

Two Minutes to Midnight: The Global Nuclear Suicide Machine

By [Dr. Andrew Glikson](#)

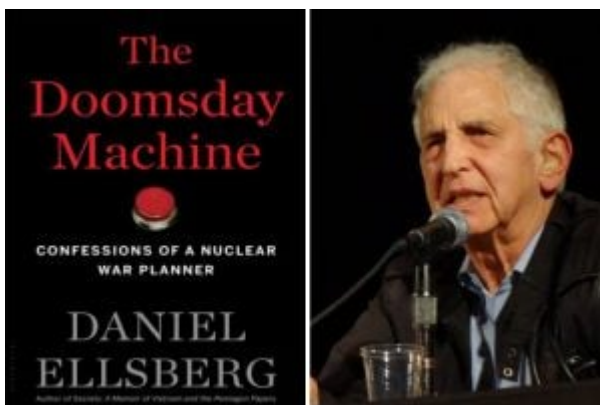
Global Research, April 02, 2018

Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#)

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

*“The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save human way of thinking and thus we drift toward unparalleled catastrophes.” **Albert Einstein** 1946*

Daniel Ellsberg, former presidential advisor, who has released the famous top-secret Pentagon Papers related to the Viet Nam war[ii], has also possessed a cache of top secret documents related to America’s nuclear program in the 1960s. In this book *“The Doomsday Machine: Confessions of a Nuclear War Planner”*[iii] (5/12/2017) he reveals the contents of those documents, with their shocking relevance for today. It is an insider’s account of the most dangerous arms buildup in the history of the world, whose legacy threatens the very survival of humanity. Ellsberg’s analysis of recent research on nuclear winter shows that even a small nuclear exchange could expand to cause billions of deaths by global nuclear famine.



Much of the nuclear research has been done in secrecy in both the west and east blocks. Few insiders with comprehensive knowledge of the consequences of nuclear detonations have revealed these secrets, the most prominent being Daniel Ellsberg. One of the more alarming parts of the book is the a number of people to whom authority is delegated to pull the trigger on nuclear weapons, as stated:

“With respect to deliberate, authorized US strategic attacks, the system has always been designed to be triggered by a far wider range of events than the public has ever imagine... Moreover, the hand authorized to pull the trigger on US nuclear forces has never been exclusively that of the president, nor even his highest military officials”.

This renders the likelihood of a nuclear exchange significantly greater. Russia has a similar protocol, known as the Dead Hand system delegating authority to retaliate to a US strike in the event that the country’s commanders were taken out. Similar delegations likely exist in

other nuclear countries. Consequently the triggering of nuclear war is now in the hands of a large number of people.

Since the first atomic test in Alamogordo, Nevada, 6 August 1945, the global powers have undertaken the construction of a global nuclear suicide machine on a scale that defies human contemplation. The desperate urgency of the existence of thousands of launch-on-warning state nuclear weapons has been grossly underestimated, receiving limited focus in the culpable mainstream media, preoccupied as it is with parochial politics, sport and sex scandals.

Sydney Drell, a physicist and nuclear weapons expert^[iv], commented on the proximity of a nuclear exchange in the following terms:

“Given all the close calls and mistakes in the 71 years since Hiroshima, he considered it a miracle that no other cities have been destroyed by a nuclear weapon — “it is so far beyond my normal optimism”.

The likelihood of nuclear war has risen due to the Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) strategy and launch on warning, namely use-them-or-lose-them strategies, has decreased human control, rendering N-war possible due to computer errors. The fear of losing nuclear assets has driven launch pads to increased mobility, on submarines, trucks and trains, increasing the likelihood of accidental nuclear war.



The Castle Bravo hydrogen bomb test, March 1, 1954, Bikini Atoll, Marshall Islands^[v] The most powerful nuclear device detonated, yielding was 15 megatons of TNT, leading to unexpected radioactive contamination of areas to the east of Bikini Atoll. Fallout on residents of Rongelap and Utirik atolls spread around the world. The blast incited international reaction over atmospheric thermonuclear testing.

