

# The Mad Men of Washington

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*It’s hard to exaggerate just how energized the Washington elite has been by the outbreak of war in Europe. The resurgent Russian menace clearly portends a prosperous future of ever larger defense budgets, not to mention offering a much-needed reprieve from the domestic tumult of a fraying political system.*

Of course, it all very well may foretell a calamitous global conflagration as well. But for many in Washington, that appears to be the point.

Appearing on [CNN](#) Saturday, former NATO Supreme Allied Commander of Europe Wesley Clark mused on the potential of catapulting the world into a nuclear war.

Speaking to Jim Acosta, Clark offered that “a lot of people are talking about a no-fly zone... I’m recommending we look at things like this.”

Clark, it must be noted, came to prominence leading the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in order to back separatist rebels in Kosovo. To be clear then: separatists in Kosovo, good-separatists in the Donbas, bad.

Russiagate’s favorite GOP lawmaker, Adam Kinzinger, has similarly [advocated](#) for the establishment of a no-fly zone over Ukraine.

Recall that the last no-fly zone NATO established led to [scores of civilian deaths in Libya](#). But no matter that.

Thus, “all options are on the table,” including a no-fly zone apparently. So as Moscow puts its nuclear forces on high alert, there are those in Washington actually agitating for the shooting down of Russian warplanes. Although, as Clark bizarrely continued, “[Putin] has chemical weapons, maybe he has nuclear weapons.” Maybe?

Acosta didn’t challenge Clark on his absurd pronouncement on Russia’s nuclear status. Instead, Acosta opined on Putin’s mental state, recklessly asserting, “It seems like he’s gone mad. He’s gone mad!”

Image on the right: Adam Schiff (Gage Skidmore/Wikimedia Commons)



One can imagine an American CNN viewer fed the Washington propaganda of Russia evil, Putin mad, wondering why the hell the force for good that is the US military just doesn't go in already and take out this "next Hitler." After all, as another prominent Russiagater Adam Schiff has [asserted](#), the US must "fight Russia over there [so] we don't have to fight Russia here."

But maybe a no-fly zone is too much. Sanctions are needed instead. We need to make the Russian economy scream.

Officials in Washington are now [reportedly](#) looking at attempting to remove the Russian economy in its entirety from the SWIFT banking system, which they deem the "nuclear weapon of sanctions." An apt name, given that such a move would likely do significant damage to the American economy as well. Amazing how Democrats in the Congress are so willing to risk their electoral lives for Ukraine's NATO membership, but are never so willing to risk it on anything like addressing climate change or providing healthcare to all Americans.

The Russian sanctions are reported to be based on the Iran model. But what have the sanctions on Tehran done other than cause needless suffering for ordinary Iranians? Have sanctions turned the Iranian people against their government? No. The truth is that sanctions never work the way their proponents claim. They are not humane alternatives to war either; they are war.

Not only that, sanctions can easily lead to further escalation. There's a direct line from the oil embargo of Imperial Japan and the start of the second world war in the Pacific. Are we really going to fall into a catastrophic global conflict over an attempt to fulfill the dream of easing the sale of American made weapons systems to a newly minted NATO regime in Kyiv?

Who is it that has gone mad?

But maybe we ought to pump the breaks on the WWII talk for now. Clark went on in his CNN appearance to speculate that Russian generals will do the job for us and will eventually stand up to Putin and end this war.

Not likely, of course. If generals were to be counted on to stand up and stop illegal criminal wars the people of Afghanistan and Iraq would have been spared the hell of US imperialism. But US generals have a long and storied history of not standing up. Oh, well. But we

shouldn't conflate Iraq and Afghanistan with Ukraine. It's all so different.

As CBS foreign correspondent Charlie D'Agata [explained](#) the difference, "this place, with all due respect, like Iraq or Afghanistan, that has seen conflict raging for decades...this is a relatively civilized, relatively European" place. One wonders what the people in Afghanistan and Iraq have to say about those "relatively civilized, relatively European" invading hordes who unleashed those conflicts that raged for decades. That would be the very same "civilized" people who now appear poised to play nuclear chicken with Russia.

But whether the Russian generals abandon their orders or not is ultimately a moot point. Rest assured; the fate of Ukraine is actually in American hands. As Clark asserted, it's "up to us. It is about American leadership, ultimately."

It was much the same across the Sunday shows this week. Military and political elites derided Moscow's aggression against a sovereign state ([a war crime for thee, not for me](#)) and boasted about how the US and its NATO lackies were ultimately the ones with the power to shape events on the global stage.

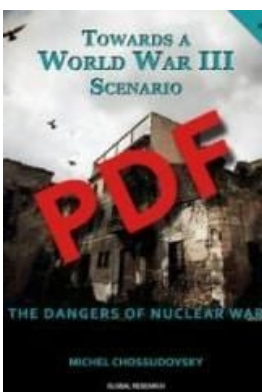
The sun never sets on American hubris.

Let us pray Washington's spiking war fever is in reality nothing but a reckless grift meant to help pump more money into the coffers of American arms manufacturers. But for an American leadership that has seemingly long since gone mad, there's no telling where the grift ends and the barbarism begins.

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*Ben Schreiner is an American writer.*



["Towards a World War III Scenario: The Dangers of Nuclear War"](#)

by Michel Chossudovsky

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## Reviews

“This book is a ‘must’ resource – a richly documented and systematic diagnosis of the supremely pathological geo-strategic planning of US wars since ‘9-11’ against non-nuclear countries to seize their oil fields and resources under cover of ‘freedom and democracy’.”

*–John McMurtry, Professor of Philosophy, Guelph University*

“In a world where engineered, pre-emptive, or more fashionably “humanitarian” wars of aggression have become the norm, this challenging book may be our final wake-up call.”

*–Denis Halliday, Former Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations*

Michel Chossudovsky exposes the insanity of our privatized war machine. Iran is being targeted with nuclear weapons as part of a war agenda built on distortions and lies for the purpose of private profit. The real aims are oil, financial hegemony and global control. The price could be nuclear holocaust. When weapons become the hottest export of the world’s only superpower, and diplomats work as salesmen for the defense industry, the whole world is recklessly endangered. If we must have a military, it belongs entirely in the public sector. No one should profit from mass death and destruction.

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