

Don't Make the World a Powder Keg That Can be Ignited by a Single Mistake, or Matchstick, to Start World War III

By [Bharat Dogra](#)

Global Research, August 26, 2024

Region: [Europe](#), [Russia and FSU](#)

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

In-depth Report: [UKRAINE REPORT](#)

It must be stated at the outset that regardless of anything else, if one of the great powers follows world dominance as a central precept of its policy then it is only a matter of time before this would bring the world very close to World War 3 or nuclear war or a war involving other weapons of mass destruction. It does not matter if such a ruinous policy is adopted by the USA or China or Russia or any other emerging great power, the result will be the same.

In recent years the most obstinate and non-rational pursuit of such a destructive policy has been seen in the context of the USA. This highly dangerous policy, often identified with the aim that no foreign power should be allowed to emerge or remain in such a strong position that it can now or in future threaten worldwide US supremacy and dominance, used initially to be identified with the neo-conservatives, but now this has been mainstreamed as the policy of the greater part of the US establishment, or at least those sections of it who appear to call all the shots in decision-making. In pursuit of this policy, all the time efforts are being made to weaken those with the potential to emerge as rivals, by bleeding them in various ways, by planning for their disintegration and by dividing them, by isolating them, by imposing sanctions on them, and above all by making them fight proxy wars, and by assisting the proxy fighters in many ways so that they can inflict the maximum damage on rivals and potential rivals.

If USA is the leading power of world dominance now, China too can strive for this position after some years if its economic, technological and military power continues to grow at a fast pace. While it continues to show signs of undue although restrained aggression at several levels, it must first meet the challenge posed by the number one power seeking to maintain dominance and in the process trying to encircle China in various ways.

The bigger reality is that as long as any great power or emerging great power is guided by the ambition of world dominance, **a huge danger of this escalating into a world war or nuclear weapons war will remain**. So in these times of weapons of mass destruction, the quest of dominance by any great power is inherently a huge risk for all life on earth.

However this risk can increase or decrease at various times depending on the extent of responsibility exercised by the leadership of the great powers. What is deeply worrying today is that we are either already in the middle of the highest risk situation ever, or else appear to be fast moving towards such a situation.

The earlier highest risk situation is often considered to be of the days of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. However the crisis was being handled at the topmost level by two world leaders, John Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev, who were very responsible leaders and were committed to peace (even though some of their aides were not).

Hence they sorted out the crisis before it could blow up into a nuclear war. **Unfortunately such responsible leadership is increasingly missing today in the country—USA—which has been on a very aggressive quest for dominance regardless of consequences.** Millions of people have already been killed in the course of this quest in entirely avoidable wars and proxy wars. In addition some of the leaders closely allied to the USA, particularly Netanyahu of Israel and Zelensky of Ukraine, have frequently behaved in no less irresponsible ways while escalating conflicts with their very narrow vision and aims.

How the Ukraine war has been escalating towards possibly a much bigger tragedy was recently captured very competently in a comment by Thomas Palley (August 23, 2024) titled 'Ukraine's Hiroshima moment is drawing closer'. Thomas Palley is a senior American economist who served as the Chief Economist for the US China Economic and Security Review Commission. He has written,

“Conditions in Ukraine increasingly give Russia military and geopolitical cause to use tactical nuclear weapons. Though Russia will use them, the US and NATO are implicated in the process. They are in the grip of neocon madness which casually dismisses potentially catastrophic consequences and blocks all off-ramps.”

USA/NATO have been crossing one red-line after another regarding supplying more and more advanced weapons to Ukraine, including anti- aircraft missiles, anti-tank missiles, long-range HIMARS rockets, longer-range ATACMs and F-16 jets. In addition, Palley noted

“the US has provided satellite information, while under-cover advisers have assisted long-range missile attacks deep inside Russia which include attacking the Kersch bridge, Russian naval vessels at sea, naval yards in Crimea and in Novorossiysk, Russia's high altitude AWACS defense system, and an attack on Russia's anti-ballistic missile defense system.”

Palley asserts,

“Many neo-con supporters have casually talked of 'Putin's nuclear bluff'. The reality is—it is threat of nuclear retaliation by the USA that is a bluff. No sane US politician or general would risk thermo-nuclear war for the sake of Ukraine.”