But the consequences of a nuclear exchange belong to the unthinkable. According to the article titled Nuclear War, Nuclear Winter, and Human Extinction (Starr 2015 - director of the University of Missouri's Clinical Laboratory Science Program^[vi]), apart from the immediate destruction by nuclear explosions^[vii]:

1. Nuclear firestorms would burn simultaneously over a total land surface area of many thousands or tens of thousands of square miles. These mass fires would release many tens of millions of tons of black carbon soot and smoke which would rise rapidly above cloud level and into the stratosphere;
2. A nuclear winter would cause most humans and large animals to die from nuclear famine in a mass extinction event similar to the one that wiped out the dinosaurs;
3. Sunlight would heat the smoke, producing a self-lofting effect that would not only aid the rise of the smoke into the stratosphere but act to keep the smoke in the stratosphere for 10 years or more. Once in the stratosphere, the smoke would rapidly engulf the Earth and form a dense stratospheric smoke layer. The smoke from a war fought with strategic nuclear weapons would quickly prevent up to 70% of sunlight from reaching the surface of the Northern Hemisphere and 35% of sunlight from reaching the surface of the Southern Hemisphere;
4. Such an enormous loss of warming sunlight would produce Ice Age weather conditions on Earth in a matter of weeks. For a period of 1–3 years following the war, temperatures would fall below freezing every day in the central agricultural zones of North America and Eurasia;
5. Nuclear winter would cause average global surface temperatures to become colder than they were at the height of the last Ice Age. Such extreme cold would eliminate growing seasons for many years, probably for a decade or longer;
6. Temperatures would be much too cold to grow food, and they would remain this way long enough to cause most humans and animals to starve to death;
7. Global nuclear famine would result in a setting in which the infrastructure of the combatant nations has been totally destroyed, resulting in massive amounts of chemical and radioactive toxins being released into the biosphere.

An important review of Ellsberg's book by Scott Ludlam "*Nuclear brinkmanship and the doomsday scenario*"[viii] states, among other:

"This work isn't scary in the conventional sense. It is quietly terrifying. No matter how bad you think the global nuclear weapons complex is, it is worse than you know. Much worse Ellsberg knows this because he helped design it" and "Today, at the highest levels, the doomsday machine is renewing itself. Nuclear weapons states have essentially cast aside the 40-year charade that they intend to honor their disarmament obligations under the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This legal instrument has come to serve chiefly for enforcement of a kind of global nuclear apartheid where a tiny handful of states maintain the capacity to commit unthinkable destruction while the great majority of the world's governments forswear against ever adopting the technology."... "This, then, is the doomsday machine. Not simply the existence of fission weapons or unspeakably destructive hydrogen bombs, but the whole network rigged together: thousands of them on hair-trigger alert, command and control equipment built in the 1970s and '80s, millions of lines of antique code sitting on reels of magnetic tape or shuffled around on floppy discs even now. An architecture tended by fallible and deeply institutionalized human beings, some of them with bigger buttons than others. A weapons arsenal premised on the fact that it can never be used, threatened with use every day since 1945, and now costing roughly \$100 billion a year globally to maintain and upgrade."

To date the nuclear-armed nations have declined to endorse the Nuclear Ban Treaty[ix]

initiated (ICAN) International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Arms[x].

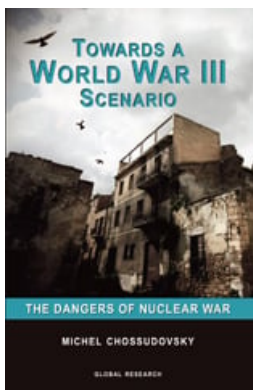
The future of the world hangs on a thread.

*

Dr Andrew Glikson, Earth and Paleo-climate science, ANU School of Anthropology and Archaeology, ANU Climate Change Institute, ANU Planetary Science Institute, Honorary Associate Professor, Geothermal Energy Centre of Excellence, University of Queensland.

Notes

- [1] <https://thebulletin.org/2018-doomsday-clock-statement>
- [2] <https://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/pentagon-papers>
- [3] <https://www.amazon.com/Doomsday-Machine-Confessions-Nuclear-Planner/dp/1608196704>
- [4] <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/22/science/sidney-drell-dead.html>
- [5] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_ethics#/media/File:Castle_Bravo_Blast.jpg
- [6] <https://thebulletin.org/bio/steven-starr>
- [7] <http://www.springer.com/gp/book/9783319572369>
- [8] <https://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2018/april/1522501200/scott-ludlam/nuclear-brinkmanship-and-doomsday-scenario>
- [9] <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/50-nations-ink-un-nuclear-ban-treaty-opposed-by-big-powers/article19726015.ece>
- [10] <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-12-11/ican-urges-world-to-ban-nuclear-weapons/9245078>



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

by Michel Chossudovsky

Available to order from Global Research!

ISBN Number: 978-0-9737147-5-3

Year: 2012

Pages: 102

Print Edition: \$10.25 (+ shipping and handling)

PDF Edition: \$6.50 (sent directly to your email account!)

Michel Chossudovsky is Professor of Economics at the University of Ottawa and Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), which hosts the critically acclaimed website www.globalresearch.ca . He is a contributor to the Encyclopedia Britannica. His writings have been translated into more than 20 languages.

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.

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



The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Dr. Andrew Glikson](#), Global Research, 2018

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Dr. Andrew Glikson](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are

acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca
www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca