defines as the ability to stave off the emergence of a peer competitor and prevent weaker countries from being able to challenge the United States in critical regions such as the Persian Gulf. If Washington continues to believe such preeminence is necessary for its security, then the benefits of nuclear primacy might exceed the risks. But if the United States adopts a more restrained foreign policy — for example, one premised on greater skepticism of the wisdom of forcibly exporting democracy, launching military strikes to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and aggressively checking rising challengers — then the benefits of nuclear primacy will be trumped by the dangers.”

The Republican-Party-oriented Project for a New American Century, which mustered American public opinion in 2002 and 2003 to favor invading Iraq, was prominently in accord with the view that was expressed in this article in *Foreign Affairs*. PNAC opposed “a more restrained foreign policy.” (Thus, they favored invading Iraq.) Victoria Nuland, Obama’s appointee to run Ukraine in 2013, had supported PNAC, and had served as Vice President Dick Cheney’s advisor on foreign policy, and then she was President G.W. Bush’s U.S. Ambassador to NATO.

However, there also were some actual Democrats who likewise favored the viewpoint that was stated in this *Foreign Affairs* article. On 15 March 2014, Chris Ernesto headlined [“Brzezinski Mapped Out the Battle for Ukraine in 1997: It’s all about maintaining the US position as the world’s sole superpower.”](#) He quoted from Brzezinski in 1997, who said: “Ukraine, a new and important space on the Eurasian chessboard, is a geopolitical pivot because its very existence as an independent country helps to transform Russia. Without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be a Eurasian empire.” Ernesto also noted that Brzezinski was the first person to compare Russia’s leader Putin to Hitler. And yet Brzezinski is a “Democrat.” So, this supremacist view dominates on both sides of the aristocracy, both Republican and “Democratic.”

President Obama’s [speech at West Point, on 28 May 2014](#), said: “Here’s my bottom line: America must always lead on the world stage. If we don’t, no one else will.” Obama alleged: “Russia’s aggression toward former Soviet states unnerves capitals in Europe, while China’s economic rise and military reach worries its neighbors. From Brazil to India, rising middle classes compete with us.” Our President said:

“In Ukraine, Russia’s recent actions recall the days when Soviet tanks rolled into Eastern Europe. But this isn’t the Cold War [he said this after signaling his listeners that it really is but that he’s a ‘liberal’ and so he doesn’t say such hate-mongering things, but they naturally can come to the conclusion themselves]. Our ability to shape world opinion helped isolate Russia right away. Because of American leadership, the world immediately condemned Russian actions; Europe and the G7 joined us to impose sanctions; NATO reinforced our commitment to Eastern European allies; the IMF is helping to stabilize Ukraine’s economy; OSCE monitors brought the eyes of the world to unstable parts of Ukraine.”

(He said this after having spent [over five billion dollars of U.S. taxpayer funds to destabilize Ukraine and bring about the civil war there.](#))

The U.S. does not yet have missiles — either ICBMs or ABMs — in Ukraine, but Obama is clearly trying to firm-up the anti-Russian government that (via Nuland) he has succeeded at placing in Kiev to control this country that borders Russia.

Despite the hostile rhetoric from our President and from the stenographic “reporters” who transmit “news” to us, Russia is no actual military competitor to the United States; but, [under Putin, it has become an economic competitor \(which intensifies Obama’s desire to cripple Russia\).](#)

The statements that Russia is a military competitor are pure propaganda, not news (except about the sources that transmit such propaganda to us).

[As of the year 2013](#), the U.S. spent \$640 billion per year on the military, whereas Russia spent \$87.8 billion per year on its military. The U.S. spent 36.6% of the planet’s military budget, and Russia spent 5.0%. There is no reason for the American public to fear Russia, though (because of the constant propaganda) they do.

For the people of the United States to fear Russia is a violation of basic logic, especially considering that the U.S. is actually pursuing military dominance of the world, whereas no other country in the world is, or even *can*. The U.S. percentage of 36.6% of the world’s military budget *dwarfs* #2 China’s percentage of 10.8%, and especially dwarfs #3 Russia’s 5.0%. #4 Furthermore, Saudi Arabia’s 3.8%, is allied with the U.S. So is #5 France’s 3.5%. So is #6 U.K.’s 3.3%. So is #7 Germany’s 2.8%. So is #8 Japan’s 2.8%. So is #9 India’s 2.7%. So is #10 South Korea’s 1.9%. “We” spend collectively 57.6% of the world’s total, whereas Russia spends only 5%.