As for the possibilities of an early settlement Palley notes,

“The problem is peace cannot get a hearing. Ukraine's flawed democracy is suspended, the Azov extremists are in control, and any Ukrainian opposing the war faces imprisonment or worse.”

At the same time, neo-con thinking prevails over rational voices speaking for peace in the USA.

As though things were not bad enough earlier, the Kursk invasion has further increased the possibilities of what increasingly looks like a much wider and bigger confrontation between

Russia on the one hand and the USA/NATO on the other hand, even though some of the NATO members are reluctant to join an offensive confrontation against Russia.

In fact the USA has consistently pursued hostile policies towards Russia since the start of the 21st century, highlighted by steady eastward expansion of NATO, promoting hostile regimes in countries close to Russia, equipping them with weapons most likely to be used against Russia, attempts of regime change and disintegration aimed at Russia, assisting/instigating a coup in Ukraine followed by constant support for forces (including neo-Nazis forces) hostile to Russia, sabotaging of efforts to stop Russia-Ukraine war at an early stage.

At what stage this can lead to an open confrontation between USA/NATO has been the most worrying issue for some time now.

This, however, is only one of the two theatres of war which today can escalate into a world war. The other such war is of course the one in the middle-east. While almost every day since October 7 2023 has been a day of great distress, the second big crisis of the possibility of huge escalation (after the first one in the first half of April which could be contained) started developing on July 30-31 with two assassinations, and since then the world has been on the edge regarding what sort of retaliation will come from Iran and Hezbollah. Even after the much bigger clash between Israel and Hezbollah on August 25, at the time of writing this on August 25 the threat of retaliation from Iran still remains. The bigger clash of August 25 between Hezbollah and Israel has also left behind scars that will not heal easily or soon.

A temporary containment of the escalating crisis was obtained by ongoing negotiations for Gaza ceasefire. With Mr. Netanyahu not really wanting peace and hardliners now being in the forefront of Hamas too, chances of both sides agreeing to permanent ceasefire are very slim. If talks break down, the likely Iranian retaliation can escalate the situation further, but in addition there are possibilities also of other sources of escalation which should not be ignored. If Israel-Iran and/or Israel-Hezbollah wars break out then the USA too can be drawn in more directly, while Russia can provide high-tech support to Iran and China can provide some kind of support too. Hence another theatre of possible confrontation between great powers emerges, and the two wars can get linked up too in some ways.

Even without the USA getting drawn in, an over-pressed Israel under Netanyahu can resort to the use of one or more tactical nuclear weapons. Iran can be aggressively motivated to speed up greatly its quest for developing its own nuclear weapons.

Hence the possibilities of actual use of nuclear weapons and of World War 3 are developing like never before seen in recent decades. The United Nations has not been particularly active to prevent this, while some of the most powerful world leaders have been behaving in very irrational and reckless ways. Hence it is extremely important to make every possible effort to raise the level of peace efforts much beyond the existing levels.

The reason why peace efforts are generally not able to rise to the level of actually being able to prevent such dangerous escalations is that these are seen mainly as fire-fighting operations, while the need is for continuing peace work which can provide a strong foundation, a strong base for peace efforts to prevail over the war-mongering.

Hence once we get past the present dangers somehow, we should not fall back into complacency and should work very sincerely and with continuity to strengthen peace movements and all forces of peace all over the world, and most particularly in the leading

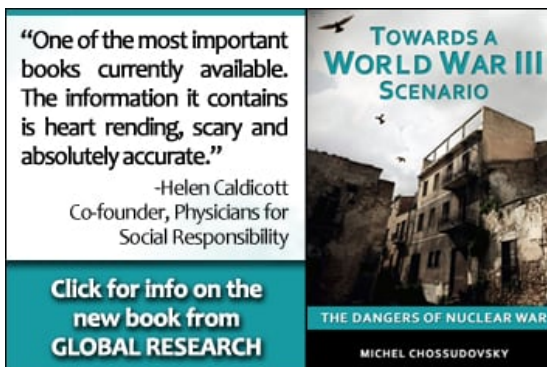
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Bharat Dogra is Honorary Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now. His recent books include *Protecting Earth for children*, *Planet in Peril*, *A Day in 2071* and *Man over Machine*. He is a regular contributor to Global Research.



[“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

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

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–**John McMurtry**, Professor of Philosophy, Guelph University

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–**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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