

# U.S. Governments Must Be Held to Account Now More Than Ever

NATO provocations are increasing the risk of nuclear war.

By [Shane Quinn](#)

Theme: [Politics](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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*The manner of which political structures are erected in the United States, ensures that certain personalities inevitably rise to become elected as president. This has particularly been the case post-1945, with America having a string of dubious characters assuming leadership of the most powerful country in history.*

Yet one must remember that the US has for generations comprised an empire, which has sought to maintain its strength to any degree possible. Only a certain type of figure can emerge to gain control of such a colossal power. Unreliable individuals like the Vermont senator Bernie Sanders are therefore rejected in favour of known quantities.

To sustain its might, America has felt the need to ignore and attack human rights if required, consistently pursuing policies to benefit its business-class elite and surrounding institutions.

George Kennan, the far-sighted US strategic planner, wrote in February 1948 that, "We should cease to talk about vague and unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of the living standards, and democratization". Among other things, Kennan recognized that to achieve this "the position of disparity" between rich and poor nations must be preserved, or widened further as the case has been.

Kennan was outlining an empire's strategies in the aim of conserving its power whatever way necessary, plans not dissimilar to those of major powers in preceding centuries. Kennan's words have neatly summarized US foreign policy, especially so in the decades following World War II.

To implement its corporate-based ambitions, the US has generally introduced misery and inequality to places where its influence is greatest, from Chile and Colombia, to Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador.

For a government or media figure to [exhort](#) that America "is a beacon of freedom and democracy for the world", is demonstrating not only high levels of naivety, but also a determined inability to grasp historical realities. It is impossible for a superpower to preserve its mastery by pursuing policies that will benefit the world's general populations, be it in Vietnam, Iraq, Libya, and so on. This disregard for human liberties has been repeated by all imperial states over the past two millenia, dating to the Roman empire.

Should Iraq, for instance, have evolved into a flourishing democracy – as it could have become were its citizens left in peace – US influence in that country (control of oil) would have been wiped out. It was a similar situation in Vietnam, as Washington was faced with possible loss of command in a region of strategic importance. The US military, with presidential authority, decimated Vietnam and its neighbours rather than allow them to “fall like dominoes” and succumb to communism.

In north Africa, Libya is another significant nation; it has the ninth largest oil reserves in the world (more than America or China), while located in a pivotal territory. The US, and its military arm NATO, led the way in smashing Libya to pieces in 2011 so as to retain influence there – while also delivering a blow upon the Arab Spring revolution which was spreading to neighbouring Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria.

As with many US interventions, the March 2011 attack on Libya received broad support from establishment circles, later describing it as a “[revolution](#)”, and despite NATO war crimes [becoming clear](#), “a success”.

Whether notable commentators actually believe what they are espousing, it once more reveals a glaring naivety, not to mention irresponsibility, emanating from so-called well educated people. If one should surrender themselves to institutions of power, it can be tempting to enter a domain in which the truth is difficult to locate, let alone perceive.

The result is a mixture of fantasy and self-delusion commonly on display from prominent opinion writers. The human desire for friendship – along with a need to fit in and be accepted by the right people – are other factors posing a menace to independent thinking that questions generally accepted norms.

An ingrained lack of critical, probing thought is surely a common thing at the world’s mass media centres. Yet a requirement to obey and stifle dangerous ideas is also prevalent in parliamentary buildings, universities and schools, where nonconformist beliefs are regularly suppressed or discouraged.

The political historian Gabriel Kolko noted that, “The desire to discover the truth must entail a willingness to challenge conventional wisdom... and to accept all of the potential consequences, some of them very substantial, for doing so. Only a tiny minority is ready to pursue such an innovative course”.

It may not be surprising that crucial problems are overlooked or ignored. The issue of nuclear weapons is hardly debated, and so public awareness of the enormity of this threat is low. This is incredible in itself as there will be a nuclear war before long in some region of the world – unless radical changes arrive which may only be achieved by committed, widespread activism.

In the decades following atomic attacks on Japan, increasingly powerful nuclear weapons have been used many times by US administrations – in the manner through which a bank robber takes money with the aid of a gun, but rarely fires it. There are [more than](#) two dozen documented instances of American leaders threatening to detonate nuclear bombs against enemy states (the USSR, China, etc.) so as to achieve certain demands.

Each year, false alarms occur in faulty nuclear weapons systems, be it in America or Russia, detailing a possible attack from the other side. Through sheer good luck no accident has yet occurred, but if such a conflict is to come, it will quite likely be due to an unforeseen incident. The planet is terribly fortunate to have avoided nuclear war so far, which would destroy large parts of the remaining life on our globe.

The means to deliver a nuclear assault has become increasingly sophisticated as the years go by, from jet aircraft to long-range missiles and high-tech submarines. Donald Trump, who may well be the most dangerous US president to date, has increased the likelihood of such a war with his 2018 Nuclear Posture Review. This process lowers the threshold for nuclear engagement, along with developing even more advanced means capable of launching an attack without response. The provocations are occurring “in the immediate vicinity of the Russian borders” as Moscow outlines.

Over the past generation, ongoing US-led NATO expansion up to Russia’s frontiers also increases the risk of a nuclear calamity, tactics broadly accepted and praised. It scarcely requires strong powers of deduction to realize that continually proceeding towards a nuclear superpower (Russia) increases the risk of war breaking out.

Still, a recent Guardian opinion editorial [outlined](#) that, “The NATO alliance has helped mould the modern world and ushered in a democratic, liberal world order characterised by open trade and open societies”.

In relation to the second major threat, climate change, Trump’s policies have also been disastrous – in spite of the American leader knowing precisely that the phenomenon is occurring. As Trump admitted over two months ago with regard climate change, “I think that something’s happening”. Yet from the beginning of his presidency in January 2017, he has chosen procedures which are leading to rising emissions in America for 2018 and beyond, in order to amass as much wealth as possible.

Amid other initiatives, Trump has loosened regulations on vehicle emissions, while aiding coal, oil and gas companies so that they can operate unhindered. These actions come as global carbon emissions are at an all time high and increasing, despite climate change first being discussed by government leaders at the 1992 Earth Summit in Brazil. Since the early 1990s, the world’s greenhouse gas rates have risen by over 60%.

The critically important COP24 climate conference, which concluded in Poland last week, was described as “insufficient” due to its hijacking “by short-sighted interests”. This is primarily because of the unwillingness of wealthy nations – those most responsible for emissions – to take firm steps in addressing climate change, leaving much of the burden on poverty-stricken countries.

There have been many wishful thoughts put forward on containing the global temperature rise “to within 1.5 Celsius” of pre-industrial levels; this is a fanciful target, however. As a result of government impotence, it will prove a serious challenge to keep world temperature increases to a 3 Celsius limit, let alone 2 Celsius. That would entail unimaginable climate consequences in decades to come, unless nuclear war intervenes bringing with it dramatic global cooling, crop failure and worldwide famine.

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