If we assume that we are driving Russia to ally itself with China (a reasonable assumption to make, for Russia’s protection), then both of those countries together are spending 15.8% on “their side,” while the U.S. and its allies are spending 57.4% — and that’s just including the world’s top ten spenders. “We” are then spending 3.6 times as much as “they” are. On a worldwide basis, including all nations, the U.S. and its allies are spending more than 80% of all of this planet’s military expenditures. And yet “we” fear “them” (Russia and China). If our military planners are looking forward to a day when the U.S. can nuclear-destroy Russia with impunity, then creating this fear of Russia will help, not only in order to make America’s public support destroying Russia, but in order to get us to accept some U.S. casualties in a nuclear war from a few Russian missiles that might slip through the ABM net.

The current conflict inside (the former) Ukraine has spiked this fear by the U.S. public, which can help prepare the U.S. public to support a nuclear invasion of Russia.

Although U.S. media have maintained that Russia’s Vladimir Putin precipitated the Ukraine conflict when he backed the overwhelmingly popular movement in Crimea to separate itself from Ukraine, that view is likewise irrational. The actual situation is far more complex. A much stronger argument can be made that President Obama’s actions caused this conflict. Paul Craig Roberts well summarized the actual history behind the Crimean matter recently, when he [said](#) (and this history should be publicized widely to the U.S. public, but is instead not publicized in our “news” media):

“Areas of southern and eastern Ukraine are former Russian territories added to Ukraine by Soviet leaders. Lenin added Russian areas to Ukraine in early years of the Soviet Union, and Khrushchev added Crimea in 1954. The people in these Russian areas, alarmed by the destruction of Soviet war memorials commemorating the Red Army’s liberation of Ukraine from Hitler, by the banning of Russian as an official language, and by physical assaults on Russian-speaking people in Ukraine, broke out in protests. Crimea voted its independence and requested reunification with Russia, and so have the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Washington, its EU puppets, and the Western media have denied that the votes in Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk are sincere and spontaneous. Instead, Washington alleges that the protests leading to the votes and the votes themselves were orchestrated by the Russian government with the use of bribes, threats, and coercion. Crimea was said to be a case of Russian invasion and annexation. These are blatant lies, and the foreign observers of the elections know it, but they have no voice in the Western media, which is a Ministry of Propaganda for Washington. Even the once proud BBC lies for Washington.”

Furthermore, [Russia’s Black Sea fleet had been established in Crimea in 1783](#) and continued being based there till the present day, so that to allege, as Obama and his minions do, that kicking Russia’s Black Sea fleet out of Crimea wouldn’t constitute a highly aggressive move against Russia, is a lie that befits only a Hitler or a Stalin, not a leader of any democracy, such as Obama claims to be.

The counter-argument to this undeniable history has been the equally undeniable corruption of the democratically elected, pro-Russian, President of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovich, who had used his political position in order to skim billions of dollars off government contracts, for himself and his son. That corruption is alleged to have justified the violation of the Ukrainian Constitution, by means of the violent February 2014 overthrow of him. This “justification” of the February 2014 coup is especially held to have been the case because Yanukovich’s troops themselves had started the violence. However, they actually did not start the violence: that too was a lie. (Moreover [all of the post-Soviet leaders of Ukraine have been corrupt](#). Yanukovich was like his predecessors in that regard.)

An [excellent video presentation about that event](#) (the violence that led to Yanukovich’s violent overthrow) opens with a discussion between Urmaz Paet and Cathy Ashton. Ashton is the EU’s Foreign Policy chief. She had appointed Paet to investigate to determine how the violence at the Maidan demonstration on February 18th had started, which ended in Yanukovich’s overthrow. Paet reported to her, in this phone conversation, what he found; and he concluded: “So ... there is now stronger and stronger understanding [among everyone who has examined the evidence] that behind the snipers, it was not Yanukovich, but it was somebody from the new coalition” (in other words, it was by the group *overthrowing* Yanukovich). The video then shows the Obama Administration’s Victoria Nuland telling the U.S. Ambassador in Ukraine to get the far-right Arseniy Yatsenyuk appointed to lead the new interim post-Yanukovich government. That government then placed Hitler-admirers (followers of Stephan Bandera) into the country’s leading positions. Yatsenyuk himself was a banker who had a clearly nationalist anti-Russian background, and was allied with neo-Nazi forces in Western Europe.

