

# Trump Driving Doomsday Clock Towards Midnight

Future of humans in growing jeopardy as problems mount.

By [Shane Quinn](#)

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Theme: [History](#)

In-depth Report: [Nuclear War](#)

*Next Thursday, 24 January, should the atomic scientists push forward the Doomsday Clock, it will be a third successive year it has progressed towards midnight (apocalypse). The Doomsday Clock is currently set at two minutes to midnight, as advanced a position since 1953, when America and the Soviet Union were each testing massive hydrogen bombs.*

Another movement of the clock's hand, as is most probable, and we enter uncharted territory. It comes as no accident that this race to the cliff has accelerated under the Donald Trump administration, which is systematically increasing the risk of nuclear war and environmental catastrophe.

Yet as the postwar record shows – more of it coming to light in recent times – it is by the grace of considerable fortune that humans have escaped annihilation from nuclear bombs, with the nuclear winter extinction phenomenon that follows it. Much of this is due to policies sought by consecutive US administrations dating to the Second World War, governing the world's prominent nuclear and military power.

America, though a uniquely strong and affluent country, is also a very young state, having been founded less than two and a half centuries ago. America does not possess the deep-rooted culture and heritage of nations steeped in history, such as Egypt and Greece, which are thousands of years old. When the US empire invades another country, it does not come forth to spread its civilization like ancient Rome, but to gain command of natural resources in pivotal earthly regions. Wealth and control are its prime concerns.

The US is also a state lacking in maturity and prudence, chained to an inability to halt incessant technological advancements; no matter how harmful and outlandish they are, from militarization of space to indestructible submarines and drone warfare.

These far-flung and dangerous policies are indeed borne out in the US Armed Forces, who have committed some of the most severe aggression since 1945, as in the attacks on Indochina and Iraq.

To offer a hair-raising example of this irresponsibility from the height of the Cold War, there were continued situations whereby US pilots flying jet aircraft in formation – all with thermonuclear bombs on board – were performing patrols without adequate communication to their commanding officer at the Kunsan Air Base, in South Korea.

Furthermore, the American pilots were roaming about on unclear orders, geared for combat, and nothing prevented a rogue flier from carrying out an "Execute message"; that is, the unloading of his nuclear device on a target (north-east Russia).

In such a case, his fellow pilots would likely have followed him and released their own nuclear payload. As an American major in command of these men [admitted](#),

“Of course, if one of them [the pilots] were to break out of that circle and go for his target, I think the rest would follow. And they might as well. If one goes, they might as well all go. I tell them not to do it though”.

This major was commanding a fleet, of 12 planes, that contained six and a half times the bomb outlay dropped during the whole of World War II.

Unknown to them, any such attack would have made the planet uninhabitable for at least 99% of humans - with perhaps those natural born survivors, the “primitive” societies in remote rainforests and polar regions, having a chance of living through the ensuing nuclear winter.

As seen, the old cliché of “American blundering” may have some grains of truth to it. During the Vietnam War, thousands of highly expensive US helicopters were utilized in “counter-insurgency” operations, military attacks in truth. It is difficult to grasp the thinking behind deployment of a craft as noisy as a helicopter in conducting surprise assaults, whose approach could be heard for miles around by North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front forces, lying in wait. Over 5,000 US helicopters were destroyed by war’s end, at a loss of hundreds of millions of dollars.

Meanwhile, as the years advanced, even staunchly conservative figures like George Shultz and Henry Kissinger have come to realize that nuclear stockpiles should be removed from the face of the earth. Having been present through the entire Cold War period, both Shultz and Kissinger are more familiar than most with these weapons.

As we enter 2019, the nuclear era rumbles on and one can almost hear the clock’s ticking in the background. Humanity’s luck will run out unless firm steps are engineered leading to wide-scale abolition of nuclear weapons, however long that process would take. Disarmament can only be achieved should America lead the way, with the eight other nuclear states following suit. The signs are far from encouraging, however.

In April 2009, a youthful Barack Obama was declaring to an audience in the Czech Republic of, “America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons... First, the United States will take concrete steps towards a world without nuclear weapons”.

