

Western Civilization is Doomed

The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty: Last Gasp of a Moribund Civilization

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“Peace cannot be achieved through violence, it can only be attained through understanding.” Ralph Waldo Emerson

When I was a boy, I knew a man who repaired clocks and watches as a hobby. (Quartz watches had not yet been invented.) I often sat for hours in utter fascination watching him work. Then one day, I asked, “Frank, how do you know how to do that?” He answered, “Johnny, what man has done, man can do.” Therein lies the fallacy of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Science and technology is a Pandora’s Box. Once opened by one man, company, or country, what is emitted soon becomes everyone’s.

The United States made the first atomic bomb in 1945. The first attempt at non-proliferation was limited to trying to keep the knowledge of how to build the bomb secret. It failed, and within a decade, the USSR (1949), the UK (1952), France (1960), and China (1964) had built bombs. Since then India (1974), Israel (1979), Pakistan (1998), and North Korea (2006) have become nuclear powers, and South Africa has the capability, having produced six nuclear weapons in the 1980s but later disassembled them. Now the know-how is widespread.

Only two nations benefited from World War II: Russia and America. The other nations that made up what is called Western Civilization had become American vassal states; they could no longer act alone. Their national policies become subject to American approval, and when America calls, they, if reluctantly, become part of some coalition that America decides to build. At the end of World War II, America had become the predominant Western power. But being the predominant Western power did not mean it had become the *predominant* power, and the non-western world soon realized it even although Americans assumed it had.

The United Nations was ostensibly established:

- * to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and
- * to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and
- * to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and
- * to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

AND FOR THESE ENDS

- * to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, and
- * to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and
- * to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and
- * to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples. . . .

Obviously, it has failed. But although those words come from the Charter, they were and are sheer propaganda. The organization was formed by World War II's victorious powers in an attempt to control the world. The Security Council was established in a way that gave those nations absolute control over the organization. Each of the five permanent members of the Council can veto any resolution it disapproves of.

The five permanent members are China, France, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States—all nuclear powers. Originally they were Nationalist China, France, the USSR, the UK, and the USA—the countries that made up the allied coalition that defeated the axis in World War II. But most of these nations were no longer really great powers. France and the UK had become vassal states of the USA. Nationalist China had been reduced to an island; the real China was Communist and occupied the mainland. The USSR was a Communist world power, that has now been superceded by the Russian Federation. The cooperation that the United States expected from the other members of the Security Council dissipated.

When North Korea invaded the South in an attempt to unify the nation which had been bifurcated for political reasons at the end of World War II, the UN Security Council, at the request of the US and minus the absent Soviet delegate, passed a resolution calling for the assistance of all UN members in halting the North Koreans. The UN coalition consisted of sixteen mostly Western nations: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, the UK, and the USA. Although never totally defeated, the coalition managed only to preserve the *status quo* that preceded the invasion. But the war demonstrated that the Western powers that were victorious in World War II were not invincible, and the French and American debacles in Viet Nam confirmed this vincibility.

The Persian Gulf War (Desert Storm) was again initiated with United Nations authorization by a coalition force from 34 nations to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait after it was invaded. (Twenty-six nations contributed personnel, many in non-combative roles: the USA, Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, the UK, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, France, Germany, Honduras, Italy, Kuwait, New Zealand, Niger, Oman, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, and South Korea. More than sixty percent of the personnel came from the USA. Although totally victorious over Iraq's conventional army, for political reasons, the war again merely reestablished the *status quo*. (In this conflict, South Korea, whose existence was preserved by a similar war fought by a similar coalition, contributed merely one *medical* battalion. Interesting! Was this really a coalition of the "willing"?)

Since then, US forces have been driven out of Lebanon (1983) and Somalia (1993) and have been bogged down along with other coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan for more than eight years. What has become obvious to the rest of the world, and perhaps even American

diplomats, is that the armed forces of Western coalitions and other coalition partners are not invincible. Western Civilization can no longer advance its goals using conventional military means. But the major Western nations are still members of the nuclear club. The last option these nations have of maintaining their control is keeping the nuclear club limited to Western nations as far as possible by means of the NPT and using their nuclear power as a threat.

But American policies alone have made this impossible; it shared its atomic weapons with NATO allies; Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Turkey store and can deploy atomic bombs. [Now](#) although some of these countries have asked the US to remove these weapons, the US refuses to. And although the US hopes to force North Korea to relinquish its weapons and to keep Iran from acquiring them, Americans say nothing about Israeli, Indian, and Pakistani nuclear capabilities. The result, of course, is an argument for the NPT that is seen as disingenuous; it carries no conviction, and American and Western influence on the world wanes.

The North Koreans and Iranians are not moved by American protestations. Israel routinely rejects American policy initiatives. The Russians and the Chinese are, at best, lukewarm about sanctioning Iran, and the [Chinese](#) openly laugh at American diplomats who speak in China. Even the peoples of many Western nations deride American policy initiatives. America has lost its preeminent position. It has now become a vassal state of its own making. Everything it wants to do requires the cooperation of its coalitions, and even when it gets it, the initiatives often fail.

Can the expansion and enforcement of the NPT succeed? Doubtful! The knowledge of how to build atomic weapons is widespread; it can no longer be contained. So the policy now is to maintain control of the fissionable material needed to make the bombs. But that has little chance of succeeding. Western policies are too contradictory. As Emerson so aptly put it, "What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say."

The United States with all of its policing powers has demonstrated that even it cannot stop the smuggling of contraband into its own land. The nations from which the contraband comes can not stop it, even with American help. How can the US expect other nations to stop it? In many parts of the world, especially the non-Western parts, smuggling has been carried on for centuries. Even Western businesses are often complicit in defying American export controls and sanctions. The initiative is a fool's errand, the last gasp of a moribund civilization. The only hope of avoiding a future nuclear war is the total abolition of nuclear weapons. But once the nations that comprise the Western world do that, their worldly control vanishes.

No civilization in history that collapsed after a period of greatness has ever regained its dominance. Egypt lasted for three millennia; today it is little more than a field for archeological study. The Persian Empire, which lasted for more than three hundred years, became the largest and most powerful empire of its time; today, all that remains is Iran. Greece has never recovered from its collapse after its Golden Age, and the greatness of Rome has been reduced to Italy. When Mussolini tried to revive Roman greatness, he failed miserably. The Spanish, Dutch, French, and English empires have expired and these nations are now mere vassal states, although France and England still pretend to be world powers. Lasting greatness is not attained by the imposition of power. As with all the great civilizations of the past, Western Civilization is doomed as long as it continues to pursue this method of dominance. The NPT won't save it.

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