On May 1st, Christine Lagarde, head of the IMF, told Ukraine that if they didn’t crush the coup’s opponents and force them into being controlled by the new Kiev central government, [then the IMF would pull the plug](#) on any further loans to Ukraine. The next day, in the Trade Unions Building in Odessa in the south, occurred [the event that sparked](#)

[Ukraine's civil war](#), the [massacre of 272 opponents to the coup-regime; most of them were incinerated to death](#) after the regime's supporters, [who had been bussed in from the north, threw Molotov cocktails into the building, and then firebombed it with larger incendiary bombs; and, when the building's occupants jumped from the burning building's windows, the people below immediately beat them to death](#) and dragged the corpses off to waiting vans, from whence some reports allege they were taken to Odessa's outskirts for mass-burial. The official body-count of corpses that were incinerated and that still remained inside the building on the night of May 2nd was 46. Despite claims by the pro-Obama forces, that the people inside the building had been Russians and not Ukrainians, none of the 36 corpses who could be identified were: all of them had been local Odessans, with Ukrainian IDs in their wallets, etc.

This massacre, [which was the first massacre in world history to be voluminously recorded by independent videos taken of it](#) by cellphones, exposed to all the residents in the southeastern half of Ukraine, which are the regions where Yanukovich had won overwhelmingly the election that had made him President, that the regime that was now installed in Kiev wanted them dead if they wouldn't accept being ruled by this new, Obama-IMF-installed, government. Consequently, Ukraine's civil war started with this massacre, which was like an announcement to the southeast: either support us, or else die — your choice.

It did not start with Putin. [U.S. media are being dishonest about that](#). The people in Ukraine's southeast simply do not want to be ruled by the coalition of the two neo-Nazi parties, Pravy Sektor and Svoboda, and by the two conservative nationalist "Fatherland" and "UDAR" Parties, which four-party coalition, all-far-right-wing, now rules in Kiev. They seek protection against that U.S.-installed far-right coalition government, because the people who live in the southeast are the targets in their gun-sights and bombsights.

The U.S. Government controls the IMF; and, [together](#), they caused the civil war that now ravages Ukraine.

While President Obama has never spoken about his having caused this civil war, much less about why he did it, [he unquestionably did](#).

His operating assumption, that a nuclear war can be won, might be true for the West's aristocracy in the short term, but it is definitely false for the world-at-large over the long term. In a separate article, Steven Starr headlined in 2014 ["Deadly Climate Change from Nuclear War: a threat to human existence."](#) He closed by saying that,

"The scientific studies summarized in this paper make it clear that the environmental consequences of a 'regional' nuclear conflict could kill hundreds of millions of people far from the war zone. Deadly climate change caused by a war fought with the strategic nuclear arsenals of the U.S. and Russia would threaten the continued survival of the human species. Yet neither the U.S., nor Russia, nor any other nuclear weapons state has ever officially evaluated what effects a war fought with their nuclear arsenals would have upon the Earth's climate and ecosystems."

An article, ["Environmental Consequences of Nuclear War"](#) was published in the December 2008 *Physics Today*, and it concluded that, "the indirect effects ['nuclear winter'] would likely eliminate the majority of the human population." (It would be even worse, and far

faster, than the expected harms from global warming.) President Obama might think that, as the *Foreign Affairs* article asserted, “the wisdom of pursuing nuclear primacy must be evaluated in the context of the United States’ foreign policy goals,” but others, both in the U.S. and especially elsewhere, might think that that’s a false, parochially nationalistic, view of what democracy is about or is supposed to support, or even of what should be tolerated from an American President. Yet it’s his policy, regarding Ukraine, if one is to judge by his actions, instead of by his words.

*Investigative historian **Eric Zuesse** is the author, most recently, of [They’re Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST’S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).*

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