As with a long line of privileged politicians, words are merely words that can sound pleasant to unassuming audiences. By September 2014, president Obama was doing the opposite by aggressively modernizing America’s “aging” nuclear capabilities.

It appears not enough to merely unload the bomb, but they must have as advanced a means as possible to do so. No longer does it reach the glamorous heights to attack from an aircraft, but the nuclear warheads must be fired from an invulnerable submarine.

Coinciding with late Obama-era policies like this and worsening climate change, in January 2015 the Doomsday Clock’s hand progressed to three minutes to midnight, the highest threat level since the Ronald Reagan days. Partly driving Obama’s strategy was his

antipathy towards Russia and its leader Vladimir Putin, who was outfoxing Obama in countries like Syria. The then US president also recognized China's rise as an unprecedented challenge to American hegemony.

In early 2016, Obama was agreeing to a trillion dollar overhaul of America's nuclear arsenal – a complete U-turn on past remarks while his country's infrastructure was falling into further disrepair. Obama's reckless initiatives are now being vigorously pursued by the Trump administration, who have increased nuclear outlay to \$1.2 trillion as they confront the daunting power of China, and to a lesser extent Russia.

The growing possibility of calamity saw Putin highlight last month that, "The danger of the situation is being downplayed" with humans staring at "the end of all civilization and maybe also the planet".

Atomic scientists in charge of the Doomsday Clock have responded in kind to Trump's presidency, pushing the hand closer to midnight over the preceding two Januaries (2017 and 2018).

Since 2016, the possessing classes have lambasted Trump on issues that warranted little more than peripheral mention. It has gone on unchecked. In regards the critical subjects that Trump should be held to account for, rising threat of nuclear destruction and environmental degradation, he has received remarkably little criticism.

Due to Trump's ambition in promoting "clean coal" and the likes, America's carbon emissions are steadily rising for the first time in years, and increased by 3.4% in 2018. Trump and his team are [fully aware](#) climate change is occurring, but his prevailing attitude is that it is too late to counter the problem so why bother doing anything about it?

Trump is further attune to the fact it is the poorest people on earth suffering the severest climate consequences. The Republican Party establishment, and big business broadly, have a general disregard for poverty-stricken states; so their viewpoint is that it is only natural they should suffer the most.

These outlooks are a blend of the outrageous to the insane, while it will eventually return to haunt those privileged sectors. All humans, no matter how rich or poor, are reliant on basic needs to survive – clean water for drinking and food almost entirely derived from crops. The wheat fields cannot grow if our planet's weather systems deteriorate or nuclear winter arrives, the latter phenomenon being far quicker and more devastating.

Trump, and many others, are loathe to shed profits should it even mean reducing damage to the globe and its ecosystems. Something similar can be said for major corporations institutionally geared towards amassing wealth; the end result being a contribution to emissions, felling of forests, rising volumes of plastic entering the oceans, etc.

None of it is sustainable. The greed and avarice has increased tenfold since the end of World War II, as a global assault is meted out on the natural world resulting in our planet's sixth mass extinction. One need only look at the pollution and waste produced by consumer societies, from the US to China.

Amid the world's biggest greenhouse gas emitters, while America's carbon emissions in 2018 grew by over 3%, China's rose by 4.7% last year, and India's climbed a staggering 6.3%.

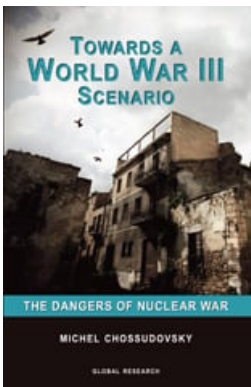
On a per capita (per person) basis, the US is comfortably the planet's largest carbon emitter. However, because of China's enormous population and industrial base, it produces more emissions than America and India combined.

In spite of the numerous scientific warnings, some stretching back decades, global greenhouse gas levels are at an all time high and rising. Lying at the core of this, is the inexcusable failure of those governing the major powers to rid themselves of powerful vested interests, and shift away from fossil fuel industries to clean, renewable energy.

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*Shane Quinn obtained an honors journalism degree. He is interested in writing primarily on foreign affairs, having been inspired by authors like Noam Chomsky. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.*



["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.”

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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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