

Russia-Ukraine War: The Western Threat of Nuclear Annihilation

It is the US and the imperialist West, not Iran or Russia, who have posed and continue to pose the largest possible threat to human survival

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*Last week, [British](#) Tory leadership frontrunner **Liz Truss** [said](#) she would be willing to unleash nuclear war if she were to become prime minister.*

She is not alone among political leaders in the western imperialist states to threaten nuclear annihilation in the past few months if their hegemony and imperial [profits were threatened](#) by resistance to their exploitation and control of the globe.

It was back in February that the West began to threaten [Russia](#) with [nuclear](#) war in response to a statement given by **President Vladimir Putin**.

Addressing western encroachments and threats to Russian security, [ongoing](#) since 1991 but increasing significantly since 2014, Putin declared:

“Whoever tries to hinder us, and even more so, to create threats to our country, to our people, should know that Russia’s response will be immediate. And it will lead you to such consequences that you have never encountered in your history.”

Putin prefaced his [statements](#) by averring that “even after the dissolution of the USSR and losing a considerable part of its capabilities, today’s Russia remains one of the most powerful nuclear states”.

The French foreign minister subsequently [threatened](#) Putin, who spoke of Russia’s nuclear capabilities as a defensive measure, by declaring that [Nato](#), too, remained a “[nuclear alliance](#)” and “that is all I will say about this”.

'Thinkable' nuclear war

By March, [The New York Times](#) jumped on the bandwagon and published an article about the possibility that the Russians might use nuclear weapons if threatened by the West. The article, ironically, cited only western experts and officials who spoke of a limited nuclear war against Russia as "thinkable".

The newspaper of record even quoted US **General James E Cartwright**, the vice-chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under Barack Obama, as saying that the "reduced blast capability" of the smaller nuclear devices in existence today made breaking the nuclear taboo "more thinkable".

It [added](#):

"Nuclear war plans are one of Washington's most deeply held secrets. Experts say that the war-fighting plans in general go from warning shots to single strikes to multiple retaliations and that the hardest question is whether there are reliable ways to prevent a conflict from escalating."

It should be noted that the idea of a "limited" nuclear war in Europe is not new. It is a longstanding American fantasy - one that [Ronald Reagan](#), in particular, [nurtured](#).

In April, after the publication of The New York Times article, Russian **Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov** expressed worry about the implications of a nuclear war, emphasising that while Russia did not want a nuclear war, "the danger is serious". [US President Joe Biden's](#) response to Lavrov was to accuse the Russians of threatening nuclear war rather than expressing anxiety that the US and Nato could launch one.

Israeli threats

Indeed, in April, [CNN](#) reported that the US had not seen "any indication Russia has made any moves to prepare nuclear weapons for use during the [Ukraine] war". But by June, NBC News [joined](#) the chorus of mainstream outlets considering the possible use of American nuclear weapons against Russia.

Earlier this month, Putin [issued](#) a statement to a UN conference which convened to review the [Treaty](#) on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, affirming that "there can be no winners in a nuclear war and it should never be unleashed, and we stand for equal and indivisible security for all members of the world community".

Yet, that very same day, Israel's new prime minister, [Yair Lapid](#), [threatened](#) to use Israel's nuclear weapons against Iran:

"The operational arena in the invisible dome above us is built on defensive capabilities and offensive capabilities, and what the foreign media tends to call 'other capabilities'. These other capabilities keep us alive and will keep us alive so long as we and our children are here."

[The Jerusalem Post](#), the conservative Israeli newspaper, postulated that Lapid's not-so-veiled threat to nuke Iran was akin to his saying:

“What exactly do you ayatollahs think you are going to accomplish by trying to break out one or two weapons which you probably could not hit us with, and which might lead us to easily incinerate large parts of your country?”

This is not the first time Israel has threatened to use [nuclear weapons](#) against its neighbours. In fact, it had prepared to use its nukes twice before, in [1967](#) and in [1973](#) when it readied its then 13 nuclear bombs to be dropped on Cairo and Damascus.

Real or imagined

Of course, the only country on earth that has ever used nuclear bombs deliberately against civilians is none other than the US, which dropped them on [Hiroshima and Nagasaki](#), 77 years ago [this month](#), in a genocidal act that the US continues to [defend](#) to this day as one that prevented more casualties had the nukes not been dropped and the war continued.

In essence, the US argues that its nuking civilians was a high moral act to save more civilians from being killed. This is amazingly and horrifyingly the very same logic the US [deploys](#) today to justify its future use of nuclear weapons.

While Hiroshima and Nagasaki awakened most of the world to the utter horror of nuclear weapons, it only whetted American appetites to use them more.

Recently [revealed documents](#) show the United States seriously considered and made plans to use nuclear weapons against China in 1958, during the so-called Taiwan Straits crisis.

Yet, despite the US use of nuclear weapons and the West’s ongoing threats to annihilate all humankind if their profits and “security” interests are threatened, we have been treated for years on end to ceaseless western propoganda about the threat that allegedly Iran, which does not possess any nuclear weapons, poses to the West.

When Israel, which is in possession of possibly as many as [200 nuclear devices](#) (and which still [refuses](#) to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty), threatened to nuke Iran a few weeks ago, its threat was taken lightly, if even considered, in the western [press](#) and by western officials, who were and remain too busy trying to eliminate a phantasmatic nuclear threat that Iran allegedly constitutes for Israel – a phantasm that has prolonged interminably the ongoing renegotiations of the nuclear treaty between the US and Iran.

It is the US and the imperialist West, not Iran or Russia, who have posed and continue to pose the largest possible threat to human existence and survival. What is truly ironic, however, is that western leaders and the western press can more easily imagine and plan for the end of the world, but not the end of the West’s imperial hegemony.

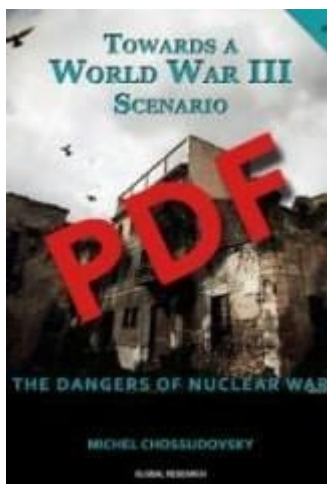
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Featured image: The world's first nuclear explosion – the U.S. 'Trinity' atomic test in New Mexico, July 16, 1945. If a nuclear war breaks out today, the devastation caused by modern nuclear weapons would make Trinity's power look small by comparison. Most life on Earth would likely be wiped out. | U.S. Department of Energy



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

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Reviews

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–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.

-Ellen Brown, author of 'Web of Debt' and president of the Public Banking Institute

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